

Ford Lets the Light Shine within Fusion Interior

by Gerald Scott
News Dept.

Ford Motor Co. has put some serious research into the science of using light and color in car interiors and that has manifested itself inside the Ford Fusion of late.

Two Ford experts – Interior Chief Designer Michael Arbaugh and Mahendra Dassanayake, Ford technical leader for design – gave a talk entitled, “The Science and Design of Lighting” at the Product Development Center in Dearborn recently.

They said that research shows that a person’s attention span is limited, and lighting can play a key role in providing a driver with critical and non-critical, driving-related information, all without diverting attention from the task at hand.

Lighting in a vehicle is about space and dimension, Dassanayake said.

“Lighting gives you a sense of orientation. It’s a unique combination of functionality and comfort. Lights, graphics and displays are critical to drivers; we need to make sure that information is presented to the customer in an effective way.”

In the case of the Fusion interior, developing the “ice blue” color in the ambient, or accent, lighting palette was critical, since it is a shade that can help keep drivers and passengers more alert.

This makes it easier for a driver to absorb all the other messages coming from inside the vehicle.

The same balance has been used to make sure that the ambient colors available in the Ford Fusion enhance the

driving experience.

Ford researchers have tested how the lighting affects the vehicle’s interior from the driver’s perspective, checking the textures and materials under a multitude of lighting conditions to make sure that glare and reflection are limited on smooth surfaces and that eye strain would be minimized.

Ford research further says that it all starts with how the brain recognizes light.

“The brain does not see color,” Dassanayake said. “What we call color of light is actually a form of electromagnetic energy with different wavelengths.”

“Light is like a pond, with ripples as the wavelengths. These ripples form and reflect and interact with each other, just like a ray hits a surface and sends a signal and then

another sends a signal, and the sensation between the two is what people perceive as blue or red or green.”

Certain levels of light actually trigger enzymes in the brain. Those enzymes then cause emotional responses within the body – states of being we recognize as stress or calmness or happiness.

Added Dassanayake, “The emotions are created based on the secretion of these enzymes that are associated with certain light wavelengths. There are certain triggers.”

So, it’s not your imagination – Ford research says color really can affect how you feel. In fact, it affects everything from your buying choices to your blood pressure.

On the Ford Fusion, the palette is ice blue, purple, blue, orange, red, white and green. The palette allows the



Fusion offers customer seven interior lighting options including ice blue, purple, blue, orange, red, white and green.

Ford used the 2013 Fusion as a test-bed for a series of color and neutral interior lighting tests. Ford research showed that interior lighting accents are an important car function.

customer to set and change each color, depending on wants and needs.

With a seven-color palette, customers have several options. “We’re opening this up to let the customer decide,” Dassanayake said. “It’s offering them a choice.”

Meanwhile, Chief Interior

Designer Arbaugh said that craftsmanship inside the Fusion is key.

Dynamic structural elements throughout, like the real metal grills over the speakers, show that every detail of the vehicle has been aesthetically enhanced. That’s how the car takes on its ‘glow.’

Bill Ford: ‘If We Do Nothing, We Face Global Gridlock’

BARCELONA, Spain – Ford Motor Co. Executive Chairman Bill Ford has outlined a plan for connected cars to help avoid a potential future of crippling congestion.

During his keynote address at the 2012 Mobile World Congress in Barcelona recently, Ford told delegates that the number of cars on the world’s roads is forecast to grow from 1 billion now to up to 4 billion by mid-century.

And he proposed that one way of avoiding the potentially global problem of an overcrowded road network is to create a global transportation network that utilizes communication between vehicles, transport infrastructure and individual mobile devices.

“If we do nothing, we face the prospect of ‘global gridlock,’ a never-ending traffic jam that wastes time, energy and resources and even compromises the flow of commerce and healthcare,” said Ford in a preview of Ford Motor Co.’s “Blueprint for Mobility.”

“The cooperation needed between the automotive and telecommunications industries will be greater than ever as we prepare for and manage the future. We will need to develop new technologies, as well as new ways of looking at the world.”

Ford went on to say, “No one company or industry will be able to solve the mobility issue alone and the speed at which solutions take hold will be determined largely by customer acceptance of new technologies.”

