

AUTOMOTIVE

Lexus takes auto's interest in yachting into production

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Lexus looks into bringing its yacht idea into production. Image credit: Lexus.

By BRIELLE JAEKEL

Toyota Corp's Lexus is bringing the luxury automotive world closer to the water with its yacht concept that goes a step further than other automakers' seaworthy designs.

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Lexus is putting its Sport Yacht concept into actual production with real models going out to customers by the end of next year. The design was awarded by Japan's "Boat of the Year" committee at the Japan International Boat Show in Yokohama, as a flood of automakers look for their own yacht interpretations.

"Based on our amazing experiences in engineering, building, testing and showing the Lexus Sport Yacht concept last year, we've decided to take the next bold step of producing an all-new larger yacht that builds on the advanced nature of the concept while adding more comfort and living space," said Shigeki Tomoyama, senior managing officer at Toyota.

Yachting and automotive

Numerous luxury auto brands are inventing yacht designs and concepts, as the two industries are closely related. Automakers see a market to cater to their affluent audiences with elevated opulence.

However, Lexus is making a bigger splash with its design because it is one of the few automakers to actually put its yacht into production.

The Toyota Marine Division engineered the Lexus Sport Yacht in part with Marquis-Larson Boat Group of Pulaski and Lexus Design created the concept.



Lexus joins other auto brands with a yacht design. Image credit: Lexus.

Lexus' yacht concept of last year was the basis for this design, but the boat that goes into production will be larger with more living space and comfort.

The yacht will be a 65-foot-long sport fly-bridge cruiser featuring below-deck staterooms. The boat is designed to fit up to 15 guests.

Owners will be able to integrate the yacht with their mobile devices through Lexus' Mobility Services Platform, allowing for control over security, diagnostics and maintenance.



Lexus takes to the seas. Image credit: Lexus.

A price point has not yet been announced for the yacht, but it will come later this year.

Driving into the water

Lexus first dove into the boating sector with its sporting yacht concept, alluding to a future in new lifestyle markets in January last year.

Manufacturers are branching out into new areas that cater to overlapping audiences, and that is what Lexus is referring to with its new yacht. The automaker's metaphorical jump into boating starts with a sport yacht design with high-performance twin engines, not intended to be put into production ([see more](#)).

Rolls-Royce is among one of the many automakers looking to yachts.

Also, Bugatti demonstrated the pull automakers have in the yachting industry with a limited-edition vessel to start off its partnership with yacht manufacturer Palmer Johnson.

Bugatti revisited the water with the Bugatti Niniette 66, a yacht built in partnership with Palmer Johnson. The design was the first in a series of new yachts from the two, and will help Bugatti stay in competition with other automakers that are doing the same ([see more](#)).

"We plan to start sales in the U.S. in the latter half of 2019, with sales in Japan following in the spring of 2020," Toyota's Mr. Tomoyama said of Lexus' new yacht.

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