

2016 North American International Auto Show (NAIAS) - Lexus LC 500 Reveal, Akio Toyoda

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As prepared for:

2016 North American International Auto Show
Lexus LC 500 Reveal
Detroit, Mich., Monday, Jan. 11, 2016
Akio Toyoda, Lexus Chief Branding Officer
Toyota Motor Corporation President

Good afternoon and thank you for joining us!

This is my first time speaking at a Lexus Press Conference here in Detroit.

Hopefully my English will be ok for you.

I'm told I have a slight accent ... you know ...kind of like Sophia Ver-gara.

But the one language I do speak fluently ... is car.

I really do love cars!

Always have.

Always will.

In fact ... when I was a little boy I wanted to grow up to be a taxi driver.

Instead ... I'm doing this!

But it's why I trained to become a master test driver as you saw in the video.

I don't want to sit behind a desk ... I want to sit behind the wheel ... because that's how I can best advise my team.

That's how I can help create cars for people who love them as passionately as I do.

And that's why I take a hands on role in producing the cars you have seen recently from Lexus ... and will see today.

But in many ways ... all of you ... have also had a direct role in creating these cars.

It's true!

Perhaps some of you will recall the talk we had at Pebble Beach in 2011?

You had some very good questions ...and candid comments ...for me about Lexus!

I actually happen to have a few with me ...

Here's a good one ...

“My impression is that Lexus cars are well made but boring to drive.”

Here's another ...

“Lexus should clearly define their brand”

And finally ...

“Lexus is at a crossroads.”

Those were some strong opinions!

And honestly ... I want to thank you for them ... because I really took them to heart.

I was determined to make sure we became a more emotional brand ... and that the words ...boring and Lexus ... never showed up in the same sentence again!

So it was just after Pebble Beach ... that I decided to take direct responsibility for the brand. I also decided to form Lexus International ...as an independent company ... a company that would be ...more imaginative ...with its own ...

- design,
- engineering,
- and marketing resources.

Since then ... we've introduced many exciting new cars and emotional concepts.

4 years later ... I can confidently say that this is a brave new Lexus ... with a new commitment to amazing products and experiences.

We don't want to make cars to simply fill a category ... we want to make cars to fill people's hearts.

Cars that are exhilarating in every way ... inside ... outside ... and under the hood.

We also want to make cars that push the limits of technology ...

Cars that help improve the world we live in.

Today ... I am pleased to introduce ... for the first time ...here in North America ...the Lexus LF-FC concept... the luxury fuel cell sedan of the future.

Building on our proven fuel cell technology... with this Lexus concept ...we hope to achieve a total of ... zero.

That's right ... zero. Zero emissions ...Zero dependence on oil.

And with its advanced automated driving features ... our long-term goal is to reduce accidents to zero.

All this ... with zero compromise on performance and design.

In fact ... our commitment is to have a fuel cell car in the Lexus lineup around 2020.

So if that's our view of tomorrow ... what about today?

In 2012 ... we debuted the LF-LC concept right here in Detroit.

And again ... many of you had strong opinions ... but this time ... thankfully ... they were good ones!

When we designed the LF-LC concept ... it was to showcase the future Lexus design ...we had no intention of turning it into a production car... but your positive reaction... as well as the reaction of our customers

...changed our minds.

We listened ... and we made it real.

The car I'm about to show you is the result of the combined passion of our engineers and designers ...who worked together to turn the LF-LC into reality.

As you know ... engineers and designers... they don't always get along ... but this project was completely different.

Everyone ... engineers included ... wanted to make this car as close as possible to the design concept ...with the most dynamic driving performance since LFA.

Thanks to Chief Engineer Sato ...and Chief Designer Mori...the teams worked as one... and what they created is truly amazing.

Ladies and gentlemen ... introducing the all new ... Lexus LC 500.

Ladies and Gentlemen...this LC 500 is what a more emotional Lexus looks like to me ... and it's also what it sounds like... and I hope you will agree... that it is anything ... but boring!

It will arrive in showrooms next year ... and having driven this car many times during prototype testing ... I can personally assure you ... it is very sugoi ...or as you say here in the states... awesome!

So once again ... thank you ...for your time and your input ... and for helping us make the Lexus brand ...that I personally love so much ...everything it can ... and will be!

Toyoda might be my last name ... but believe me ... Lexus is my middle name!

And this ... Ladies and Gentlemen ... is just the beginning.

Thank you very much!