

# Driving What's Next: CXD Engineers Help Shape the Future of Connected Cars

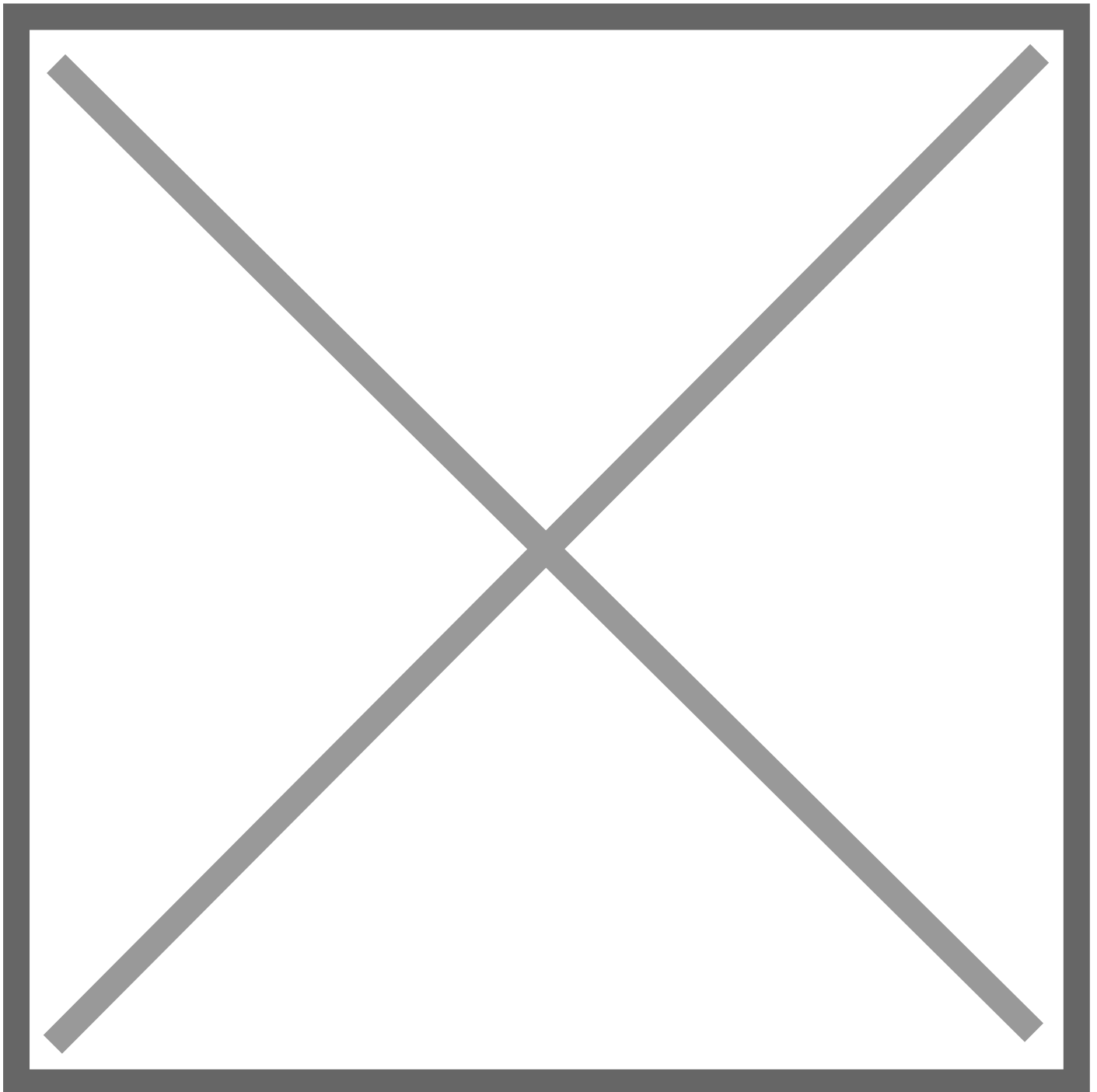
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Toyota Motor North America's Connected Experiences Division (CXD) is dedicated to crafting the ultimate connected experience for Toyota and Lexus drivers, bridging the gap between advanced in-car infotainment and essential remote app services. The team of 220 people works together to foster a culture of collaboration and innovation that helps our company deliver technology that makes every drive smarter, more convenient, and more enjoyable.

