Thu, 15 May 2025
Weekly Newsletter

DVN Interior

NEWSLETTER #261

Editorial

Milan Design Week: A Journey Of Cars And Art

KIA EV2 CONCEPT AT MILANO (KIA IMAGE)

The car industry is increasingly aligning itself with design, and it's now the norm for car marques to commission installations, run events, and even launch cars during Milan Design Week. More than a dozen automotive brands were active during this, the world's biggest design week this year, including some notable newcomers. That's more than ever before, and they all used the event to go beyond the showroom — positioning themselves as lifestyle tastemakers, design authorities, and sustainability leaders.

From art exhibitions to multisensory experiences and new product reveals, design remained the undisputed star in Milano. This week's in-depth piece describes some of the highlights.

Our China event is coming soon! It's on 4 - 6 June in Hangzhou. A collaborative effort between DVN and EAC-Enmore will strongly emphasize and center design content with a CMF design conference, including integration with sound, light, and electronics; new and sustainable materials and process innovation, a cockpit focus with emotional interaction, UX, interaction design, holography, and also sensory design, aesthetics, colors, and more. Want to attend? Time's running out to register, so **send us a query**.

Sincerely yours,

Philippe Aumont
DVN-Interior General Editor

In Depth Interior Technology

More Auto Brands Are Showing Up at Milan Design Week

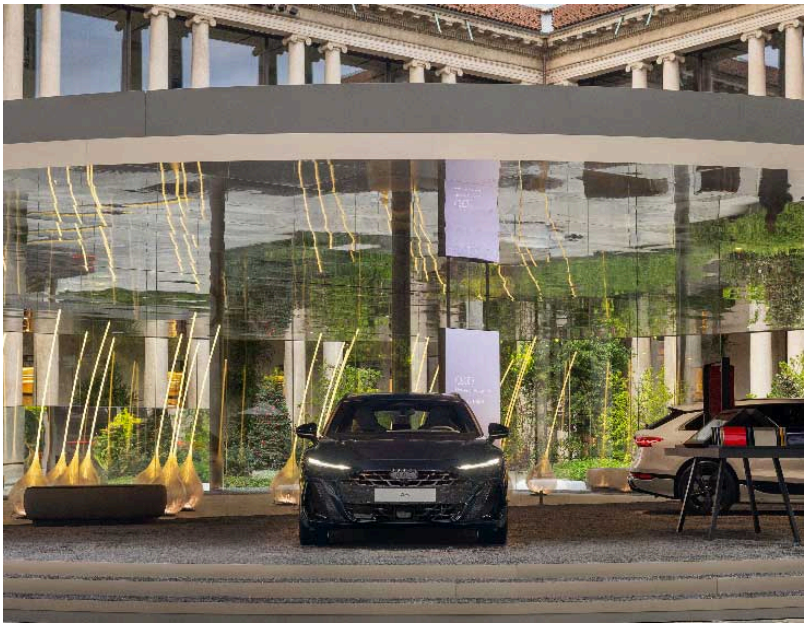
DVN IMAGE

Known in Italian as Settimana del Design di Milano, Design Week is one of the world's most influential design events, held annually in Milan, Italy. It transforms the city into a vibrant showcase of creativity, innovation, and design excellence. Designers, architects, brands, and creatives from around the globe present their work in exhibitions, installations, and pop-up events across the city. A few years ago, the automotive world started to participate, and they've gained great traction. Here we present some of the best exhibitions we saw.

Audi

This year, the House of Progress is animated by the Dutch design studio Drift, who designed an immersive and interactive installation called Drift Us. It brought an interpretation of transformation in line with Audi's DNA.

Audi created a booth in the evocative spaces of Portrait Milano, the 16th-century complex which now is the arena for showcasing future-forward innovation.

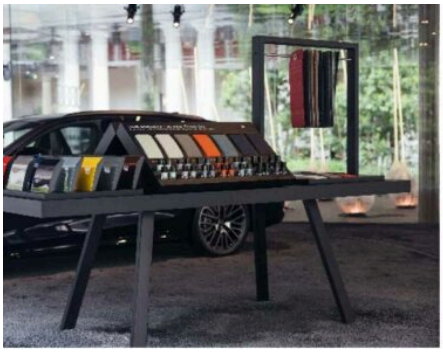


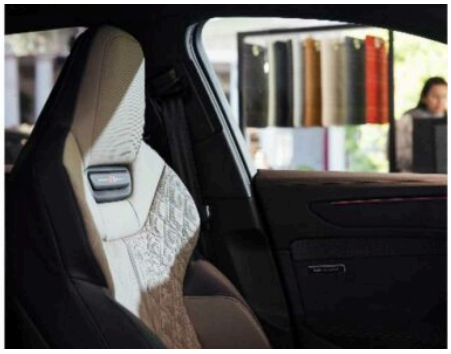
Drift's work forms an immersive robotic landscape where kinetic bulbs sway in response to visitors' movements, mimicking wind in a field of grass.

