LF-Ch Interactive Case Study

Windows 7 Touch Software solution.

Client: Lexus

Requirements
Our project brief was to join with the creative team to deliver a robust, technically innovative, interactive software application that would collect target market data for Lexus with regard to their 2009 hybrid concept car (LF-Ch)
The interactive software also needed to allow and encourage individuals to contribute to the creation of a worldwide Photosynth project based around their feedback regarding the LF-Ch.

Lexus wanted the means to connect with the individuals of the car's potential target market. It also wanted to create a sense of community involvement with the vehicle's ongoing evolution from concept car through to production vehicle.
With hundreds of thousands of visitors expected to visit and explore the interactive piece, the software and hardware needed to be robust.

The vehicle's target market was identified as socially conscious, tech savvy 18-30 year olds. The exhibition piece, of which the software was an integral factor, needed to appeal to and impress the target market. It also needed to demonstrate the values of the concept vehicle.

Unveiled as a concept vehicle at all major car shows across Europe and the United States of America, the car was planned as a production vehicle for release in 2010 and is now known as the C200-T.

The Solution
Various options were considered, including Microsoft Surface and Windows 7 PCs. Ultimately, simple touch screens were selected to display the Windows 7 Touch software that would show off the magic of the LF-Ch.

The interactive software had to show off the car's features and lines, and provide simple rewards for supply of key information. Lexus was specifically looking to capture the email addresses of the LA Car Show attendees, and production car colour preferences.

