

AUTOMOTIVE

## BMW highlights car tech, safety in horror spoof

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*BMW's new campaign takes an unexpected turn. Image credit: BMW*

By SARAH RAMIREZ

German automaker BMW is turning to humor to show drivers that fears about automated vehicles are unfounded because of the brand's commitment to safety.

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BMW is one of several premium automakers that have introduced more automated technology into their vehicles. Many drivers remain unmoved by the updated technology, and marketers have turned to creative ways to ease concerns and clarify misconceptions.

"Many consumers do not trust autonomous vehicles," said Lauren Fix, automotive expert, the [Car Coach](#), Lancaster, NY. "Three-fourths of drivers, per AAA, do not trust autonomous cars because of the chance of an accident or computer failure."

Ms. Fix is not affiliated with BMW but agreed to comment as an industry expert. [BMW](#) was reached for comment.

### Dark drive

BMW's latest video campaign begins in the same manner as a scary movie.

A vehicle, this time a BMW 7 Series, is driving down a desolate, wooded road in the middle of a darker-than-usual night.

*BMW's latest video is a twist on a popular movie motif*

An eerie melody begins to play as the camera provides a closer look at the foggy forest. As the tension slowly builds, a mysterious figure runs through the frame.

The car continues its journey through the woods, and ice rapidly forms on the sideview mirrors to indicate a sudden, supernatural drop in temperatures.

In an instant, the BMW brakes as a young woman with long, dark hair and a nightgown appears in the middle of the road.

Barefoot, the woman approaches the car and ominously pushes her hand on the driver side window, which is now also covered in frost. She opens the car door and leers inside, but then her expression turns to confusion and finally fear.

The woman screams and turns away, frightened by what is, or rather is not, inside the car: a driver.

Slowly, the car begins to drive itself again and it is revealed that the rear bumper reads, "Autonomous Driving Test Vehicle."

As the screen fades to black, a narrator says, "The future of driving nothing to be afraid of."



*An engineer reviews the automated vehicle's driving. Image credit: BMW*

The score returns as the BMW pulls into an industrial garage and an engineer climbs into the backseat. He pulls up footage from the driving test and gasps as the ghostly female figure appears on the video.

BMW's film is teasing its future features in a tongue-in-cheek way, since the automaker's Vision iNEXT is scheduled to enter production in 2021. The vehicle is meant to be automated, emission-free and fully connected ([see story](#)).

#### Automated push

As automakers continue to invest in automated and driverless vehicles, more marketing and public awareness efforts revolve around dispelling drivers' concerns.

Hacking and safety is shown to still be a real concern for drivers, according to a report from Ketchum. Consumers may be more concerned and wary of autonomous driving than excited for the technology, with almost 40 percent expressing worry in regards to driverless cars ([see story](#)).

German automaker Audi showed off the automated capabilities of its cars in a short film stylized as a science fiction movie trailer.

"The AIs are Coming" starts with a dark look at the impact artificial intelligence might have on the future, before demonstrating the different ways Audi cars use AI. It is a unique approach to confront concerns drivers may have about automated vehicles ([see story](#)).

British automaker Jaguar Land Rover has similarly created a new system that it hopes will increase consumer trust in autonomous vehicles as the development of self-driving cars continues.

Jaguar's new technology gives drivers and pedestrians advance notice of an autonomous vehicle's intentions by projecting images onto the road. More than 500 test subjects have been part of Jaguar's research with autonomous vehicles ([see story](#)).

"Manufacturers are bringing out new safety systems to make you safer on the road," Ms. Fix said. "This is the best way to slowly step into potential autonomous vehicles in the future."