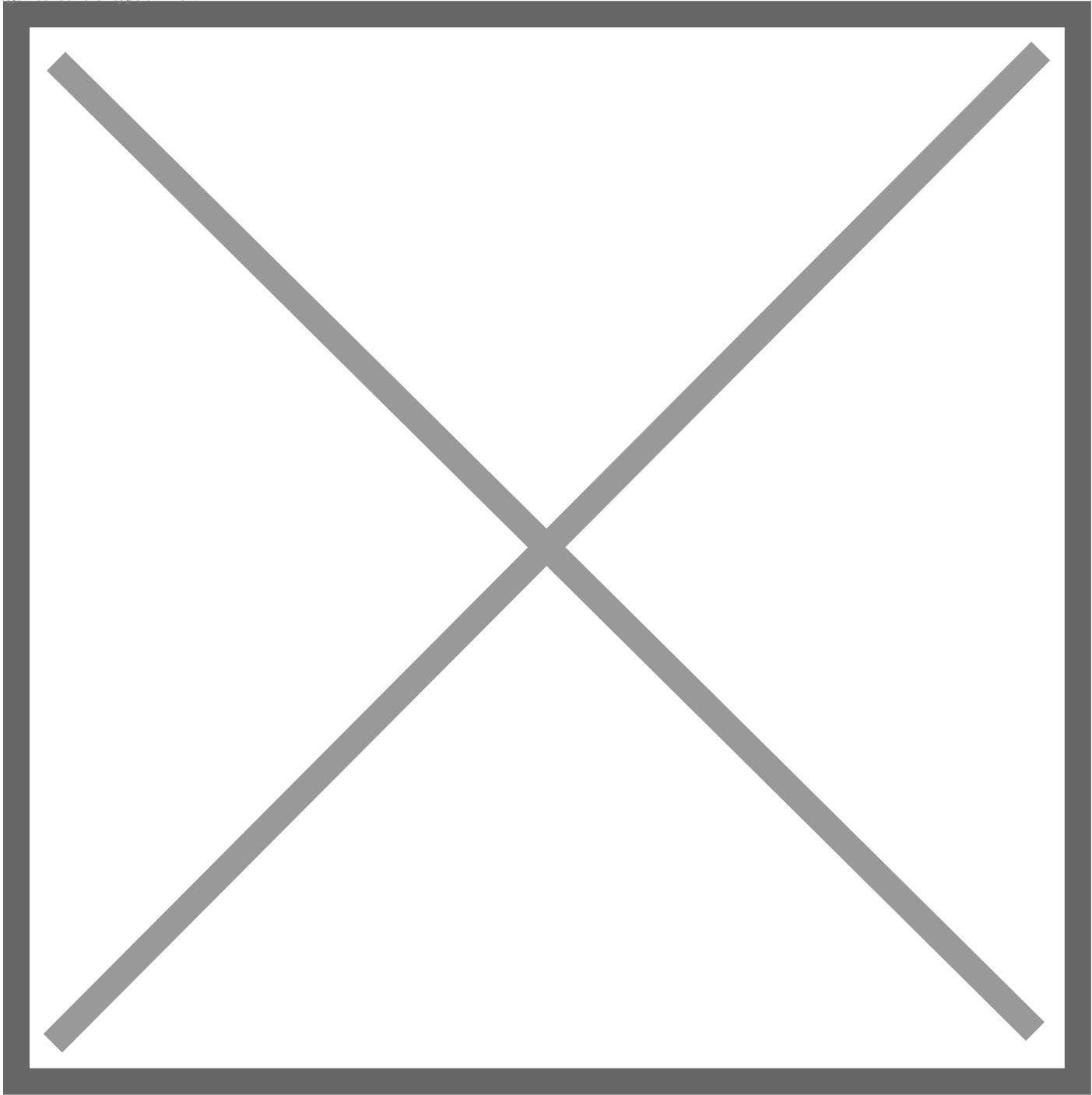


# Where Passion Meets Precision: A Collaborative Art of Toyota's Service Parts and Accessories Department

August 26, 2026

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These offerings include overlay badges, emblems, and body side moldings that elevate a vehicle's appearance; illuminated door sills, auxiliary light bars, and fog lights that blend style with functionality; and roof racks, cargo organizers, floor mats, and coolers that add convenience to every journey.

Each accessory is designed with a purpose—whether that means adding utility, protection, convenience, style, or a more engaging driving experience.