For the simple act of providing their email addresses, Lexus exhibit visitors could use the cameras to take photos of their favourite parts of the car to contribute to the LF-Ch Photosynth. Those same photos could be sent to the visitors' email and Facebook accounts, ready for use as 'bragging' rights by those same visitors, and of course, valuable marketing tools for Lexus.
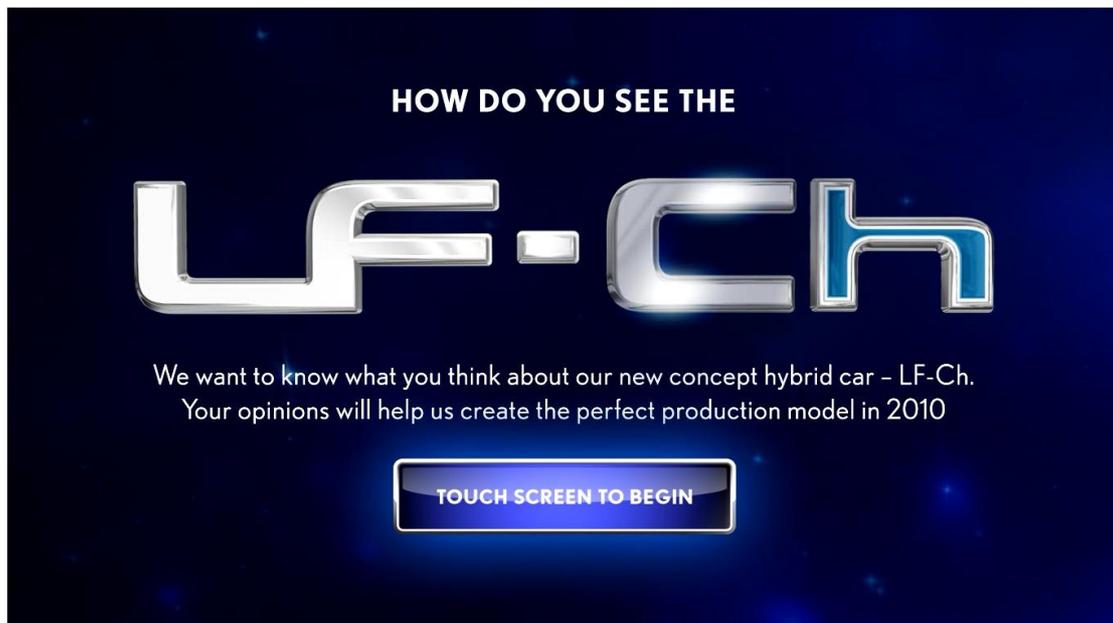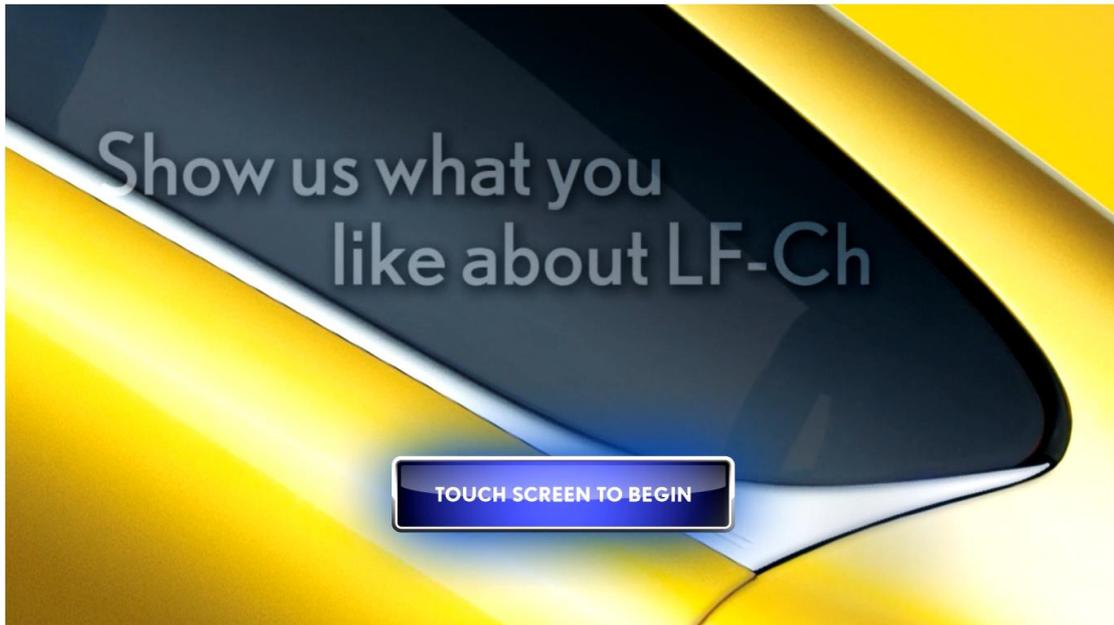
Interactive Stations
Three x 32-inch touch screen monitors were stationed around the revolving stage of the exhibit. Each 32-inch monitor was connected to a local PC and a digital camera. The monitors were mounted on pedestals that housed all required cabling, and each camera was mounted inside tamper-proof housing on a pedestal.

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Each of the local PCs was housed in a robust unit that allowed appropriate ventilation for each machine, and was also connected to the exhibit server for data storage, moderation, and upload to the Photosynth.


While on 'standby', each station played a video loop that highlighted the vehicle's visual and practical features. An onscreen button on the screen glinted at specified intervals to attract visitors to interact with the screen.