In celebration of 30 years of custom personalization, Audi unveiled a special edition A6 Avant, spotlighting premium design and craftsmanship with an upgraded interior and sport seats in Baikal Blue and Neodymium Gold. The interior features vanadium trim.

Color & Trim Designer Nadine Wolfinger said, "Neodymium is a metal that occurs naturally in combination with minerals. Our selection of colors was inspired by this luxurious element. Combined with the intense hue of Baikal Blue, the interior takes on a particularly elegant appearance. In bright light, the blue appears vibrant and radiant, but in subdued light it takes on a soothing, almost mystical depth".

There was a 'Material Bar' where specially-configured exhibits – such as three seating islands with different colors of leather and contrasting stitching – gave an overview of the wide range of customization options offered by Audi.





There are two specific design packages that add high-contrast colors to the interior. One features side bolsters in dark Baikal Blue, with the seat center panel in perforated fine napa leather and neodymium diamond stitching, contrasting Baikal Blue seams balance both colors perfectly. The sporty, elegant style is complemented by additional Baikal Blue interior elements, including the center armrest, center console trim, decorative elements on the instrument panel and doors, and front and rear door armrests. These elements come in the microfiber material Dinamica, which looks and feels like suede, but about half of it is recycled. All elements feature neodymium contrasting stitching, as do the black leather steering wheel, the upper part of the dashboard, and the floor mats.

The other design package focuses on textiles and uses light gray Kaskade fabric and Neodymium Gold accents to create a play of colors. The Kaskade is reminiscent of natural materials such as wool, and is not additionally dyed. It is partially made from recycled materials such as selvedge and recycled polyester.

Cupra

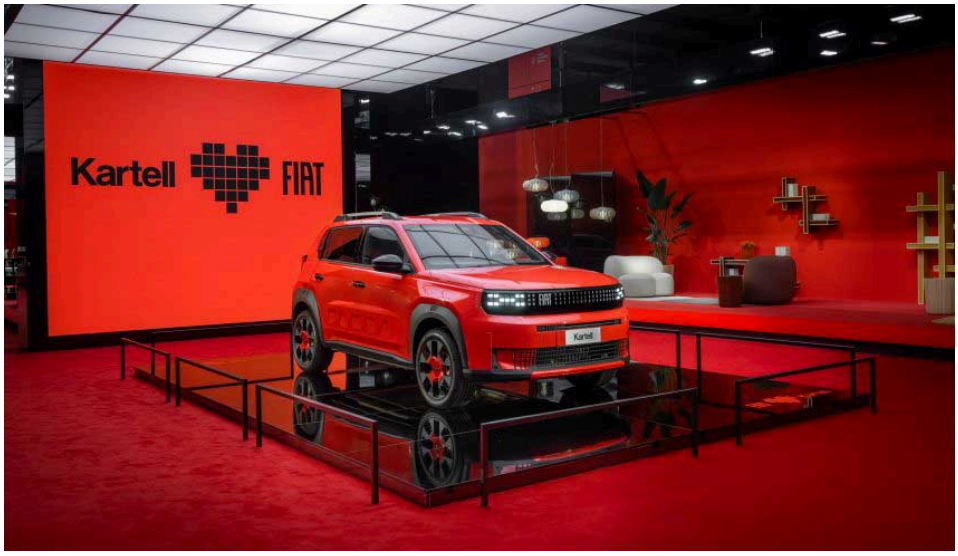
CUPRA IMAGES

In the heart of Milan, an immersive structure invited visitors to explore the Cupra Sensorial Capsule, a futuristic prototype redefining the interior of a Cupra vehicle. This concept goes beyond the traditional relationship between human and machine, revolutionizing the onboard experience and offering a glimpse at future Cupra interiors. Inside the capsule, the environment intuitively responds to gestures, preferences, and emotions, creating a seamless connection between the person and the car.