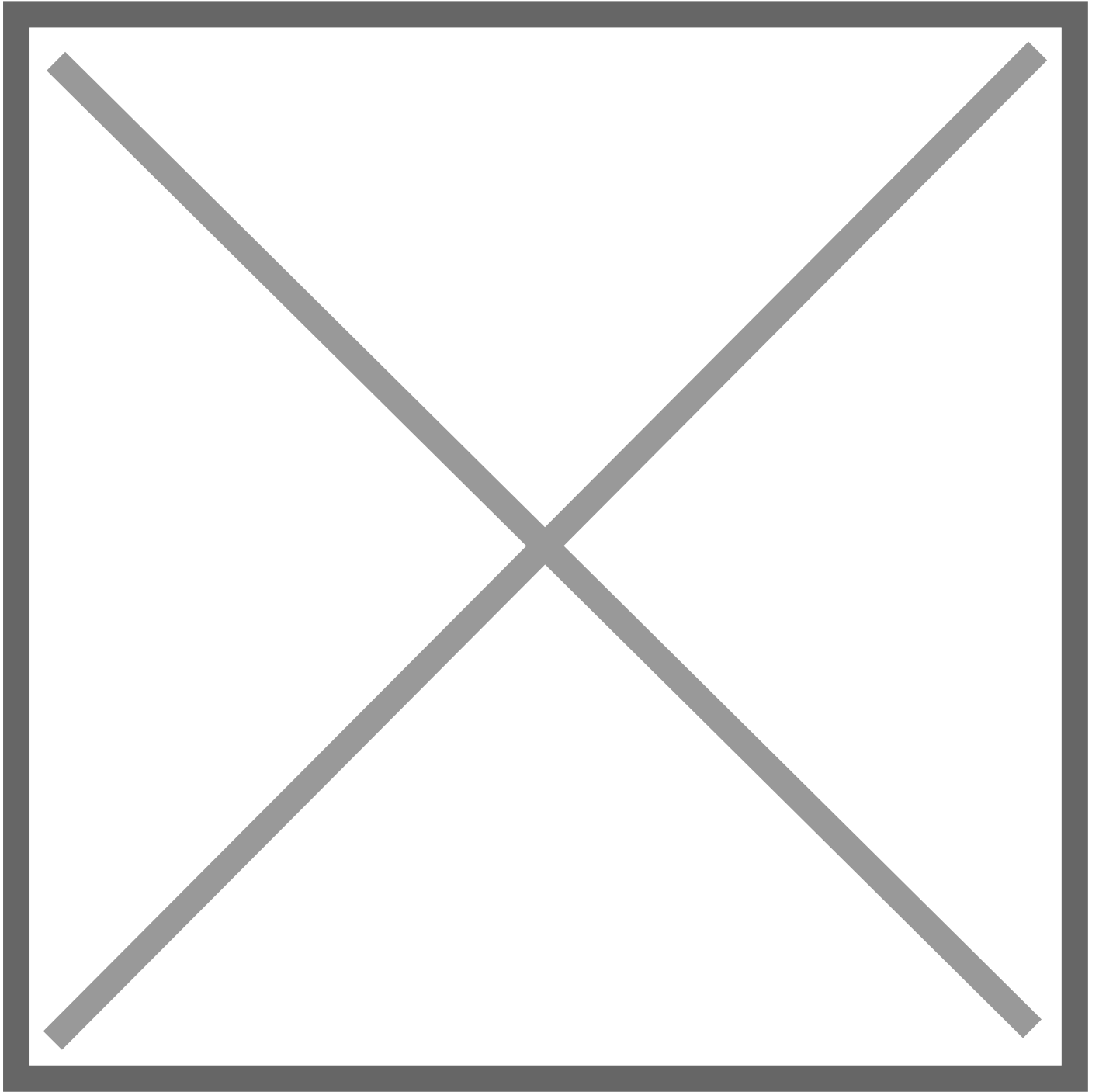
And while these products are designed to enhance and personalize the vehicle, they are developed with the same commitment to quality, durability, and customer-focused engineering that Toyota and Lexus owners have come to expect.

Among the many products developed by SPAD are accessories that directly influence how a vehicle looks, feels, and performs on the road.

Wheels can transform a vehicle's appearance, suspension upgrades can refine its stance and driving dynamics, and performance-focused enhancements can further strengthen the connection between driver and machine.

Bringing these genuine accessories to life requires a unique blend of planning, program management, engineering expertise with a quality mindset, creativity, and a passion for vehicle customization.

From what fuels their inspiration to a look inside their day-to-day roles, several members of SPAD's Performance team and Wheel/Underbody/ Powertrain team share what it takes to develop accessories that help Toyota and Lexus customers make their vehicles uniquely their own.

