

SOFTWARE AND TECHNOLOGY

Luxury showcases AR advancements, inclusivity-centric innovations at CES 2023

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Mercedes-Benz sits among a list of top automakers with large respective CES presences. This year proved no exception. Image credit: Mercedes-Benz

By AMIRAH KEATON

Innovations unveiled at this year's Consumer Electronics Show arguably mark some of luxury's most forward-looking.

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Held each year at the Las Vegas Convention Center in Winchester, Nevada, hundreds of the industry's high-end players attended the most recent three-day event, from Jan. 5-8. An accessible lipstick application apparatus for those with physical impairments, ambient smart home lighting and a shared vision for sustainability are among the list of high-tech gadgets and guiding principles that sent echoes through the wide walkways of CES' 2023 showroom.

"For the luxury industry, technology is less a differentiator, [but] rather a tool that supports engagement, communication, visualization. Using technology to personalize marketing outreach and enhance customer centricity are apt uses of technology," said Marie Driscoll, managing director of luxury and fashion at [Coresight Research](#), New York.

"The luxury industry needs to understand these latest technology tools and determine what is right for their brand," she said. "Attending CES is as good a use of time on the part of luxury brands as is working with tech companies to help understand the nuanced role of technology in the world of luxury versus grocery, CPG, home, and other consumer industries, so that tech can create solutions most suitable for luxury brands."

Luxury shines at CES 2023

Of the multitudinous presentations showcased during the current year's conference round, future musings took the form of branded booth activations, expert panels and conceptual product trials.

Today, most luxury conglomerates continue to show face at the annual gathering, many with new, buzzworthy ideas in tow.

This year, augmented reality (AR), inclusive innovation, emotionally-driven entertainment and sustainable systems were all the rage, proving most popular of this year's thematic contenders.

Inclusivity-wise, French beauty group L'Oréal's latest conceptual innovation a handheld motorized lipstick application device garnered much conversation, both during and in the aftermath of the expert event.

[View this post on Instagram](#)

A post shared by L'Oreal Groupe (@lorealgroupe)

"For the last few years, Coresight analysts have been tracking and reporting on the growing importance of inclusivity and so in the case of L'Oréal, we were very excited to see them develop the Hapta lipstick applicator for people with hand tremors," Ms. Driscoll said.

"For the individuals that can now be self-reliant and apply their lipstick without assistance, and feel beautiful because of the power of lipstick, this is a game changer in self-perception, realization and confidence and speaks to the incredible power and potential technology has."

Switching gears, automotive is one of CES' most active overall categories. Put simply, luxury showed up to showcase investments made pertaining to pressing sustainability requirements ([see story](#)).

EVs marked yet another big area of innovation across luxury brands.

We are at [#CES2023](#) to showcase "Tech to Desire" with several developments: a high-power charging network, the new Automated Lane Change (ALC) feature and our collaborations with SUPERPLASTIC, ZYNC, Apple Music, UMG and Dolby.

More: <https://t.co/J6n3UT6xZI#MBCES2023> pic.twitter.com/BkRBRbqzT2

Mercedes-Benz (@MercedesBenz) [January 5, 2023](#)

German automaker Mercedes-Benz touted prototype-centric activations as part of its 2023 CES build-out.

The latter brand rolled out a litany of upgrades, including conditionally-automated driving technology the company announced that its Automatic Lane Change (ALC) feature would make its way to the North American market this year while also unveiling lighthearted entertainment initiatives such as its "Superplastic" [collaboration](#) and "Superdackel" debut. The animated character represents a reinvention of the "Wackeldackel," a nodding dog dashboard toy that has accompanied many a Mercedes-Benz.

German automaker BMW made headlines with the debut of its "Dee" model, which prominently features an AR-

enabled dashboard and new electric ink technology. American actor Arnold Schwarzenegger aided in both the live announcement and subsequently, starring in the car's campaign ([see story](#)).

Standing for "Digital Emotional Experience," or "Dee" for short, the automaker's new augmented reality function creates such a personalized, interactive and immersive experience for its owner that the prototype has gone so far as to promote itself as a digital soul mate. Features of the car were recently presented at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas.

BMW showed off the latest application of the E Ink technology with its color-changing car unveiled by Arnold Schwarzenegger at [#CES2023 https://t.co/UIqPafz1fW pic.twitter.com/OtiSrg7tzi](#)

Reuters (@Reuters) [January 6, 2023](#)

Though both European brands and stateside names highlighted new key features, American innovation rose to the top in terms of themes for this year's event.

U.S. automaker Cadillac, for example, made waves at CES 2022 upon introducing InnerSpace, an electric, autonomously-driven luxury concept car.

The activation worked to credential the automaker, driving interest in another attainable luxury model as well.

Besides the brand's mainstay "Lyriq" EV model, rolled out last year ([see story](#)), the "Celestiq" offers a new addition to Cadillac's luxury fleet.

Designed to be the world's first all-electric ultraluxury sedan, the model will soon mark the brand's flagship luxury EV offering. According to Cadillac, each car unit will be personally commissioned, as clients work directly with their selected dealer and Cadillac designers, touting unprecedented levels of personalization.

