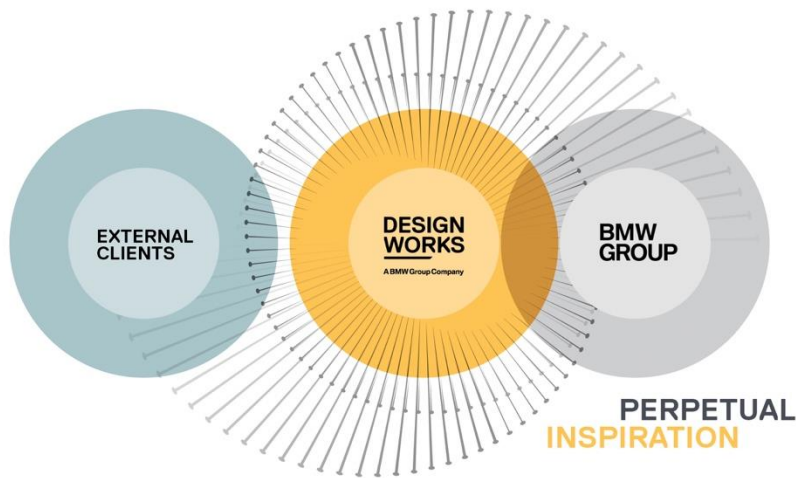


Press Information
June 22, 2021

BMW Group's Secret Design Innovator

Just before its 50th birthday, BMW subsidiary Designworks reveals its role as a special ingredient to BMW's power of innovation.



As mobility providers look to the future, they are reimagining many of the principles that guided their past thinking. But change, especially in large corporations, isn't easy. To meet this challenge head-on, in 1995, the BMW Group acquired a Californian design studio called Designworks, and commissioned it with the task to inspire, innovate and "rattle the cage" from outside the BMW Group. Initially, this meant enriching the in-house car designs by providing impulses and cross fertilization of ideas resulting from the ongoing project work done for clients outside the automotive field. This task was soon extended. For more than 25 years, Designworks has challenged established ways of thinking and been a source of constant, positive provocation and outside stimulation for the BMW Group, its designers, brands, products and its leaders.

A Path to Inspiration and Innovation within the BMW Group.

For decades, Designworks has played a key role in the development of various BMW Group icons. The teams have been deeply involved in the design development of the X family, Rolls Royce, Mini, the M8, Z4 and many more. Designworks was also a creative partner in the concept development of BMW's i drive controller (1999), internal design partner for BMW's iconic, shape-shifting GINA concept (2009) and heavily involved in the early phase design for the BMW i3 and i8 concept vehicles (2008 - 2012) and the BMWs i Inside FUTURE and i Interaction EASE

concepts (CES 2017 and 2019). The BMW Group also relies on Designworks' expertise in innovation projects beyond its core business: In 2012 the team was tasked with the design of the BMW-sponsored US Olympic bobsled. In 2014, this new bobsled helped the US men's two-man team win a medal for the first time in 62 years.

To stay at the forefront of innovation also meant that Designworks itself has had to evolve. "Today's global challenges are asking for a different kind of creative mind," says Holger Hampf, President of Designworks. "A new breed of designer who thinks and acts contextually, with an eye on the system. All our team members are trained to develop a 360° perspective and they are envisioning the future with positive energy and excitement. They filter through a broad set of possible directions with creative instinct to arrive at the best solution," he continues.

Perpetual Cross Industry Inspiration.

Founded in 1972 as an independent design studio, Designworks is now both the innovation platform for the BMW Group and a global creative consultancy that partners with companies from a large bandwidth of mobility related industries. Some of its most recent engagements include the visionary Backhoe of the Future project for John Deere, the design of the charging pylons and station forecourts for IONITY's European long-distance e-charging network as well as the first hydrogen powered eVTOL (electric vertical take-off and landing) vehicle, SKAI, on behalf of ALAKAI. Clients turning to Designworks are prepared to push boundaries to ensure the cultivation of a future-forward mindset, to unlock brand potentials and to help their business grow through the design of products, services and systems that enrich the human experience and stimulate behavior change for the better.

Approximately half of Designworks' projects are for external clients. For them, the design firm is an attractive partner as the creative teams understand aesthetics and brand just as well as corporate challenges, processes and culture. "Great ideas are born out of curiosity and creative friction, however they also need a good portion of courage to become reality. This is what our clients sign up for and expect from us – a shared, heartfelt and fruitful journey to a more meaningful future," says Holger Hampf. While keeping one foot in the agile world of consulting and the other in the corporate world, Designworks enables innovative ideas while maintaining empathy for corporate process.

Aesthetics, Business Thinking, Brand Therapy.

The reasons for companies outside the automotive world to work with Designworks are as diverse as the services offered by the studio. "If you need a vision, you best go and ask Designworks, because their future scenarios are not only creative leaps forward, they also have lasting validity" says Jürgen Schlaht, Head of Product Portfolio Management Public Transit at Siemens.

“We have understood better what it takes to get a seat at the table, to secure design presence in long term business discussions and use design as strategy. There is a lot to learn from the processes and approaches of the BMW Group and Designworks opened up this wealth of knowledge for us” commented Martino Scabbio Guerrini, Executive Vice President and Group President at leading fashion conglomerate VF Corporation.

“Working with a world-class design firm like Designworks is a special opportunity to push boundaries both aesthetically and technologically,” says Kirt Martin, Chief Creative Officer at Landscape Forms, America’s industry leader in high-design site furniture and advanced LED lighting. “It’s always a joy to work with the team, they have our utmost trust. But most importantly, Designworks is like a family to us—we look forward to our weekly calls, excited to see what inspiration and spontaneous solutions may arise from the conversation,” he adds.

About Designworks

Designworks is the innovation studio for the BMW Group and a global creative consultancy working at the intersection of design, technology and innovation. The teams in Los Angeles, Munich and Shanghai partner with companies worldwide to unlock brand potentials, foster business growth, enrich the human experience and stimulate behavior change to the better. Designworks is one of the only creative consultancies to specialize in Automotive, Mobility and Digital Life. The studio was founded in 1972 in Malibu, California by Chuck Pelly. In 2017, Holger Hampf was appointed Designworks president. The studio’s headquarters are in Los Angeles. The design firm employs 130+ people.

www.bmwgroupdesignworks.com

In the event of inquiries, please contact:

In North America -

Holly Palmer, Designworks LA Studio Communications

Tel: + 001 805.490.4659

Email: holly.palmer@bmwgroupdesignworks.com

In Europe -

Birgit Pucklitzsch, Designworks Munich Studio Communications

Tel: +49-151-6052-4026

Email: birgit.pucklitzsch@bmwgroupdesignworks.com

In Asia -

Kelly Wang, Designworks Shanghai Studio Communications

Tel: + 86 21 60326200

Email: kelly.wang@bmwgroupdesignworks.com