This wasn't just a showpiece, but a seemingly living sculpture answering the movements and using the light to create different shapes, giving life to surfaces thanks to lighting.

Its materials, contours, and structure are revealed through light trails and mapped projection.

Fiat



FIAT IMAGES

Visitors to the stand of furniture brand Kartell at the Salone del Mobile trade fair might have been surprised to find a car on a pedestal, front-and-center.

Kartell teamed up Fiat to produce and premiere the Fiat Grande Panda Kartell, intended to help the two brands cross-pollinate design and material ideas.The bright-red car has a blue interior. It bears the Kartell logo in several places, including the wheels and seats. The new Fiat Topolino was also exhibited in the Durini Design District, and available for test drives. For a special souvenir, Gallo created a limited edition of socks inspired by the event, a perfect mix of fashion and motors.

GAC

The GAC Design Studio put on an open house during Design Week — it was a phenomenal opportunity, facilitated by the maker's design studio in the heart of the city, where most GAC concept cars are brought to life.

Outside the studio, the Aion UT was on display. This car mixes Italian design aesthetics with local market preferences. It features eyebrow-inspired headlamps, a 14.6-inch central touchscreen, an 8.88-inch digital display screen, L^2 'Intelligent Driving Assist', high-strength sidewalls, and a brace-shaped spine body structure. It is said to exceed European safety standards. Its second-generation magazine battery allows for a quick charge from 30 to 80 per cent in 24 minutes, and is gunshot-resistant.

Google

Quite unusual in the automotive world but iconic in the tech industry, Google showcased their 'Make the Visible Invisible' exhibition.

Google worked with artist Lachlan Turczan to present an immersive installation of mist and lasers that allowed visitors to move light as though sweeping back curtains. 2-meter-wide fixtures were suspended from the ceiling in a dark room, consisting of lasers and a concave parabolic mirror, helping to project their light below. The room was filled with mist, so the light glinting off the mirror created the impression of a curtain.

When sensors detected a person walking underneath or waving their hand through the light, the virtual curtains wobbled and moved as though made of solid material. The effect was achieved using proprietary software and heightened with sound, also triggered by the motion detectors.

Omoda

Omoda is one of Chery's automotive brands, headquartered in Wuhu, Anhui, China. The focus is on futuristic crossover SUVs.

The Omoda 9's cabin is a blend of craftsmanship and advanced technology The 24.6-inch curved dashboard integrates the digital instrument panel and multimedia system. High-quality materials cover the seats and door panels, while dynamic ambient lighting creates a sophisticated atmosphere. The ISD (here it means 'Intelligent Sound & Design', not interactive social/signalling display) system synchronizes light, sound and design.

Land Rover

Land Rover unveiled their first landmark installation, called Futurespective: Connected Worlds. It was designed in collaboration with California-based innovation design studio Nuova.

Together with Land Rover's in-house creative team, Nuova visually narrated the Range Rover's design lineage and enduring influence on modern luxury through a cinematic journey from 1970 to 2025. The interiors include bespoke furniture and soundscapes alongside custom scents by Aeir, Nuova's carbon-negative luxury fragrance brand, all designed exclusively for the Range Rover.

Transporting visitors back to the days of the first Range Rover, the first capsule in the exhibit takes inspiration from a 1970s car dealership. At its center, a particularly significant classic Range Rover: the first of the marque's pre-production vehicles built ahead of its launch in 1970 sits within a nostalgic seventies interior. A celebration of the earliest Range Rover and the brand's roots in luxury design, the two-door

pre-production car in its original olive green color was staged within a wooden paneled room. Nuova designed custom furniture pieces for the space, including an oxblood red sofa, a circular version of their Enzo table in white Carrara marble, and bespoke desk chairs. Retro details such as a fish tank, archival artifacts, and original sketches enhanced the ambiance. The space was bathed in a warm light from 44 ceiling lights.

Lotus

The Emeya is Lotus' new electric GT car designed with drivers in mind. The interior atmosphere can be changed by dint of a light stripe going all around the car, giving the sensation of floating parts and lightness.

The exhibition fused past, present and future, celebrating Lotus' heritage with a display of the much-loved Esprit, which was marking its 50th anniversary, alongside the cutting-edge Emeya. The story continued with an exploration of the design principles of the Theory 1, Lotus' most recent concept car and a showcase of the brand's vision for the future.