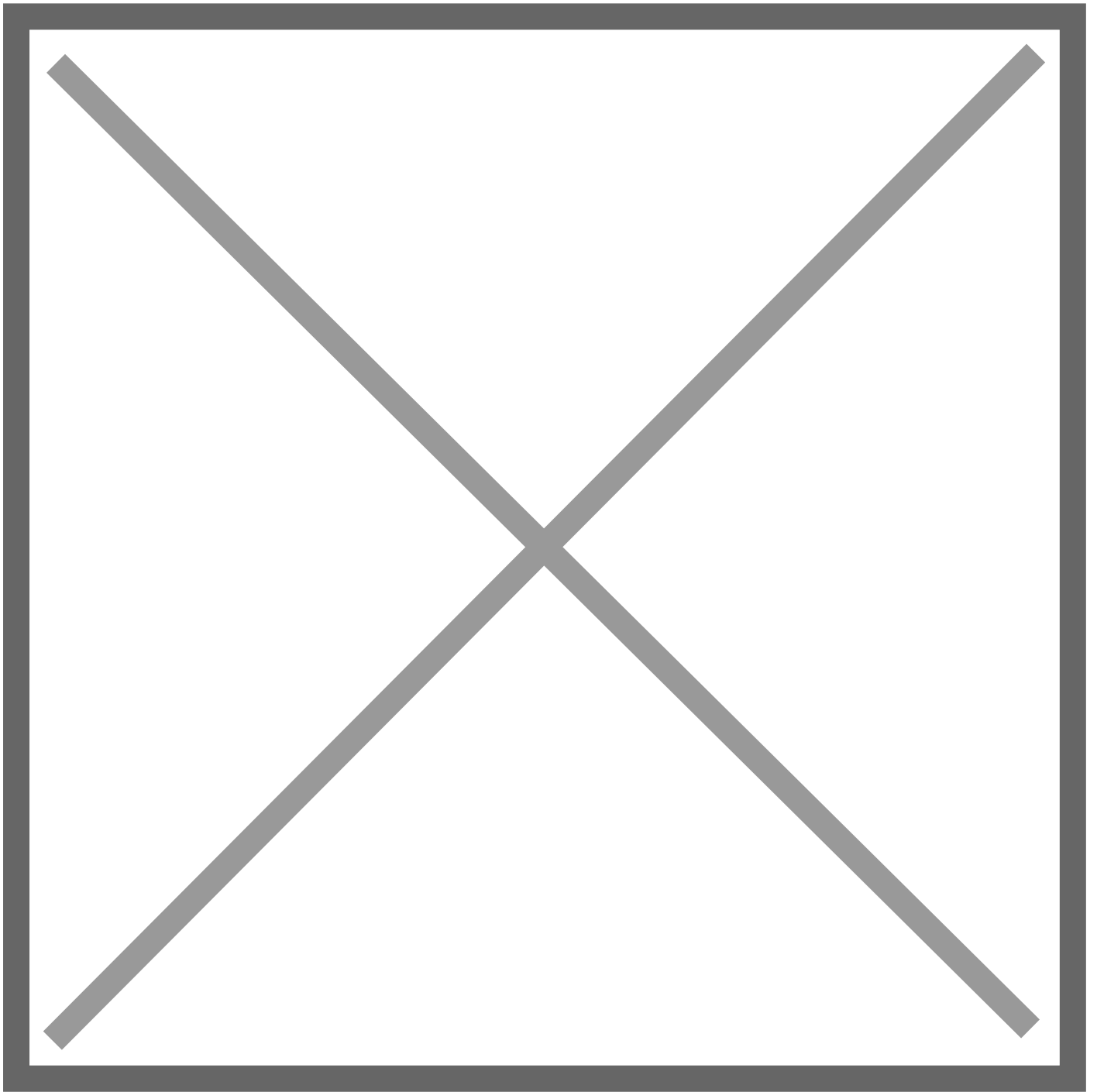


*\*Off-roading is inherently dangerous. Abusive use may result in personal injury or vehicle damage.*

### **Driving Forces Behind the Passion**

Long before Mikhal el Arculli joined Toyota as a principal engineer, he identified as a car enthusiast.

“I’ve been a ‘gearhead’ all my life and I used to be able to recite all the car brand names to my grandfather when I was a child,” he says. “I’ve always known that I wanted to work on cars and be in the automotive industry.”

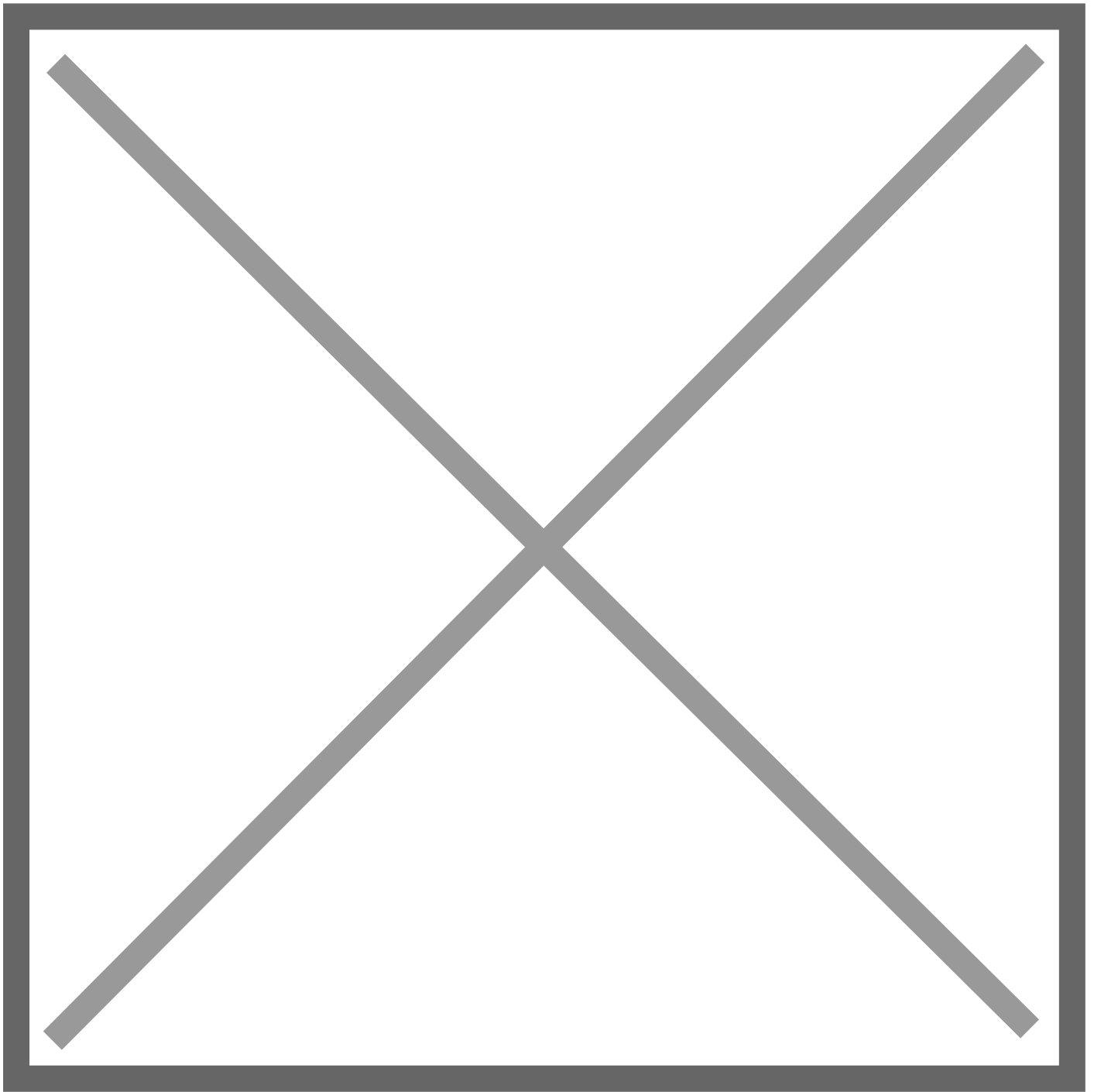


That same passion was also felt at an early age for Jack Ferguson, a development engineering manager at Toyota who focuses on suspension.