"Celestiq" continues the 120-year Cadillac history of leveraging the most advanced automotive technology in the service of luxury, said Ken Althouse, lead development engineer of Celestiq at Cadillac, in a statement.

"The innovations 'Celestiq' uses to offer its sophisticated ride isolation are the pinnacle of Cadillac automotive achievement."

On the topic of virtual worlds, for this year's activation, the company teamed up with Audi-backed Holoride, which launched in the U.S. at this year's CES, and among other capabilities, a startup that retrofits any model car with the necessary technology to enable virtual reality experiences.

I just got a [@holoride](#) virtual reality demo in a '67 [@cadillac](#) DeVille. Sometimes, CES is pretty neat. [https://t.co/QI1anoQrUG pic.twitter.com/nHTb40sdaD](#)

Tim Stevens (@Tim_Stevens) [January 5, 2023](#)

Connecting to a VR headset via Bluetooth, attendees were able to receive a demo of the modern technology amid a classic Cadillac model from 1967. The exercise spread awareness and heightened engagement for Holoride, while simultaneously aligning Cadillac with both contemporary technology and heritage branding.

The execution likely also helped to further lift the above models, some of which go to market as soon as this year.

"Given the ease with which Gen Z and Gen Alpha transition between virtual, augmented and the real, luxury brands need to provide [related] experiences that are brand and profit-enhancing, in and true luxury style, high touch," said Ms. Driscoll.

Speaking of wearables, many fashion tech players present signaled efforts to bring their inventions en vogue, with many attempting a couture crossover.

Small-scale luxury Italian shoe designer Enrico Cuini – proprietor of the "Alia Solution," the creative owns the patent on the heel solution, which decreases pressure by increasing the shoe's surface area – teamed up with orthopedic surgeon Dr. Taryn Rose on a capsule collection to fight foot discomfort within women's collections.

"Come see our latest foot-measuring technology at CES and try on some shoes," said the pair, in a website [post](#).
Meanwhile, fashion programming at CES 2023 offered thought leadership from experts in the field.

As more and more brands are adopting metaverse strategies, what should we be watching out for?

"I think we're going to see a lot in the fashion space in connected fashion," author [@CathyHackl](#) says.

Watch more from [#CES2023](#): <https://t.co/Md3P8wXmcs> pic.twitter.com/2C4sTUGfYI

Veki (,) (@Veki551155) [January 7, 2023](#)

Within the home space, one standout improvement arrives from General Electric, which debuted new ambient lighting technology, falling under the emotionally-drive entertainment category for this year's CES expo.

New products produced under its lighting line can exert multicolor light shows, on-device music syncing and vivid light effects displaying a range of 16 million colors and white tones, including multiple colors simultaneously, bringing mood lighting to a new level.

"We're looking forward to launching additional Cync Dynamic Effects products that expand our immersive, innovative smart home ecosystem to bring even more personalization and fun for the home," said Kara Perdue, vice president of product management at GE Lighting, in a statement.

"Our new Cync products work seamlessly together in a single app and feature the same premium quality and attention to detail for which all GE-branded Cync products are known."

Across sectors automotive, beauty, fashion and home luxury displayed new dimensions at the CES 2023 show.

"CES is first and foremost a trade show focused on attendees in the industry," Coresight's Ms. Driscoll said.

"In recent years its scope has expanded beyond electronics into health and wellness, retail, foodtech and other areas," she said. "The common thread is that technology is the great disrupter and enabler and touches our lives throughout the day."

Trends launch in 2023

One of the world's biggest and most influential tech events, CES began in 1967, its start in 1967, offering brands with breakthrough technologies a chance to do business. Each year, exhibitors dealing with everything from AR, VR and XR, to blockchain platforms, education fitness and wearables, and smart home appliances hit the stage with solutions for some of the world's most relevant issues.

This year, luxury is proving a few of 2023's forecasts to be priorities already, both at CES and beyond. First, as global trend authority WGSN suggests in "Top Trends for 2023 & Beyond," nearly 75 percent of the world's population will use AR ([see story](#)) regularly by 2025 ([see story](#)).

Consumers began to see the tech come alive as recently as this past holiday season, as luxury brands appeared more open than ever to experimenting with augmented reality at the consumer level ([see story](#)).

Additionally, trend forecasters have suggested that home dcor will prevail in popularity.



GE Lighting's Dynamic Effects lighting dominates in "Game Day Watch Party" assets. Image courtesy of General Electric

Considering that luxury homeowners are sticking with their properties, staying put as experts anticipate nearby market fluctuations ([see story](#)), outfitting interior spaces makes sense for now.

Luxury brands have been clued into the upcoming frenzy, and are already feeding into the design facet with home jewelry collections of their own ([see story](#)).

Additionally, U.S.-made automotives may be rising to the top, befitting the migration of EV production stateside on behalf of some luxury brands ([see story](#)).

New models manufactured from this year on could enjoy a boost, as the President's office continues to promote legislative benefits outlined for electric vehicles ([see story](#)).

"Luxury brands must think in terms of decades hence and more," Ms. Driscoll said.

"They are serving today's clients but are also preparing for the next generation of luxury shoppers."

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