Here's a behind-the-scenes look at a few CXD team members whose talent and work reflect the future we're building for connected experiences:



Yusra El-Sharkawy's journey in the connected car industry has been as dynamic as the technology itself. She began at Daimler Chrysler (yes, back when that name was still around), working on the company's Uconnect multimedia platform. She later expanded her expertise at SiriusXM as a certification and vehicle system engineer.

Now, as a principal engineer within CXD, El-Sharkawy focuses on multimedia. She is the product owner of the Home Energy Management System (HEMS), pioneering innovations such as home energy products designed to enhance the battery electric vehicle (BEV) ownership experience and unlock new value for customers. In addition to HEMS, she has played a key role in launching two exciting new features in the latest-generation Toyota Audio Multimedia system: Drive Recorder and EV Domain.

El-Sharkawy takes great pride in her work, knowing it helps increase the value of Toyota and Lexus' products and strengthens our company's competitive edge in the industry.

"It's incredibly rewarding to share my engineering knowledge and experiences to help solve challenges and drive innovation," she said.



James Evans bought his first car at age 14. It was a 5-speed manual, rear-wheel-drive 1986 Toyota Corolla GT-S hatchback (AE86) with a rebuilt title. He spent hours tuning it up, replacing parts and painting it an official Carbon Blue Mica.

“Sadly, I totaled the car, which was a learning experience,” he said. “But working on it ignited my passion for automotive and my dream of becoming an engineer for Toyota.”

Evans started as a technician at Toyota dealerships, eventually earning his ASE master technician certification and completing an associate's degree in automotive technology with specialized training through Toyota's T-TEN program. Later, he completed a master's degree in electrical engineering, including a few internships at Toyota Kentucky and the Toyota Technical Center. In his current role as a senior engineer, Evans works on the design and development of truck and towing features in Toyota Audio Multimedia and Lexus Interface.

Evans takes complex concepts and turns them into intuitive, innovative solutions. He does this through hands-on driving experience, benchmarking competitor vehicles, writing technical specifications, reviewing and revising designs to improve usability, validating software and collaborating with other teams to bring multimedia solutions to market.

“My favorite thing about being an engineer at Toyota is having an opportunity to advocate for our customers,” Evans said. “I want to make their interaction with Toyota and Lexus products more exciting, informative and enjoyable.”