“The telecommunications industry is critical in the creation of an interconnected transportation system where cars are intelligent and can talk to one another as well as the infrastructure around them.

“Now is the time for us all to be looking at vehicles on the road the same way we look at smartphones, laptops and tablets; as pieces of a much bigger, richer network.”

Addressing Mobile World Congress delegates earlier in the day Ford Motor Co. also took the opportunity to announce that AppLink, a feature that delivers voice control of smartphone apps from the driver’s seat, is being introduced globally as part of the SYNC voice-control and in-car connectivity system.

In the spirit of cooperation outlined in the keynote address, Ford says, it plans to work closely with app developers around the world to provide the best services for Ford customers through AppLink. The automaker’s “Blueprint

for Mobility” will seek solutions for a problem that is already becoming a reality in expanding vehicle markets around the world.

Ford points out:

- In Sao Paulo, Brazil, traffic jams regularly exceed 100 miles and the average commute lasts between 2 and 3 hours a day. Despite this, car buying is growing at a rate of 7.5 percent annually.

- In China, the world’s longest period of gridlock was registered at 11 days during 2010.

- The problem is not restricted to emerging markets, either. For example, it is estimated that the cost of congestion to the economy in England through lost time will rise to around \$35 billion annually by 2025. In Germany, sustaining a town of 300,000 people is estimated to require 1,000 truck deliveries daily.

- Solving the issue of urban mobility is a huge challenge that will only be successful if government collaboration, infrastructure development and industry come together globally.

During his keynote address, Ford focused on the opportunities and challenges presented by expanding communication networks and increasing global demand for personal



Bill Ford

mobility and commercial transportation as he outlined his vision for a future transport network integrated with mobile communications.

And, as with the company’s “Blueprint for Sustainability,” which set near-, mid- and long-term goals for significant reductions in the company’s global environmental footprint, the “Blueprint for Mobility” defines the start of Ford’s thinking on what transportation will look like in 2025 and beyond, and the technologies, business models and partnerships needed to get there.

NASCAR’s Kenseth Enjoys New Fame

By CHRIS JENKINS
AP Sports Writer

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. (AP) – Maybe it’s his consistent approach on the track, or his low-key demeanor off it.

Whatever the reason, Matt Kenseth’s name usually isn’t the first to come up when people talk about current Sprint Cup Series drivers who might rank among the sport’s all-time greats.

But with Kenseth’s Daytona 500 victory last month, his racing resume is hard to ignore. When Kenseth’s career is over, a case can be made that he’ll be worthy of consideration for NASCAR’s Hall of Fame. Other drivers were louder, but he was successful.

Kenseth said he hasn’t put much thought into his place in the sport’s history. He’s just happy he got a chance.

“We’ve done a lot of things beyond my wildest dreams,” Kenseth said. “I never thought I’d get a chance to run in this series and run a Daytona 500, much less win one – or two. Certainly, I appreciate and enjoy the success I’ve had so far.”

Kenseth has won two Daytona 500s, a Cup Series championship in 2003, and has 22 career Cup race victories. He also has 26 career wins in NASCAR’s second-tier series, now known as Nationwide.

His defining characteristic as a driver always has been his consistency; in 437 career Cup starts, Kenseth has 210 top-10 finishes.

Given Kenseth’s career accomplishments – and his obvious ability to run up front as he nears his 40th birthday on March 10 – it seems odd that his Roush Fenway Racing team has not yet been able to find a full season’s worth of sponsorship for his No. 17 car.

The Daytona win might pay off in renewed sponsorship interest. But as far as Kenseth knew Wednesday, it hadn’t yet.

ly gets updates from the team’s sponsorship sales department but generally stays focused on racing.

“I think they have some inventory they’re trying to sell,” Kenseth said. “They give me some updates. But other than that, I kind of let the sales department do their thing, and try to do our thing from a performance standpoint.”

According to the team, Best

Buy has committed to sponsoring Kenseth in nine races this season, with Zest sponsoring an additional four races and Valvoline as the primary sponsor for one race.

Meanwhile, team co-owner Jack Roush is expected to run the No. 17 team for a full season regardless of the sponsorship situation, but Roush Fenway very much would like to sell the rest of the races available on Kenseth’s car.

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