

From Origin to Eminence: A Lexus Retrospective

September 04, 2019

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When researchers for the Flagship One (F1) project fanned out to conduct market research in May 1985, launching a new luxury brand was not on the team's radar.

The goal of F1 was simple, if not humble: Build the world's greatest vehicle. Designers on the project huddled together on the U.S. West Coast, taking in the briny air of Laguna Beach, California, while observing the lavish lifestyle of the locals. At the same time, F1 engineers were conducting prototype testing across the globe. They were looking for the best in automotive excellence — and how to do it better.

When the teams reconnected, they shared with each other what they had just experienced: luxury and peak performance. The teams concluded they would need a new brand, a new sales stream and a new identity for the luxury sedan.

Today, Lexus celebrates 10 million vehicles sold globally. And, it all started with a simple idea and a trip overseas.