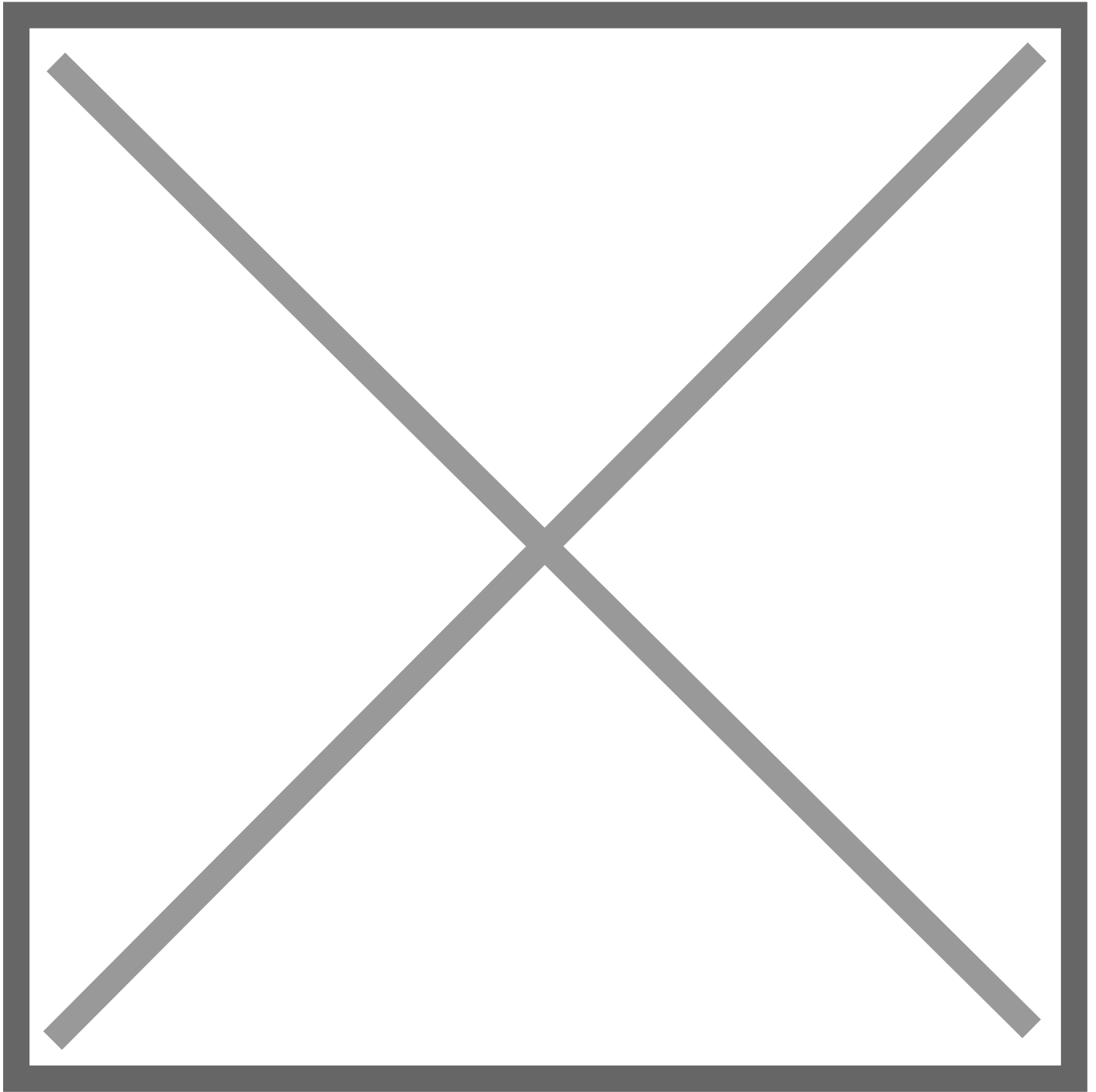


Sreedevi Chakka leads in-market evaluation, defect triage and defect management for the Toyota/Lexus App and vehicle head unit. At scale, her work enables engineers to make faster, better decisions without compromising quality standards.

This work has a direct impact on the stability, reliability and overall experience customers have with their Toyota and Lexus vehicles. By driving early root-cause identification, improving defect quality and accelerating resolution timelines, Chakka's team helps reduce the duration of in-market concerns, or better yet, helps prevent issues from reaching customers in the first place. The team supports Toyota's commitment to building quality

from the start and maintaining our customers' trust for life.

“What I value most about being an engineer at Toyota is the strong culture around quality, respect for people and collaboration,” Chakka said. “Being part of an organization where engineering decisions directly support customer trust makes the work meaningful and impactful.”



Donovan McWilliams has been an engineer since 2019, when he started his career as a quality assurance engineer for multimedia systems. Now he serves as a product engineer supporting global partners and affiliates

at Toyota.

McWilliams works closely with cross-functional teams to help bring connected services to markets around the world, including Lexus Mexico and New Zealand. His work ensures regions have the right vehicle capabilities to support connected features and helps tailor solutions to meet unique regional needs. He has also supported targeted feature launches, such as Drive Recorder.

“What people may not see is the behind-the-scenes work of taking the original request, studying and refining it,” he said. “This is where most of my opportunities to learn take place and how we get the request to something that development teams can solution.”



