

AUTOMOTIVE

Lexus taps "modern leaders" for insightful LS campaign

April 20, 2021



Author and sports analyst Emmanuel Acho appears in the new Lexus LS campaign. Image credit: Lexus

By KATIE TAMOLA

Toyota Corp.'s Lexus is spotlighting the interconnectedness of humanity in its latest campaign for the 2021 LS 500.

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**
Plus: Just released
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246 ▶**

The "Modern Leaders" campaign stars two successful public figures, each examining the relevance of empathy in their professional lives and in the world at large in their respective films. The efforts highlight Lexus's human-centric ethos, as the automaker consistently aims create an emotional connection between consumers and their vehicles.

"These vignettes are effective because they're different," said David Undercoffler, editor in chief at [Autolist.com](https://www.autolist.com), San Francisco. "Rather than relying on the types of high-adrenaline, fast-paced messaging or the excessively refined campaigns promoting the car's luxury credit, these pieces take a more cerebral, socially-conscious approach.

"It's a savvy move given all of the unrest and upheavals this country has seen in the last 12 months," he said. "Going this route is the Lexus brand's way of saying that it's perhaps more self-aware than other luxury rivals."

Vehicle for thought

The first vignette, "Utterly Human," stars author and sports analyst Emmanuel Acho. The short opens with Mr. Acho standing in the center of a room at a photoshoot, while his voiceover then begins.

The shot then cuts to Mr. Acho working thoughtfully on a speech from inside his Lexus LS.

Business mogul Tiffany Pham for Lexus

"We're all different, but once we get past our differences, that's when we find empathy," he says. "Because everything great is birthed through discomfort."

Mr. Acho continues formulating his speech while sitting in his parked vehicle, closing his eyes while he completes his thought. The shot then cuts to him on a run, then continuing the process inside his vehicle.

As Mr. Acho continues to comfortably and safely construct, practice and perfect his thoughts and emotions inside the LS, the campaign illustrates that the Lexus is more than a vehicle and is instead a safe haven.

This sentiment is also present in the "More than Intelligence" spot, starring author and CEO Tiffany Pham.

It opens with Ms. Pham reclining in her Lexus LS, eyes closed. The author then sits up, adjusts her comfort settings and begins practicing her speech.

"We have to look beyond what we recognize, beyond what's familiar," she says.

The next shot is of Ms. Pham driving her Lexus LS, then continuing reciting her speech at home, taking breaks to play the violin. Scenes continue to alternate, showing Ms. Pham in her car and going about her busy days.



The Modern Leaders campaign illustrates how consumers can become emotionally connected to their vehicles. Image courtesy of Lexus

Each vignette illustrates both authors enjoying vehicle features including Shiatsu massage, climate concierge and head-up display.

The 2021 Lexus LS is the most technologically advanced LS to date, with a new touchscreen multimedia display that intends to ensure convenience. It also includes the most comprehensive safety system for the model.

Consumers are also able to customize the wheels, interior and exterior of the 2021 LS, offering consumers the ultimate personalized hub for comfort and emotional connection.

"With this campaign, Lexus is aiming to inspire the next generation of modern leaders," said Amanda Roark, Lexus product communications. "The spots feature real-world modern leaders practicing their speeches about empathy from the luxurious comfort of the LS. Lexus establishes the new LS 500 as the ideal empathetic sidekick for the modern leader."

Both the "More than Intelligence" and "Utterly Human" spots end with the subjects parking their LS vehicles and then entering a studio to deliver their carefully crafted speeches, highlighting the sedans helped them articulate feelings and insights.

"These videos remind consumers that first and foremost, we are all human," said Julie Blackley, communications manager at [iSeeCars](#), Boston. "Lexus designed the LS with the driver's needs and comforts in mind, which makes for an overall more pleasant driving experience."

Humanity at the heart

This is the latest campaign from Lexus that spotlights the humanity at the center of its brand. Lexus aims to celebrate those who have helped the company become what it is, as well as those who utilize their products that ultimately play a prominent role in their lives.

In March, Lexus celebrated the Takumi, the company's master craftspeople, and their indelible mark on the brand in poetic fashion.

The automaker marked World Poetry Day with a haiku celebrating the craftspeople who have undergone extensive training, led occupations that strive for perfection and ultimately make the brand what it is today. With no higher honor within the Lexus engineering ranks than the title of Takumi, the automaker released a haiku paying homage to the experts and highlighting just how crucial they are to the brand ([see story](#)).

The car company is not just interested in marketing its latest vehicles, but also in continuing to show what their consumers mean to them, and how much their safety is valued.

Earlier this month, Lexus aimed to shatter a misconception about texting and driving by bringing awareness to distracted driving with a new campaign. In honor of Distracted Driving Awareness Month, Lexus wanted consumers

to reflect on the choices they make while behind the wheel of their vehicles ([see story](#)).

The Modern Leaders campaign is Lexus's latest effort to center people, instead of simply centering their cars.

"These vignettes could make a consumer feel less guilt about spending \$77,000 or more that the LS costs," Autolist.com's Mr. Undercoffler said. "They can do so knowing that they're supporting a brand that's trying to present itself as progressive and one with values that align more with the buyer's than other car brands."

© 2021 Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your [feedback](#) is welcome.