“I grew up a gearhead thanks to my grandfather and great uncle,” he says. “In college, I was lucky enough to land an engineering co-op learning opportunity with Toyota Motor Manufacturing Indiana.”

After working on the second-generation Toyota Tundra and Sequoia for launch, Ferguson joined Toyota Motor Engineering & Manufacturing North America’s (TEMA) post-grad rotation program. He’s been with the

company ever since, building his career across various product development and new-model engineering roles.



### **Custom Matters**

Thanks to experienced and new SPAD talent, drivers who crave customization and souped-up options are in luck — as the team continues to deliver the ultimate personalized vehicles.

“In general, the appetite for high performance accessories has remained steady if not increased for items like body-on-frame trucks and SUVs,” says Jakin Wilson, a senior engineering manager at Toyota. “Coming out of

COVID, I believe there was a large pent-up demand for accessorizing vehicles, and the overland customization scene really grew significantly.”

Driven by the push for personalization, the SPAD team is expanding its customization options. Wilson added, “A great example is our line-up of world class styling accessory wheels.”

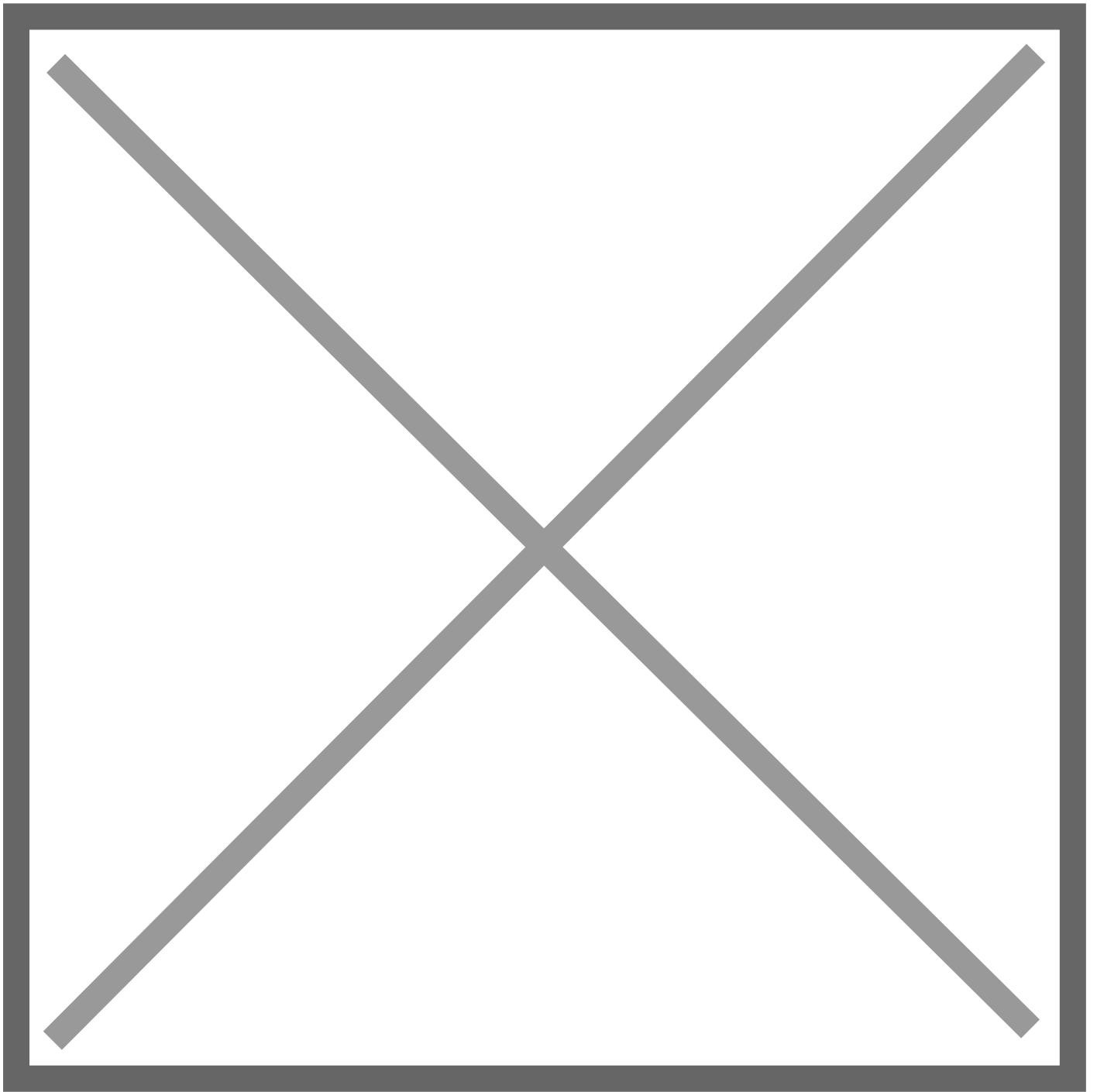


For Jacob Herget, a principal engineer specializing in wheel, underbody and recovery hook products, his background and knowledge of Toyota In- House design has been instrumental in how he approaches the development of accessories.

“My beginnings, like many other members in SPAD, stem from R&D (Toyota Motor North America Research & Development) and other parts of the auto industry,” Herget said. “I spent 6 years at R&D that shaped me into the engineer I am today, and taking those learnings and applying them to accessory development makes the job fun every day. I think the most exciting part of making accessories, is that they touch every vehicle sold in this country and we have the opportunity to work on every part of the vehicle.”

