

AUTOMOTIVE

Lexus pokes fun at growing demand for personalization

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Lexus partners with 23andMe for a April Fool's Day prank. Image credit: Lexus.

By BRIELLE JAEKEL

Toyota Corp.'s Lexus is taking a surprising approach to personalization with a genetic matching system that is stunning consumers.

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The automaker is supposedly partnering with 23andMe, a genetic company that helps customers discover their ancestry along with numerous other DNA findings. Lexus is offering its customers the chance to be matched with the perfect vehicle based on their genetic makeup, however the only problem is that it is completely in jest.

"Lexus has always obsessed over crafting an individual experience for customers, both in selecting their vehicle, as well as in the ownership process," said Cooper Ericksen, vice president of marketing at [Lexus](#).

Humor in marketing

As shoppers look for a more experiential aspect in bricks-and-mortar locations, brands are stepping up their game in finding new ways to cater to this new audience.

Winning retailers and manufacturers are making special moments out of an area that used to be mundane, and Lexus' new campaign is far from that in its bid for consumers' affections.

In celebration of April Fool's Day, the brand is releasing a campaign claiming to find shoppers with "the car of their genes" through 23andMe.

According to the prank, participants provide a sample of saliva to the program and Lexus provides a handcrafted, completely personalized vehicle to customers' doors within 48 hours.



Lexus' Genetic Selection product. Image credit: Lexus.

Everything within the vehicle is tailored to the participants' specific DNA, such as body height based on the drivers' height, lighting, tint for eye and skin sensitivity, scent manufacturing, a prescription windshield for those with glasses and more.

Those who have a caffeine addiction will be fitted with larger cup holders.

Owners start their new Lexus cars by simply licking the steering wheel, eliminating the need for a key.

Lexus' sarcastic video ends by saying, "The perfect driving experience is in our DNA, because it is also in yours."

Viewers with a keen eye will notice the fine print, which reads, "Imaginary technology. Funny bones not hereditary."

23andMe provides Lexus' Genetic Selection program

Lexus has stated that its fabricated program will begin on April 1 and is going through great lengths to make sure its April Fool's prank is authentic, with a full page of its Web site that even includes customer reviews.

Customers are featured raving from the extensive personalization tactics, from specialized speakers based on earwax type to inside windshield wipers for those prone to sneezing.

Happy April Fool's Day

Lexus' humorous campaign is connecting with consumers through a medium that they love: comedy. But it is also making light of how tailored the shopping experience has become, and maybe even taking a look into the future.

This year Lexus' Genetic Selection will likely be the first of many similar prank products.

In honor of April Fools' Day for the last few years, luxury brands also rolled out faux products and services to get a laugh.

For the holiday, celebrated April 1, a number of brands shared imaginary launches on social media or through press releases, aiming to amuse their followers. While these reveals will not come to fruition, they enable brands to show off their innovation and dedication to hospitality ([see more](#)).

Last year, Lexus debuted an imagined feature aimed at clearing the road ahead.

In honor of April Fools' Day, the automaker revealed a "Lane Valet" that will shift slow drivers out of the left lane, supposedly making roads safer in the process. While fake technological advances may cause some confusion for the gullible, pranks allow brands to connect with consumers over a shared laugh that goes beyond promotion ([see more](#)).

"Exceeding customers' expectations is in the Lexus DNA. Now, we're taking it to the next level by tapping into our customers' DNA, too," Lexus' Mr. Ericksen said.