In the interior, the architecture carries over from the Eletre SUV. So, the centerpiece is a 15.6" OLED touchscreen, which is where the driver must go to adjust everything except the cabin temperature — even just opening the glovebox must be done via the touchscreen.

Lotus, unlike Tesla, has realized it's thoughtless not to provide a display for the driver showing speed, range and warning messages. A 12.6" strip-shaped screen takes care of this, and the passenger gets one too, for shortcutting infotainment.

The main screen has a lot of menus, numerous of which are accessed by small 'keys' which can be tricky to hit. Even passengers asked to help with accessing phone activity and nav functions struggled to do so — though the voice control seemed to work fairly well.

Zeekr

The Zeekr Mix (find previous DVN coverage) was part of the Chinese brand's exhibition, attracting a lot of attention with its expressive headlights and rotating seats.

The exhibition unfolded in two parts. An immersive, interactive experience invited visitors to engage with Zeekr's design philosophy in a thought-provoking way. Alongside this, they presented a groundbreaking student project that reimagines the future of electric mobility. Unlike traditional design programs, this initiative gave emerging talents full creative autonomy, empowering them to explore radical ideas without constraints. The result: a collection of innovative concepts, brought to life through scale models, which challenged conventions and offered fresh perspectives on what mobility can be.

Interior News

Axkid's New Forward-Facing Child Seat

INTERIOR NEWS

AXKID IMAGE

Swedish child car safety company Axkid has launched the Axkid Up, a forward-facing car seat designed for safety, adaptability and comfort of children from 100 to 150 cm tall. It has been tested up to 50 kg.

Featuring the company's HeightControl technology, the seat and backrest can be adjusted independently to ensure the seatbelt remains positioned across the shoulders and hips. The fit reduces belt slack and ensures the child can fully benefit from the car's built-in safety systems.

Axkid VP and Commercial Director Anton Wall says the Up "is the result of years of development and close collaboration with parents, the automotive industry and our partners; while we will always recommend rear-facing travel for as long as possible, we know that many children are turned forward too early, or stop using a car seat altogether, often due to misconceptions or lack of awareness. We identified a clear gap in the market, where many still believe that a forward-facing seat suits both a four-year-old and a much older child equally well. That's simply not true. Parents needed a forward-facing seat with smarter and safer features, one that adapts to the child's height, whether they're four, eight or 12", adding that the Axkid Up meets that need.

It features the Axkid ProtecBase steel frame and SnapGuard removable side wings. The seat's foldable design, powered by Quickfold, ensures ease of installation and storage. ErgoSupport aims to enhance lumbar support for longer journeys.

Wall says, "We wanted to raise both the level of safety and the degree of innovation in forward-facing car seats. What many don't realize is that a car's built-in safety systems are designed for adults from 152 cm and up. That's why we developed an adjustable seat [which], together with the adaptable backrest, positions the child at an adult height based on their size, so they can truly benefit from the car's safety systems, which are designed for us adults. It's time to raise the level of in-car safety for older children too, so they can make full use of the seatbelt, airbags and other protection systems".

BMW's Surprise Shanghai AI Decision

INTERIOR NEWS

BMW IMAGE

BMW has announced a pact with Chinese ChatGPT rival DeepSeek for China-market New Class vehicles.

In Shanghai, BMW showed a version of the cars specially developed for the Chinese market, part of their effort to meet the wants and needs of Chinese customers with a high degree of product localization.

For the Chinese version of the Panoramic iDrive, BMW has specifically tailored their Operating System X to local preferences Chinese in cooperation with local technology partners. Important Chinese partners include internet giant Alibaba and technology group Huawei.

BMW CEO Oliver Zipse emphasized that China has made significant progress in AI technology, and that BMW is strengthening their local partnerships to integrate these innovations into vehicles for the Chinese market.

DeepSeek represents a significant further development of the premium manufacturer's digital platform for the Chinese market, where software-defined functions are a decisive purchasing criterion more than in any other market.

BMW's 'China for China' strategy also means independent development of software there, where the BMW Group has their largest research and development center outside Germany, in Shenyang, and also produces the New Class models. Around 70 per cent of the software for the Chinese version consists of locally developed and adapted source code. The system offers a wide range of digital functions, including the AI-supported BMW Intelligent Personal Assistant for China.