“I believe our customers continue to make it clear that accessories are an important part of considering what vehicle to purchase. This means that these parts will only continue to grow in demand over time. It is my role as well as the other principal engineer’s roles to ensure that SPAD is ready to meet the customer’s demand for more exciting accessories, through team member development, process improvement, and collaboration with different parts of Toyota, to ensure our success,” he added.



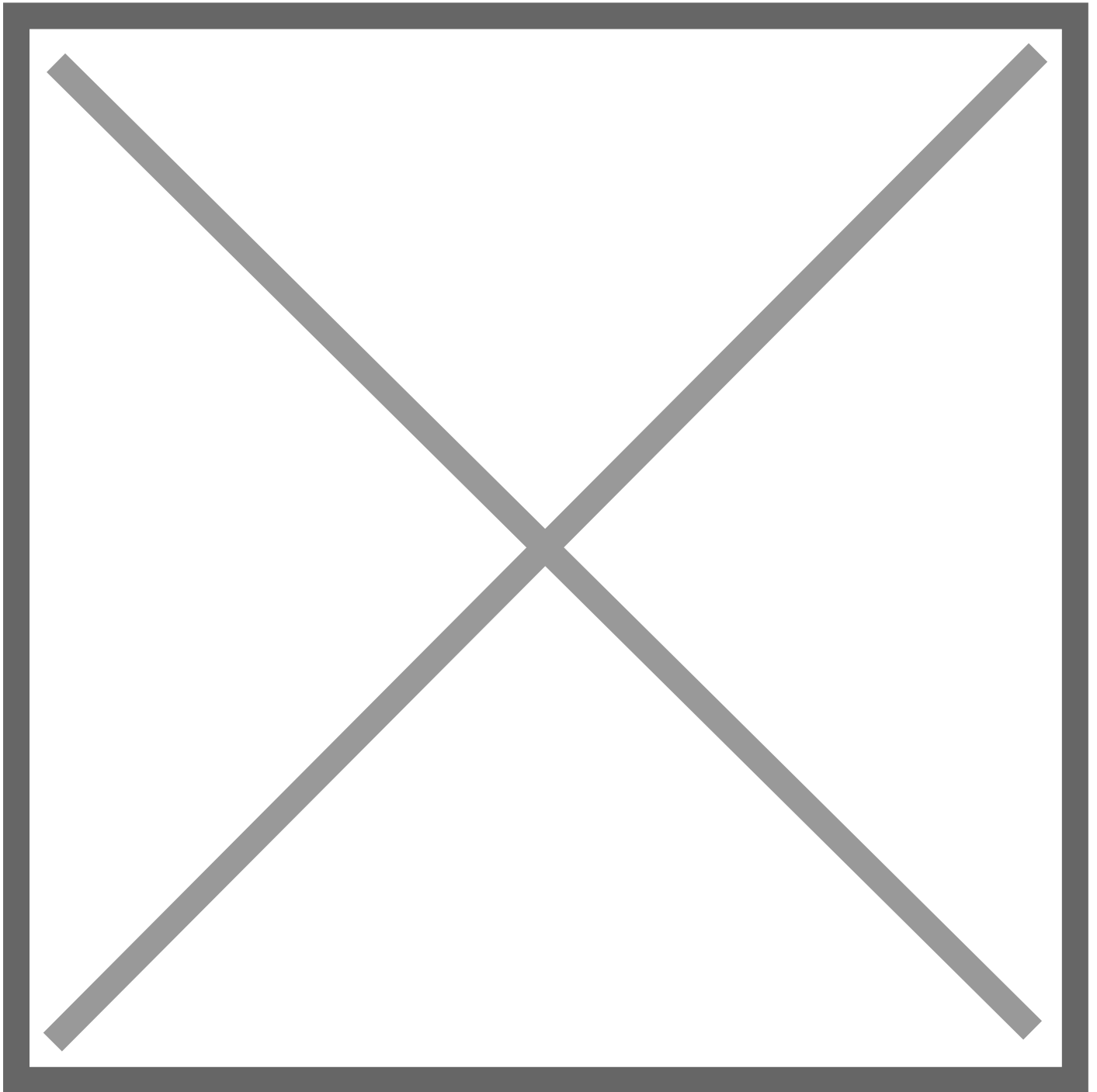


### **Crafting Tomorrow, Every Day**

Bringing these customizations to life is a daily masterclass in deep research, rigorous testing and sharp problem-solving.

For Sophia Butsumyo, a product development engineer, who primarily works on wheel assembly items, it's been a dream come true.

“I do a mix of vehicle studies, computer-aided design (CAD), and physical work like fit checks and on vehicle evaluations,” she says. “I have always wanted to be an engineer, so working in this field means the world to me.”



