

AUTOMOTIVE

Porche prioritizes performance with Bill Nye the Science Guy

April 21, 2021



Bill Nye explains what sets the Porsche Taycan apart in a new effort. Image credit: Porsche

By KATIE TAMOLA

German automaker Porsche is tapping television's favorite scientist for a new campaign highlighting its electric vehicle.

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

In the new short film, Bill Nye, popularly known as Bill Nye the Science Guy, explains the science behind the Taycan, explaining its performance capabilities with a few fun demonstrations. In between experimenting with the Taycan, Mr. Nye explains the inner makings of the Porsche model and what sets it apart from other electric vehicles.

"I think it's good for many of us who grew up with Bill Nye," said Tyson Jominy, vice president for data and analytics at J.D. Power, Nashville. "Now we're obviously much, much older and can afford wonderful things like a Taycan.

"It definitely shows the German engineering and thoughtfulness that you would expect from a German car, and that few others have these kinds of high-end features, and it creates a competitive strength in line with the Porsche brand," he said.

Bill Nye, the Taycan guy

Born William Sanford Nye in Washington, D.C., Mr. Nye is a mechanical engineer, science communicator and television presenter. He is a prominent cultural figure best known as the host of the PBS and syndicated children's science show Bill Nye the Science Guy.

"Bill Nye Explains the All-Electric Taycan: Repeat Performance" opens with the scientist holding an electric toothbrush, explaining how if the battery of an electric toothbrush or ordinary electric vehicle were running low, the performance of the products they power would also run low. Mr. Nye continues that this is not the case with the Taycan, as it is not an ordinary electric vehicle.

Bill Nye Explains the All-Electric Taycan: Repeat Performance

The shot then cuts to Mr. Nye measuring the speed of the Porsche Taycan as someone drives it past him. The scientist measures the speed three times, and the performance of the electric vehicle does not falter once.

"Same time, time after time, and there's lots of reasons why," Mr. Nye says.

The scientist then explains that while most electric cars have just one single-speed transmission, the Taycan has the first and only, one of its kind, two-speed transmission. He then explains the Porsche two-gear system can provide excellent acceleration and is also easier on the battery, making the Taycan more efficient.

In his classic instructional style, the beloved scientist then explains the concept of regenerative braking and how it is key to the performance of an electric vehicle, as well as its other disparate features. The film juxtaposes Mr. Nye's explanations and the Taycan doing laps around a racetrack.

"These features create an electric Porsche that can perform well...like a Porsche," Mr. Nye says as the Taycan does donuts behind him.



Mr. Nye elaborates on how the setup of the two-gear system can provide excellent acceleration and is also easier on the battery, making the Taycan more efficient. Image credit: Porsche

"And keep doing it again, and again, and again and again," he says finally, as he turns to face the vehicle and throws his hands up in the air celebratorily.

From the title of the vignette and from start to finish, the effort drives home the key feature of Taycan: the fact that it can repeat its functions successfully again and again without sacrificing performance.

A new opponent emerges

The electric vehicle space is constantly growing more and more competitive.

Last week, German automakers Audi and Mercedes-Benz premiered new electric vehicles, joining others in pushing to expand their sustainable lineups. Once outliers, EV from legacy automakers are becoming more mainstream as consumer acceptance grows and environmental regulations evolve (see story).

Before the launch of Taycan, Porsche built anticipation for its first all-electric vehicle with its #ElectricityTalks series. The films were set alongside famous landmarks that demonstrate the immense power of electricity, a response to skeptics who do not believe electric engines can coexist with Porsche's sports cars (see story).

Porsche's latest effort featuring Mr. Nye seems to address a key competitor without naming names.

As the effort seems to highlight the Taycan's ability to repeat actions without negative impact to the vehicle's performance, it inadvertently reminds consumers that other manufacturers, including Tesla, cannot promise the same feature.

"It indirectly focused on the one element of the Tesla which Porsche potential buyers may or may not know about which is the degradation of Tesla performance if you repeat something over and over again," Mr. Jominy said. "They sort of hammered that point home that you can do this in a Porsche, but do people know that you can't do that in a Tesla? I'm not quite sure."