Jeff Bracken, GVP & GM, Lexus Division:2017 Los Angeles Auto Show - Remarks

December 01, 2017

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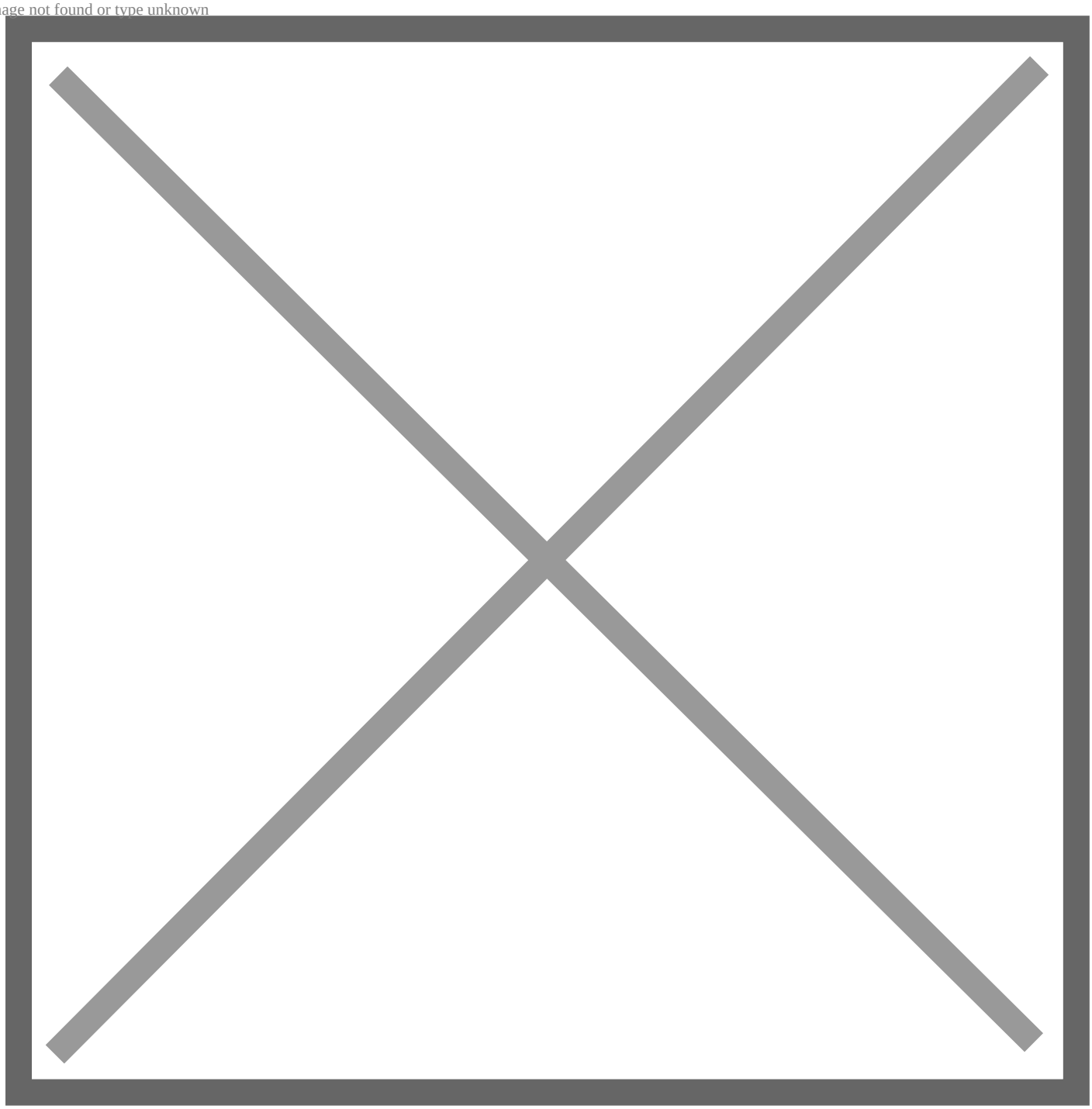

As prepared for:
Jeff Bracken, Group Vice President & General Manager, Lexus Division
2017 Los Angeles Auto Show
Lexus RXL Three-Row, LX 570 Two-Row, and LC Inspiration Series Reveal
Los Angeles Convention Center, Los Angeles
Wednesday, November 29, 2017

Good morning everyone.

I hope you all enjoyed Thanksgiving and had a chance to spend time with family and friends.

In my home, perhaps like many of yours, we chat about the things we're thankful for.

This year, I listed typical things you might expect: my wife, my children, my grandchildren, and I had to throw in all the cool new Lexus vehicles about to hit the market, including the three you'll see today.

That cost me a kick in the shin from my lovely wife, but my children expected it and brought a few laughs.

In any case, welcome to the Lexus Experience. Today we have quite a few treats to share.

First, our Lexus brand is driven to make each Lexus experience personal. That's one reason why we've recently created the Inspiration Series for our flagship models.

The Lexus Inspiration Series will begin with our all-new LC. This LC, inspired by a partnership with Marvel's Black Panther movie, made its debut at SEMA in Las Vegas and will hit dealer showrooms this coming February the same time the film hits theaters.

Believe it or not, this LC showcases a 15-year science project, a new high-tech paint called Structural Blue. It creates an almost 3D holographic reflection. It's absolutely the first thing people will notice.