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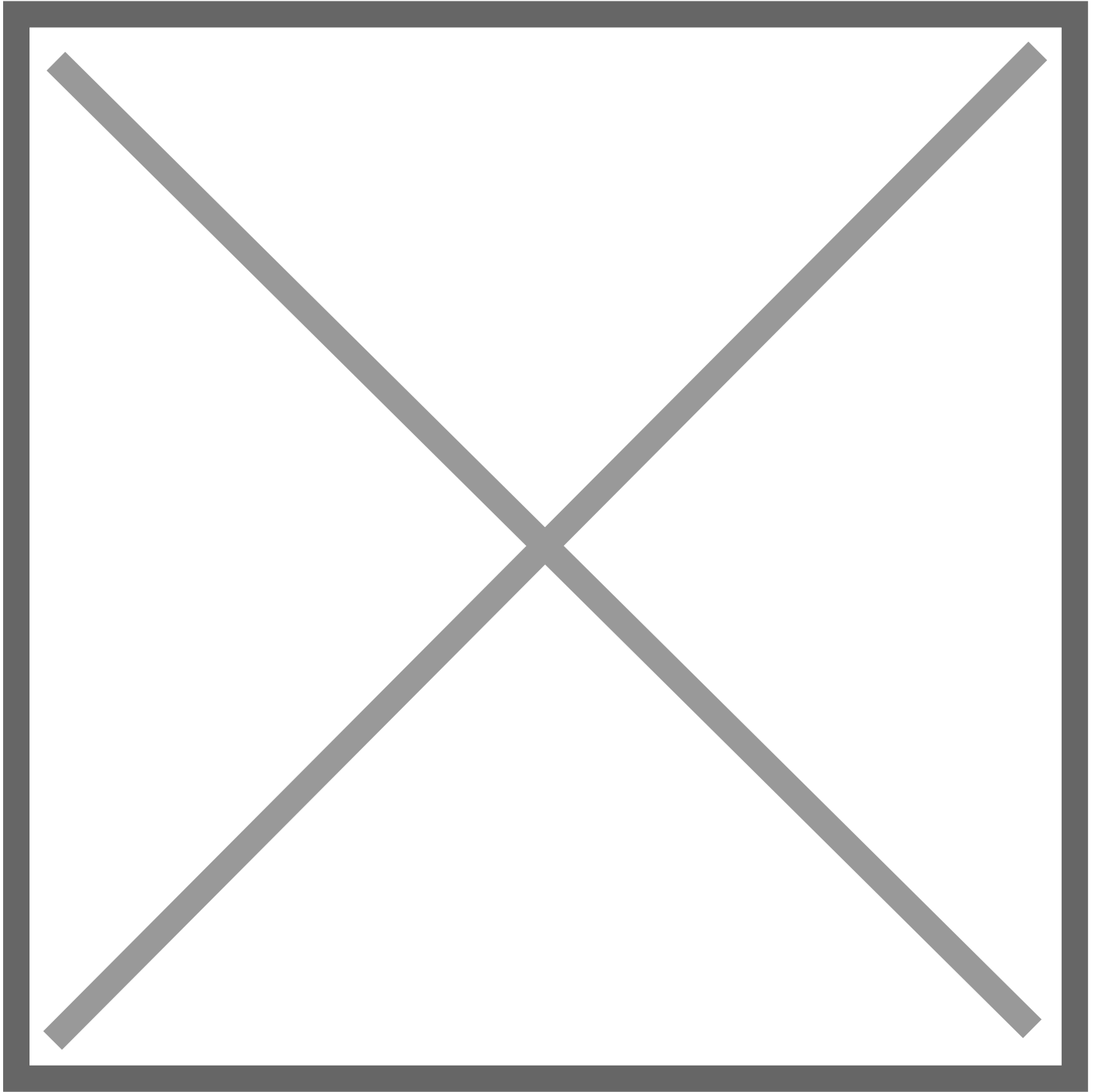
Torry Walker, a SPAD manager, shares Butsumyo’s enthusiasm. He and his team are responsible for shaping the customer experience through developing the accessories, styling enhancements, and performance parts that

drivers interact with every time they step inside a specially equipped Toyota or Lexus.

“The components I manage include intakes, exhaust systems, underbody protection, wheels and tires,” he says. “On any given day, my responsibilities can include proposing new accessories, contributing to design choices, and developing both short- and long-term implementation strategies to support the customer voice and market trends.”

“It’s a unique position. Due to the scale and volume of vehicles impacted across two major brands under the Toyota umbrella. That breadth of influence is one of the aspects I enjoy most about the role,” Walker says.

Drawing on experience gained through roles at Toyota R&D, as well as a previous overseas assignment working at Toyota’s technical center in Japan, Walker leverages a global network and cross-functional perspective as SPAD expands accessory offerings and explores new ways to meet customer needs.