The Large Language Model (LLM), an integral part of the Intelligent Personal Assistant, is a result of collaboration with Chinese technology company Alibaba. Over the course of the year, BMW plans to gradually add AI functions from DeepSeek to the Intelligent Personal Assistant. The digital assistant can execute voice commands, actively engage in dialog with vehicle occupants, and analyze situations based on context.

Ansys Speos for Optimal Interior Lighting

INTERIOR NEWS

ANSYS IMAGES

1:55 PMhe BMW Group prides themselves on creating individualized driving experiences, from the high-performance luxury of a BMW and the opulence of a Rolls-Royce to the free-spirited MINI. Apart from premium performance, a focus on interior refinement has inspired salient features — Swarovski crystal shift knobs, starry-sky projections in the headliner, and digitally projected art displays on the dash.

Introducing features like these into an already busy interior environment can be challenging. The light from backlit buttons, infotainment and instrumentation displays, plus the glare from the sun or oncoming headlamps at night are all competing to the point of distraction. Leveraging Ansys simulation software running on an NVIDIA GPU-accelerated computing platform enables the BMW Group to address unwanted reflections and glare, thereby ensuring a comfortable driving environment.

Kenneth Weselake, virtual validation project leader at the BMW Group, uses Ansys Speos CAD-integrated optical and lighting simulation software early on to do light studies to optimize optical interior elements for the BMW, Rolls-Royce, and MINI brands. He says, "We are cleverly using light as an information carrier, creating entertaining animations, implementing hidden projectors allowing the digital world of the displays to overflow out onto the dash, thus connecting the digital and physical worlds. We are merging light, materials, and controls. We have light streaming through materials and multiple displays reflecting in the front windshield, which we have branded BMW Panoramic Vision".

All these elements are guided by the light properties of a range of material and color choices. And all must be ranked and evaluated for various elements of the dash to determine what can be possible with safety in mind. A big challenge is how to allow lighter colored interiors without disturbing the driver. Branding had to be carefully considered, along with all the materials involved in creating dash components, as well as the use of textures to reduce reflections. Weselake successfully used Speos to experiment with color gradients, dash geometries, and materials to minimize unwanted reflections and glare.

"I've measured over a thousand different materials", he says. "This is necessary to perform comparison studies. I'm using Speos software to gauge the color intensities. Referring to my cockpit setup, I can update my dash model in Speos software again with all the different materials to see the influence the geometry, as well as the materials, has on the results. Early on in the design process, I'm still able to have an influence on the geometry. Later on in the design process, it's mainly materials".

Leveraging Speos and Nvidia RTX 6000 Ada Generation GPUs enabled Weselake to run optical simulations 300 times faster. Breaking this down further, the setup gave a significant boost to Speos performance, reducing individual test runs from several hours to under 10 minutes.

Bridge of Weir Leather Interior Concept for the Neurodivergent

INTERIOR NEWS

Bridge of Weir Leather, a Scottish company with a 120-year history of supplying high-end automotive leather to top carmakers, recently completed a new 'Conscious Collection' concept which might help neurodivergent people to experience a more calming and comfortable car interior experience.

1 in 7 people — only some of whom know it — are thought to be neurodivergent, an umbrella term including conditions like autism, dyslexia, and ADHD. Thei experience of the world can differ significantly from that of a neurotypical person. An interior designed with these people's needs in mind represents not only another interior option for buyers, but is a new direction for a sensory-inclusive design which takes into account that an interior experience can be influenced by more than just technology and luxury.

Our senses work in parallel, and our brain transforms each sensory perception into a general feeling that we rarely can describe with just words. An overwhelming environment, with disharmonious tones, striking patterns, and bristling with technical gadgets can increase fatigue and affect safety — even for neurotypical people.

The company investigated neurodivergent people's in-car experience and applied the research results to devise key concepts: a calming interior, which can be summarized as 'less is more' and 'the power of simplicity': soft and muted tones, predominantly blues and greens with patterns which guide the eye and create structure; gentle textures offering a familiar tactile experience, and material aromas which trigger a subconscious feeling of comfort and security.

Bridge of Weir Design Manager Debra Choong says, "This collection is about rethinking the relationship between materials and human experience. We want to create interiors that foster inclusivity while celebrating the unique strengths of neurodivergent individuals".

The lessons learned in this exercise can be easily transformed into a new design philosophy for all kinds of interiors, inviting car manufacturers to create vehicles that don’t just transport people but actively contribute to their wellbeing.