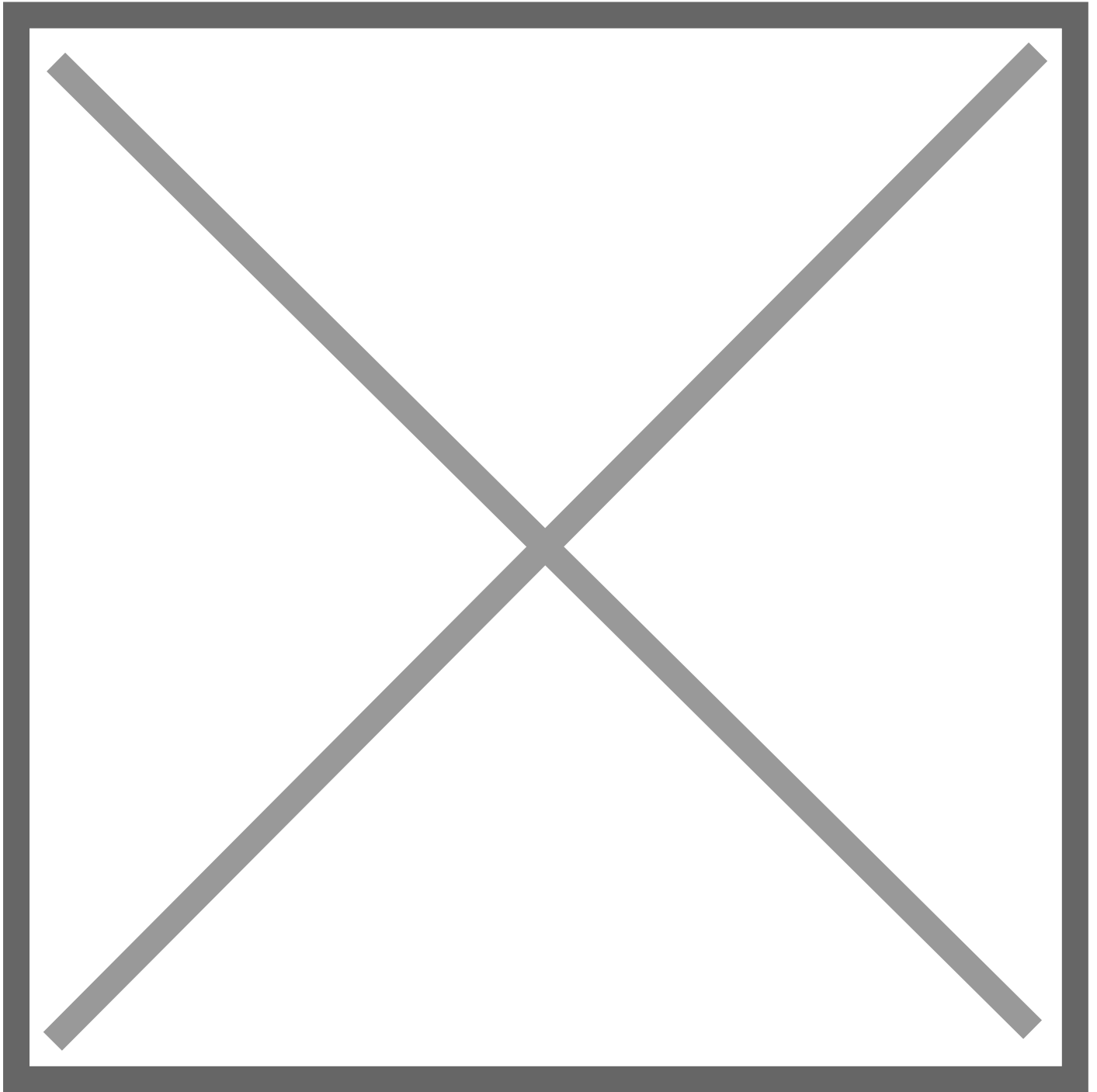
Nearly a decade ago, a curious college junior named Prince Remegio stepped into the Toyota Technical Center for a co-op rotation that would change the course of his life. With a passion for cars, a knack for hands-on work and a background in electrical engineering, his dream of shaping the future of vehicles came to life.

Today, as a senior engineer, Remegio's role in CXD is more than just building infotainment system features. It's about crafting an experience that improves the lives of our customers. From navigation and phone calls to climate control and media, the "Hey Toyota" and "Hey Lexus" Voice Assistant that he and his team helped develop is a seamless, hands-free companion designed to keep drivers focused on the road. It's a complex dance

of coordination across teams, blending technology and human interaction to make driving easier and safer.

“It’s not just a feature,” Remegio said. “It’s using voice as a way of interacting with everything in your car, and a good Voice Assistant can help reduce distractions on the road.”

What keeps Remegio motivated is knowing his work impacts millions of customers. And beyond the technology, it’s the passionate people he works with and their constant desire to push boundaries that make it worthwhile.



Amanda Maves has spent more than a decade building experience across the full vehicle lifecycle. She began her career in Toyota's vehicle performance development group, where she saw firsthand how early design decisions shape real-world performance. Her roles have expanded into quality, compliance and full-model program delivery, broadening her view from individual components to long-term customer impact.

Since 2022, Maves' focus has been on connected mobility, where hardware and digital experiences intersect. Her work helps extend the value of the vehicle beyond driving, supporting features that customers rely on every day. Her work contributes to a more reliable, software-enabled connected ecosystem for customers, an experience they can trust throughout the life of their vehicle.

"I've always been drawn to understanding systems and thinking through problems logically," Maves said.

What she enjoys most about Toyota is the opportunity to collaborate across disciplines in an environment that pushes her to grow while contributing to something bigger than herself.