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Once the onscreen button was touched, the interactive application opened. With the use of simple graphics, it demonstrated that visitors should take their favourite photos of the vehicle on a rotating stage in front of the strategically placed cameras. The photos taken would be used to create a world-wide Photosynth of the Lexus LF-Ch.
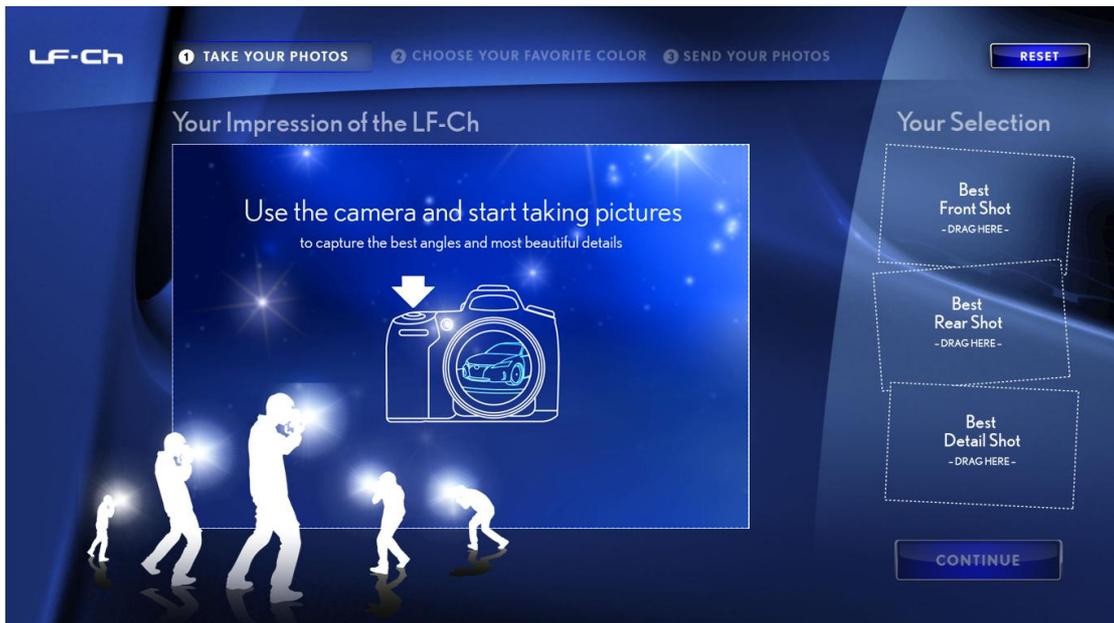
Photos that were taken were displayed on the screen, and the visitor was prompted to choose his or her favourite three photos. Visitors could first explore the photos (zoom, drag and drop functions were enabled), and were then prompted to select three favourite photos from the collection they had created.

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To identify the three favourite photos, visitors simply needed to drag and drop each one onto the predefined area of the screen before touching the onscreen "Continue" button. At this point the application saved the selected photos on the Photosynth server and deleted all other photos taken.

The following screen showed Visitors the selected photos that would be contributed to the Photosynth and asked what their favourite car colour for the LF-Ch was.

This screen shows the red car selected, and the visitor's three favourite shots.

