

ADVERTISING

Is Jaguar contradicting its brand image with small engine line?

April 25, 2012



By TRICIA CARR

British automaker Jaguar will bring two new forced-induction engines to the global market to expand its current line of vehicles, but experts are wondering whether less-powerful engines clash with its new mechanically-focused Alive campaign.

Sign up now

Luxury Daily

The automaker will release a 380-horsepower supercharged 3.0-liter V6 and a turbocharged 2.0-liter I4 to be offered as options on current models. Jaguar could be looking to get a leg-up on competitors by creating a greener engine, but this could hurt the brand in terms of what consumers expect from its vehicles.

“Today, it is understood that Jaguar, as all auto manufacturers, needs to offer engines that lower emissions and increases fuel economy, but much emphasis on frugality and conservatism will not heighten the appeal of a luxury brand,” said Bob Prosser, CEO of [Auto World Marketing Corp.](#), San Diego. “Luxury is often associated with power and fuels an emotional purchase decision, not a practical, rational one.

“Perhaps luxury-oriented consumers will choose a Jaguar because of its fuel economy, but if they do, it is only to appease the logical side of the mind and will do so providing there is no significant downside to one's personal image while being seen driving a four-cylinder Jaguar,” he said. “The big question soon to be answered is, how many Jaguar

drivers care all that much about the cost of gasoline?"

Mr. Prosser is not affiliated with Jaguar, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Jaguar declined comment for this article.

Choose your engine

Jaguar's new engines will be offered as options on a number of Jaguar models in the future.

For example, the new V6 will be used in the new F-Type that will be released in 2013.

Embedded Video: <http://www.youtube-nocookie.com/embed/V1LbSashErE>

F-Type teaser video

The automaker has not yet announced for which additional models these new engines will be available.

The new V6 engine was developed from Jaguar's existing 5-liter V8.

The V6 uses key technologies from the V8 engine such as direct injection, variable valve timing and aluminum construction.

This engine will give similar power of the V8, but with greater specific output and efficiency courtesy of supercharging, per Jaguar.

Meanwhile, the smaller Turbocharged I4 engine uses Jaguar's technologies to create efficient power despite its size.

The engine produces 240 horsepower from the use of low-inertia turbocharging, direct fuel-injection and variable timing of both the intake and exhaust camshafts.

Both engines will be mated to a new eight-speed automatic gearbox which offers a broad spread of ratios for an optimally balanced combination of performance, economy and driver control, per the automaker.

The V6 will also be available with Jaguar's Intelligent Stop-Start system.

Jaguar's new four-cylinder engine is a surprising move as fewer cylinders signify less power, literally and figuratively, per Mr. Prosser.

In a similar attempt to improve fuel consumption and emissions, Bentley now offers its Continental model with an eight-cylinder engine, not just the big, powerful 12-cylinder. This option aligns with Bentley's legacy and stays within the expected range of social acceptability, he said.

"The historical scale for engines goes sixteen-, twelve-, ten-, eight-, six-, five- and finally four-cylinders and below this is motorcycle territory," Mr. Prosser said. "Four means small, frugal, limited and uninspiring.

"Even the exhaust note of a four-cylinder engine sounds wimpy by comparison," he said. "Like the smell of leather, sounds are an important intangible of an overall automotive

experience."



Jaguar C-X75

Give the people what they want

Through its Alive campaign, Jaguar is looking to immerse consumers in its world not only through a driving experience, but by conveying the automaker's four key values of performance, style, technology and refinement.

The automaker is in the midst of the largest comprehensive driving push in brand history that will travel to 18 U.S. cities this year ([see story](#)).

Jaguar may have taken feedback from its interactions with consumers at the beginning of this tour and in turn created smaller engines that fit their need, but is an interesting move considering that Jaguar is focusing on the power of its vehicles in its ever-present multichannel Alive campaign.

The campaign hones in on three Jaguar vehicles – the XF sports sedan, the XJ full-size luxury sedan and the XK coupe and convertible grand tourer – and emphasizes their best features in addition to what makes them tick under the hood.

The Alive campaign is meant to bring the cars to life, that Jaguar is not so much “manufactured” as it is “created” and is as alive as consumers are, per the brand ([see story](#)).



Alive campaign image

“If I was king of Jaguar's jungle, I would not put any mention of the inline four-cylinder engine in the advertising,” Mr. Prosser said.

“I would instead put heavy emphasis on the fact that Jaguar also has offerings that are more environmentally responsible, and do so without compromising style or luxury on the journey there,” he said. “Just do not expect to get that big cat to pounce nearly as fast.”

Final Take

Tricia Carr, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your **feedback** is welcome.