Our designers were inspired by the wings of the Morpho butterfly which appear bright blue but are in fact gray. The structural blue paint actually has no blue-colored material in it. What you're seeing is a blue reflection of the paint absorbing light. Not only is the process to create the paint specialized, applying the paint to the LC is such a meticulous task that only two 'Structural Blue' LCs can be painted each day.

In addition to this unique paint, the LC inspiration series has a Bespoke White interior, a unique carbon fiber scuff plate, and 21-inch forged alloy wheels.

Additionally, the Inspiration Series comes with a sommelier wine set designed by our partners at Barneys New York to match the interior of the LC. We're also including a very special wine to go with it, a signed magnum from Scott Pruett, Lexus Hall of Fame racecar driver and winemaker.

We'll produce just 100 of these LC models and they'll be priced at $106,640.

The Inspiration Series LC is an example of Lexus creating unique, personalized vehicles for our customers. You'll see more of that in the future as we introduce the Inspiration Series to our other flagship models the LS and LX.

Okay, now let’s switch gears and talk about a vehicle that helped put Lexus on the map.

Last month, Toyota celebrated 60 years in America and there were many retrospective articles and videos that showed our company’s progress throughout the decades.

One of my favorite decades was the 90s, when Lexus created the luxury crossover segment with the RX luxury utility vehicle. The RX set a new standard for luxury customers by offering the versatility and higher ride height of a utility vehicle with the added comfort of a smoother ride from a luxury sedan platform.

The RX was an instant success and while the number of luxury crossover models approaches 50, RX remains the most popular luxury utility vehicle in America. And while our customers love it, they tell us there’s one thing that could make it better — more of it.

Today, we’ve asked Minnie Driver, who is the voice of Lexus in our commercials to show us how we can respond to our customers’ demand to make more of the RX.

Introducing the all-new RX 350 L, now available with three rows. Take a look.

Now that's an "L" of a vehicle!

As you can see, there’s now much more you can do with the RX 350L. The addition of third-row seating means room for two more passengers from those in child seats to adults.

Chief Engineer Kato and his team worked very hard to create a third row that works for all starting with a 4.3-inch extension to the rear overhang. By extending the roofline passengers have plenty of head room. They also have more leg room as the second row was designed to sit slightly higher so their feet can slide under the seats.

For maximum comfort, third-row passengers have their own cup holders and can also control their own HVAC settings for the three-zone climate control.

When room for two people is not needed, both sides of the rear seat can be split 50/50 or can fold completely flat with the touch of a button. In fact, the third row electronically folds and then reverses slightly to increase the clearance from the second row so those passengers can recline.

And when the third row is upright, there’s still enough cargo space behind it for a stroller or sports equipment. In addition to the third-row seat, customers also have more options for the second row.

They can get a seven-passenger RX with a bench seat for three passengers. A one-touch lever folds and slides the second row to allow access to the third row.

Or, if they prefer, they can accommodate six passengers with second-row captain’s chairs allowing for easy access to the third row from inside the RX.

This interior room and functionality are achieved while retaining the RX’s distinctively sleek design. In addition to choosing a six- or seven-passenger configuration, customers may also select their powertrain.
The very first luxury hybrid was the 2006 RX 400h and now Lexus holds 40% of the US luxury hybrid market. To continue our leadership, the three-row RX will be available with a powerful hybrid V6 engine.

The hybrid version RX 450hL will go on sale in the US next spring and will come with standard captain’s chairs

in the second row. Pricing for that model will be released closer to the on-sale date.

However, the RX 350L will be in dealerships shortly and today we're happy to announce that it will start at $47,670.

Joining us today is Chief Engineer Kato who is responsible for the three-row RX. Kato-san, please stand.

So, just as RX owners have asked us for a third-row RX to accommodate more passengers, some of our LX premium luxury owners have asked us for more cargo space. Those who are empty nesters or have lots of gear to haul tell us they don't always need the third row of seating. So now we will be adding a new 2-row LX to our line-up.

It provides 15% more cargo space for a total of 50.5 cubic feet. Like the three-row model, it will have a 5.7-liter V8 engine and a towing capacity of 7,000 lbs., full off-road capability and a long list of luxury amenities.

However, this model will be offered in a mono-spec configuration with standard features, including a leather-trimmed interior, four-zone automatic climate control, power tailgate, moonroof and 20-inch wheels. It will carry a price of $84,980 which is approximately $12,500 less than the typically equipped three-row LX.

The LX two-row is arriving in December, and our dealers are excited to have yet another premium SUV in their showrooms.

We hear loud and clear from our Lexus guests that they love their luxury utility vehicles. In fact, about 65 percent of all the vehicles we sell are variations of the LX, GX, RX and NX.

When you include our F SPORT and hybrid models, we'll soon be offering more than a dozen variations of our luxury utility vehicles to cover the market from top to bottom and that count doesn't even include our front-wheel drive variants.

We will be introducing our customers to our new Luxury Utility Vehicles, sedans and coupes through lifestyle events. Lexus has high-profile involvement in culinary, golf, cycling, luxury hotel partnerships and motorsports events so we can connect with our customers through their passions.

Whether it's a beautiful luxury coupe like the Inspiration Series LC, a third row in the RX or more cargo room in the LX, we'll never stop listening to our Lexus guests to keep it personal and Experience Amazing.

Thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

Now, I'd like to invite the media up for photos. We also have a cut away that demonstrates the three-row versatility and we'd like to welcome all guests to join us to see these vehicles up close and personal.