Touching the "Continue" button took the visitor to a screen that prompted them to email their photos to themselves, before taking a look at the Photosynth display tables close by.
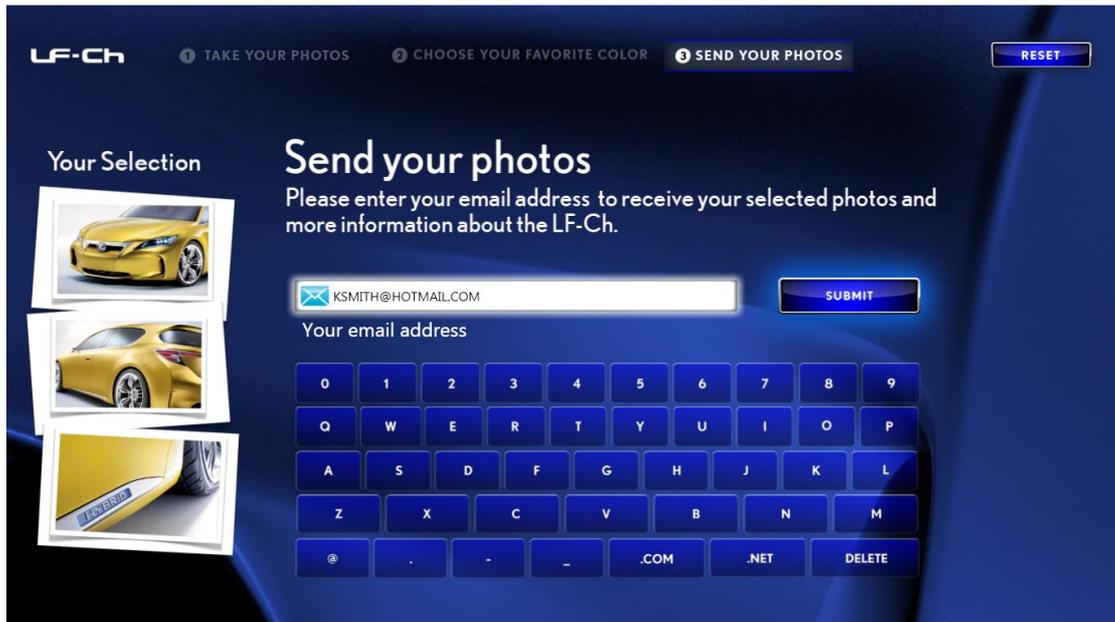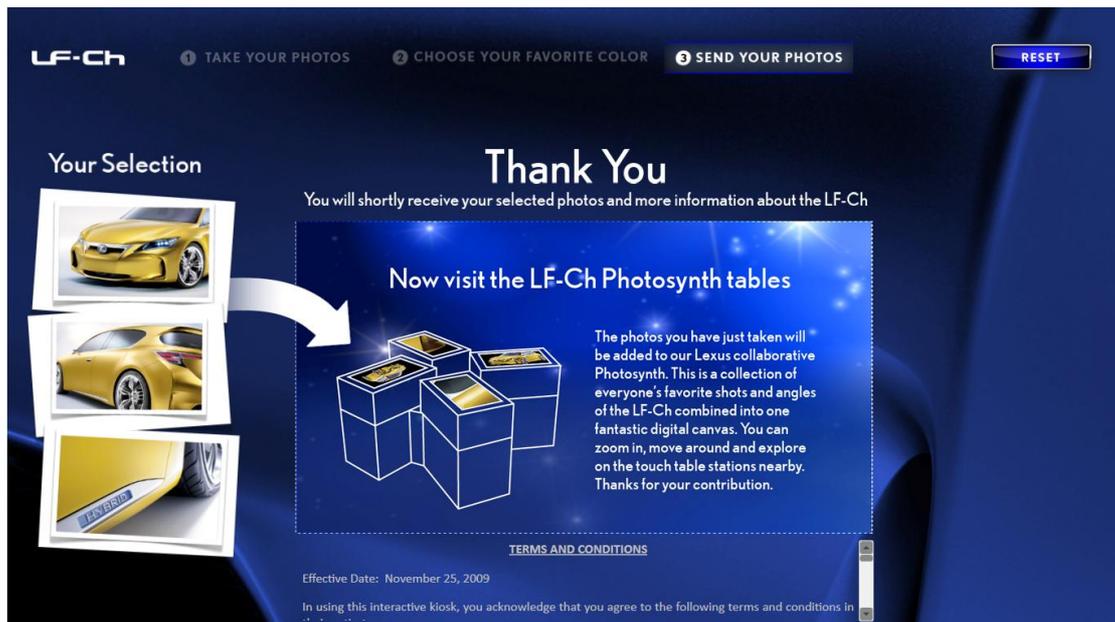
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Exhibit visitors were directed to the Photosynth tables after sending their photos to themselves. The Photosynth tables showed not only the current LF-Ch Photosynth, but also gave more information regarding the car's hybrid status and company's green policies.

Outcomes

The stations were interacted with by hundreds of thousands of visitors over the lifetime of each of the 5 major car shows across the United States of America in late 2009 – Early 2010.

The software stood up to our high standards and those of the client: it operated without fault or failure for the entire gamut of shows, and required no support during that time frame.

The Client has been very tight-lipped with regards to sharing of data collected, other than to report that they received much better engagement than they had expected to.

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The Client also believed that the affinity created with the car over the course of its display in the car shows across the United States would result in higher than expected initial sales figures as well as those over the longer term. The car is now in production and will be released later this year in Australia.

About nsquared

Touch based collaborative computing is one of the fastest growing areas of software and nsquared has been one of the pioneers in this field for the last three years. Director Dr. Neil Roodyn is the world's first Microsoft Surface Most Valuable Professional having trained over 100 Surface developers worldwide.

Get in touch for more information or to discuss how collaborative software solutions could help your business.

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March 2010.

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