Bcomp's Bio-Based Amplitex in Kia EV Concept

INTERIOR NEWS

KIA IMAGE

Swiss composites manufacturer Bcomp supplied Kia with a sustainable natural-fiber composite material called Amplitex, for key interior components of the new Kia Concept EV2.

The Concept EV2, unveiled at Kia's recent EV day in Barcelona, is intended to demonstrate the potential for large-scale adoption of bio-based composites in affordable EVs, paving the way for wider integration into production vehicles.

By replacing conventional synthetic materials with Amplitex, the Concept EV2 prioritizes responsible design choices without compromising on performance or aesthetics. Delivering circularity by nature, Bcomp's solutions also offer end-of-life benefits, including recycling the components into composite pellets – a new base material – to serve a second life.

Amplitex is derived from flax fibers. Its properties enhance sustainability and provide performance and functional gains, such lower mass and better durability.

Bcomp worked closely with the CMF designers at the Kia Europe Design Center to develop a custom dark blue finish. The Kia team used Amplitex in the back seat shell and front seat substructures of the Concept EV2. It brings bio-based materials to the mass market, offering an alternative to plastic and carbon fiber.

Bcomp Sales Manager Nicolas Samson calls his company's supply of Amplitex for the Concept EV2 "another step toward the mainstream adoption of natural-fiber composites in automotive interiors; Kia's forward-thinking approach to mobility aligns perfectly with our mission to push the boundaries of sustainable interior solutions, and together we're proving that sustainable, circular materials can enhance both vehicle aesthetics and functionality at scale".

And Kia Europe Design Center Senior CMF Designer Nathalie Bucher says, "Bcomp's industry-leading expertise in bio-based composites has allowed us to redefine what's possible in automotive interiors with the Concept EV2 and bring innovative materials to the mass market. Their dedication to working closely with our design team ensures that every material aligns perfectly with our vision, reinforcing our commitment to creating stylish, environmentally aware and high-quality vehicles for the future".

‘Golden Ears’ Audio Engineer Shaping Nissan Sound

INTERIOR NEWS

NISSAN IMAGE

A good car audio system can dramatically improve the driving experience. Not just because of the possibility of listening to preferred music without interference, but also because a well-tuned audio system can help reduce external noise and transform a car into a small auditorium.

Optimal hardware and software aren't enough by themselves. Human ears do a better job than microphones in assessing a room's acoustic characteristics; our ears are a very sophisticated tool for perceiving sound, capable of detecting very small changes in phase, tone, or direction, and able to filter out and prioritize sounds from specific directions and sources.

With extensive training, humans can achieve perfection in assessing and tuning audio system performance. For instance: Patrick Dennis,known as 'Golden Ears'. He's a principal audio engineer at Nissan Technical Center North America, where he has spent nearly 20 years perfecting the sound quality of Nissan and Infinii vehicles.

PATRICK DENNIS (NISSAN IMAGE)

With impeccably-trained ears, Dennis helps create immersive, concertlike in-car audio experiences, even in acoustically challenging environments. "It's not that my ears are naturally better than anyone else's – it's that I've been trained to identify certain things in the music that other people might not be able to catch", he says, adding that a car "is not an ideal space for an audio system; you're competing with noise from the powertrain, road, wind and surrounding traffic". Plus, car speakers are often mounted far from passenger ears, and at less-than-optimal angles. Low in the doors, for example. Technology has enabled Nissan audio teams to precisely direct the music so it feels closer to the listener.

But also, speakers can be moved physically closer. The Bose Personal Plus audio system available on the 2025 Nissan Kicks, for example, includes headrest speakers for the driver and passenger. The sound is immersive, like wearing high-end headphones.

Software also plays a role in reducing external noise. For example, active sound management uses an interior microphone to identify low-frequency vehicle noises and neutralize them with opposite-amplitude, same-frequency sound waves — like noise-cancelling headphones. Dennis and his team work from early development stages to tailor sound systems to each vehicle's interior. He emphasizes the importance of collaboration, and the satisfaction of achieving the perfect audio performance that enhances the customer experience. Nissan has supply deals with high-end audio specialists like Bose, Fender, and Klipsch.