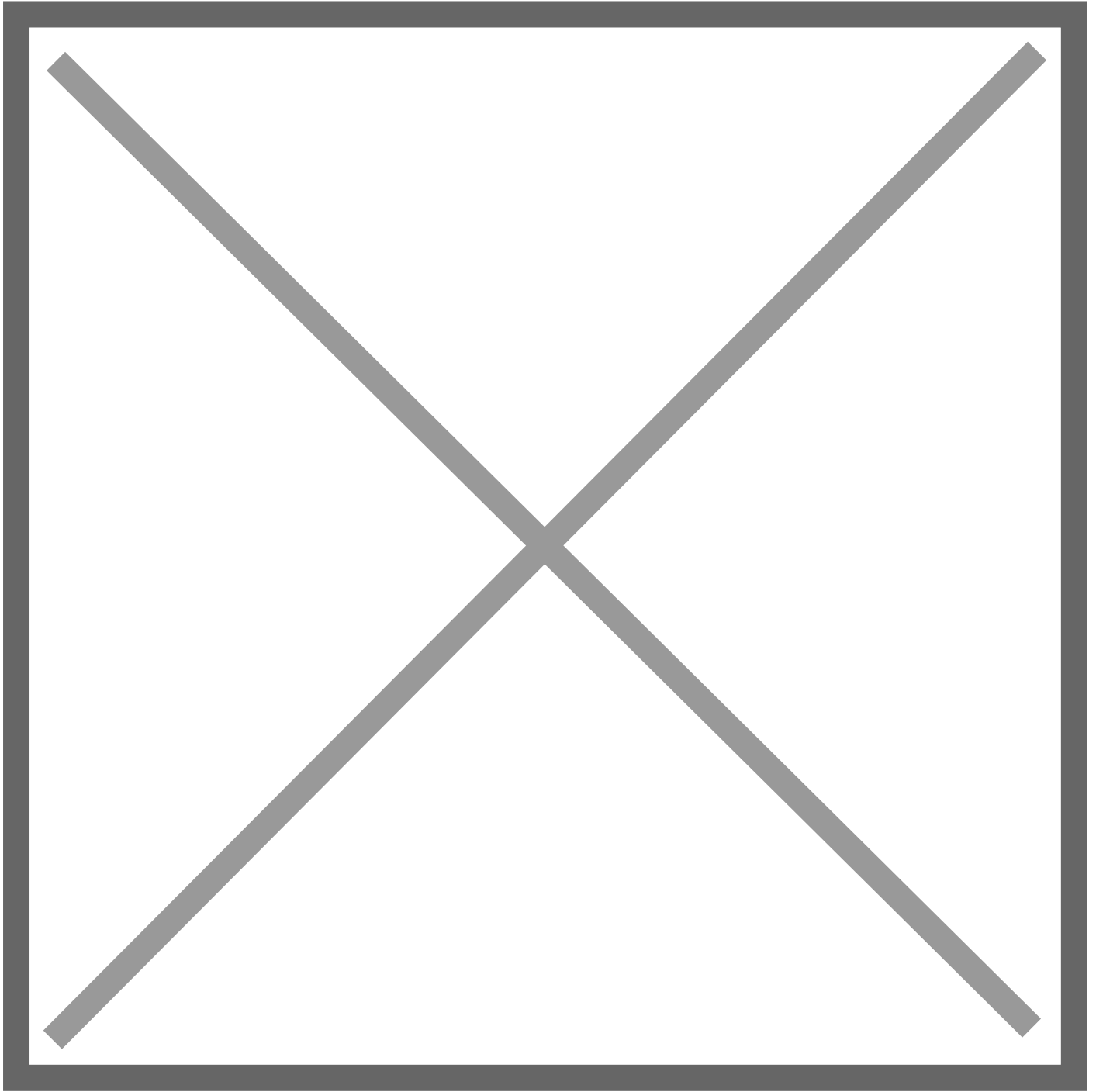


*\*One-off prototype for SEMA auto show.*

### **Assembled for Success**

Behind every great vehicle is a team that works well together. For the SPAD crew, collaboration is the ultimate horsepower. By uniting a variety of specialties under one roof, they work in perfect lockstep to turn ideas into high-quality vehicles that some customers value and love to drive.

“Having these teams under one roof allows us to work together and make the final result more than the sum of its parts,” Ferguson says. “For instance, when developing the TRD Pros over the last decade, we could coordinate suspension tuning with upcoming wheel styling changes. So, it’s been really nice to be able to leverage the combined effect of both when we have that opportunity.”

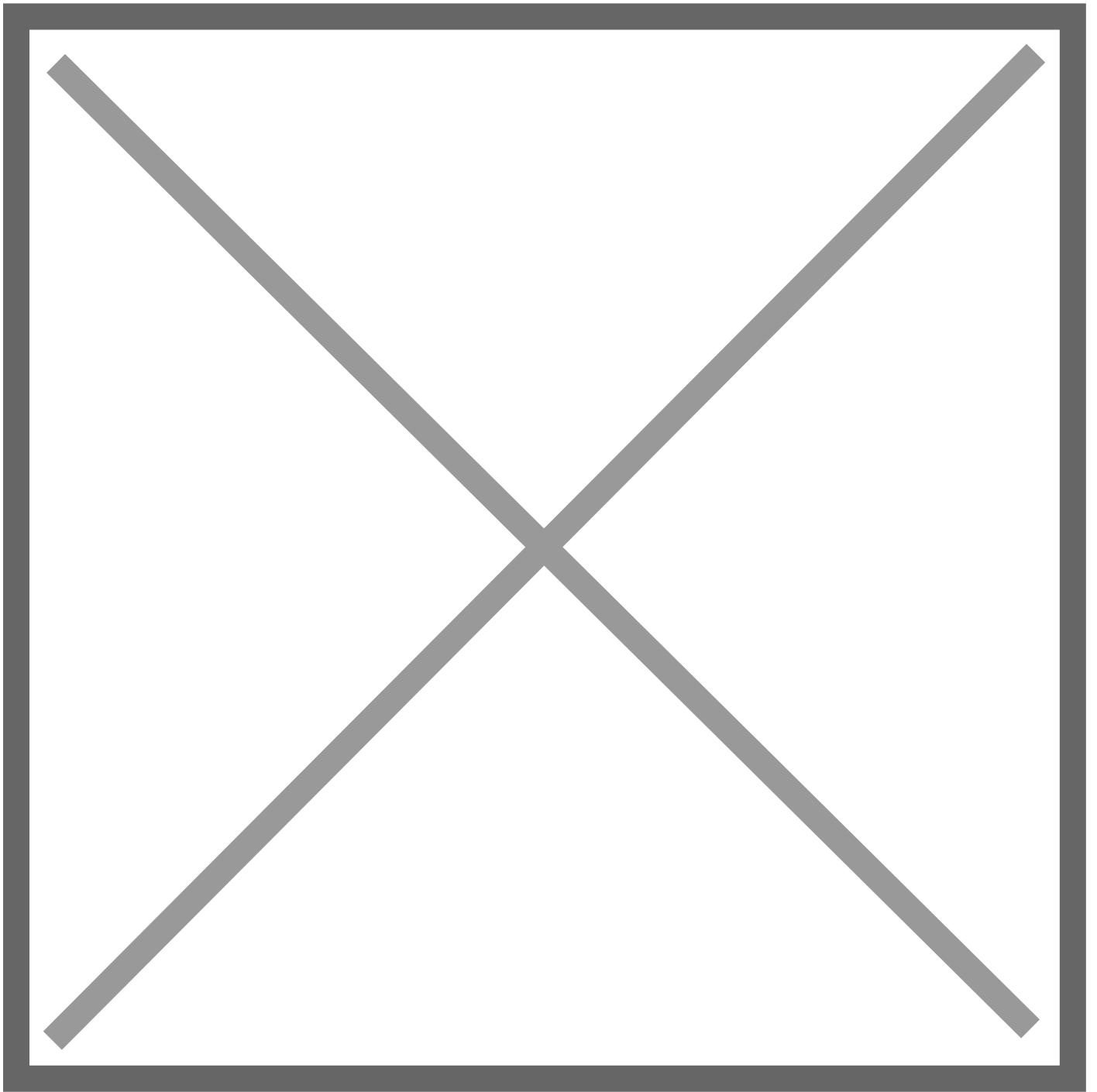


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Toyota senior engineer Alberto Echazabal has been working in the automotive field since the late 1980s. As a specialist in wheels, he agrees.

