

AUTOMOTIVE

## Lexus teases the future of driving with new concept

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Toyota's Lexus Corp. released a promotional short film to highlight its new LF-Z Electrified concept. Image credit: Lexus

By KATIE TAMOLA

Toyota Corp.'s Lexus is offering consumers a glimpse into the future in a new short film highlighting its new "LF-Z Electrified" concept.

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"The Future of Driving" illustrates the concept battery electric vehicle from Lexus, which intended to be a hub for driving performance, style and technology. Envisioned for realization by 2025, the concept vehicle reflects the technologically advanced and further personalized age that many believe awaits the automotive industry.

"Global citizens, businesses and societal environments are ever more inclusive of low-emission, thoughtfully-sourced, technologically-advanced luxury goods, services, and lifestyles," said Amanda Roark, product communications analyst at **Lexus**, Plano, TX. "The Lexus LF-Z concept vehicle is a first-step in showcasing Lexus' vision to deliver on those desires and to meet the expectations of its drivers who want an electric vehicle along with the luxury performance, design and technology that Lexus brings."

Into the future

"The Future of Driving" vignette is cinematic from the beginning, with a Lexus EV driving and unlocking itself in front of a consumer to begin their journey, all while suspenseful music permeates the background. The driver ostensibly summoned the vehicle using his smartphone.

Once situated in the driver's seat, one of the screens adjacent to the steering wheel prompts the driver to choose his destination then asks if he would like to try a more scenic route. Other features illustrated include 5G connection, a map, profile and comfort settings.

*Lexus offers a glimpse into the future*

The driver selects his destination, smiles, and with the vehicle's acceleration, the entire sound and setting feels futuristic.

"The future is crafted from the unknown," the narrator of the film says. "Visionaries ask what it looks like or sounds like."

"But Lexus asks how it will feel," she says.

"We are absolutely headed in an all-electric direction," said David Undercoffler, editor in chief at [Autolist.com](https://www.autolist.com), San Francisco. "Emissions regulations in Europe and China are rapidly pushing us towards widespread electrification of our vehicles and they are such large markets for cars that global automakers have no choice but to comply.

"Luxury is about making one's life easier and less complicated," he said. "We see Lexus going to great lengths in this video to show how seamlessly its future electric vehicles will integrate the driving and riding experience with managing other aspects of your life."

The narrator then describes the concept of an all-new EV platform designed for seamless performance. The vignette progresses, once again maintaining a cinematic and futuristic theme while cutting to the vehicle on the road but illustrating what the technology on the inside looks like when its functioning.

The short film highlights Lexus's advanced implementation of artificial intelligence. For instance, the EV asks the driver if he would like to increase noise suppression, and later a screen displays an evening appointment with a verbal reminder.

"This is what the future feels like," the narrator says. "And the feeling is electric."



*The new concept is envisioned for realization by 2025. Image credit: Lexus*

The new four-wheel driving force control technology illustrated in the vignette is known as "DIRECT4" which promises to generate a superior and highly flexible driving performance that will set the LF-Z Electrified apart from conventional vehicles. Lexus states it is also planning to incorporate additional technologies that offer entertainment and informational features to consumers.

Lexus is planning to introduce 20 new or improved models, including more than 10 electrified models such as battery electric vehicles (BEVs), plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs) and hybrids (HEVs) by 2025. The automaker is also exploring the possibility of releasing sports models for consumers who seek and value the fun of driving.

Always moving forward

Lexus is aiming to offer electric variants of all its models by 2025, and ultimately hoping that the sales ratio of electric vehicles will exceed that of its gasoline-engine vehicles. By 2050, Lexus aims to achieve carbon neutrality throughout its entire production process.

This is the latest development in Lexus's constant innovation pushes and looks towards the future.

In February, Lexus expanded its "All In" campaign with its new release of the Gamers' IS, the first vehicle designed by and for the Twitch community. Twitch user Fusile hosted a livestream where Lexus invited more than 554,000 viewers to build a custom car where viewers watched and voted on their favorite interior and exterior vehicle modifications ([see story](#)).

Last December, in a bid to help automakers navigate the future, neuroscientist Greg Gage and artist Sarah Sandman, who are both TED senior fellows, devised artful ways to make autonomous cars responsive to people. The intricacy and profundity of their ideas were embraced by Lexus, as the brand is looking to distinguish itself as an early adopter of self-driving technology ([see story](#)).

The LF-Z Electrified concept appears to be where technological innovation and personalization come together to

offer consumers the ultimate experience.

"Lexus makes a point of highlighting the performance of its electric vehicles, giving the viewer the idea that they can have their cake and eat it too," Autolist.com's Mr. Undercoffler said. "The combination is the ultimate ideal of luxury."

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