“The wheel can impact in many ways,” Echazabal says. “For example, if a wheel is too heavy and lacks proper suspension damping, its mass overworks the suspension. This leads to a loss of traction, poor ride comfort and degraded body control.”

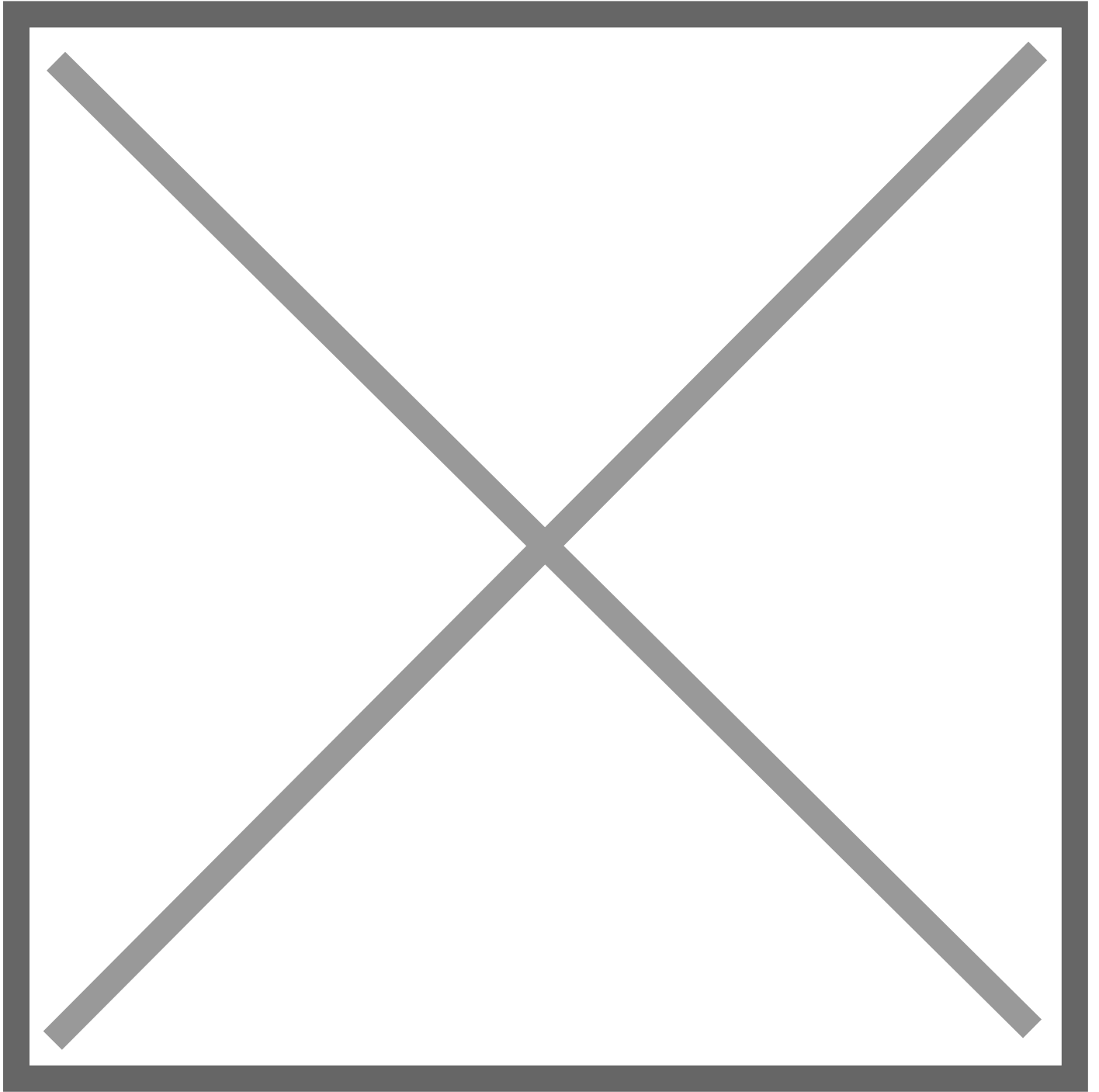
“We must work together to make those two become one system, and they have to then complement each other and meet those targets,” he adds.



### **Rewarding Roads**

The ultimate proof of SPAD's teamwork comes when their customized vehicles hit the road. For the team, there is nothing more gratifying than seeing their finished product.

For Butsumyo, getting the opportunity to work on a vehicle while still early in her career was a memorable experience. "I was lucky enough to be a part of the development of our 2024 SEMA RAV-X concept vehicle," she says. "That was exciting because there was a lot of iteration that happened in such a short period of time."



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Wilson echoes the pride and happiness that comes with the work.

“We’re enthusiasts, and we’re developing parts for enthusiasts,” he says. “So, it brings such joy to come to work every single day and do the things that we want to do during our free time. That’s what makes this job so rewarding.”