The Design Lounge

Genesis Interior Designer Jaeho Oh on the Future of Luxury Cabins

THE DESIGN LOUNGE

GENESIS GV80 COUPÉ, JAEHO OH (GENESIS IMAGES)

Extract from Genesis Newsroom *interview*

After transitioning from exterior to interior automotive design, Jaeho Oh was captivated by what he calls the "whole different world of creativity" in interior automotive design. Now, as Genesis' head of interior design, he faces the ongoing challenge of integrating the best technologies into Genesis models while maintaining a layout that's simple and refined and features just the right number of analog buttons.

Question: How did you get into automotive interior design?
Answer: While exterior design plays a crucial role in a customer's purchasing decision, the interior is where they actually experience and live with the car, which I found attractive.

Q: Genesis interior design is often defined by its signature 'beauty of white space' concept, what does this mean to you?
A: Beauty of white space is about optimizing the arrangement of interior elements like buttons, displays and other components, and in that process, naturally creating negative space.

Q: What does a typical interior design process look like for a new Genesis model?
A: Once the vehicle typology and its unique characteristics and identity have been confirmed, designers in Korea, Europe and the USA start sketching the interior while considering new UX technologies. Each region then narrows down to about three candidates; we then pick the very best one.

Q: What happens after the selection process?
A: We take that selected interior design and discuss with numerous other teams to make it into production. This entire process usually takes approximately three years.

Q: Automotive interior design is continually evolving. What's your take on the future of interior design?
A: With advancements in autonomous driving and electric vehicles (EVs), today's cars are increasingly becoming extensions of our living spaces.

Q: How would that affect Genesis interiors?
A: We will maintain clutter-free interior designs while integrating key controls through AI and voice recognition. For safety and usability reasons, essential buttons will remain analog.

Q: How else do you see Genesis interior designs evolving?
A: As customer expectations continue to rise, we plan to deliver a much more refined, detailed and luxurious experience. Projects like Genesis Magma and One of One will exemplify this evolution, providing a deeper level of exclusivity for our customers.

News Mobility

Apure Shuttle is Plant-Based Milestone

NEWS MOBILITY

TORAY IMAGE

In 2015, Toray became the world's first plant-based nonwoven suede manufacturer, and today more than half of their sales volume is of their more environmentally conscious material. The Apure shuttle, realized in partnership with German design firm Neomind, is a key milestone in Toray's push for a fully plant-based reality.

This self-driving shuttle concept is a flexible, on-demand mobility solution that aims to set a new standard in public transportation. Combining Neomind's extensive experience in public transport design with Toray's innovative materials and RMV's mobility expertise, the resulting concept is expected to boost the attractiveness of public transport and boost the future adoption of autonomous shuttle services.

The Apure name stands for Autonomous Premium Urban Riding Ecosystem, and it was conceived to offer a premium experience for passengers. Not only in the conventional sense – soft to the touch, easy on the eye and pleasant-smelling – but also in terms of performance. Materials in a shared autonomous shuttle would be subjected to more frequent use than a typical private car, and must be super durable. There is another crucial consideration beyond this, though: wellbeing and mental comfort.

The choice of materials and colors plays a huge role in defining passenger moods. They should encourage a feeling of tranquility and calm, something that conventional suede has done for decades. Toray says their partially plant-based alternative amply meets that need: "The space feels like a living room thanks to soft lighting and new upholstery, offering a refreshing change from standard bus interiors".

A calming mix of sage green, cream, and natural wood adorns the interior of the shuttle, teamed with dark seat covers and fluted units along the walls and window frames. It combines well and does indeed evoke the feeling of a wellness retreat. All upholstery fabric used in the shuttle's interior is made entirely of partially plant-based material, highlighting its versatility. The seats feature Ultrasuede Nu, designed to replicate a premium aniline leather, while the interior surfaces and pillars use the Ultrasuede suede alternative. Foam padding and flame-retardant shielding, along with various other materials, also employ a mix of plant-based material from Toray.

In September 2024, the Apure concept won a Red Dot design award for its "eco-conscious interior design, partially plant-based and recycled materials and practical layout, balancing high capacity, safety and comfort". A prototype was on show at InnoTrans in Berlin, and Toray says they will continue to develop their synthetic organic and polymer chemistry, biotechnology, and nanotechnology.

Zeekr 007 Parks, Charges All By Itself

NEWS MOBILITY

ZEEKR IMAGE

Geely has developed a fully automated, production-ready solution for parking and charging electric cars in parking lots and parkades.

Daughter company Zeekr Power demonstrated the system to a group of international journalists. In the underground parkade of the Geely headquarters in Hangzhou, a metropolis of 11 million people, a Zeekr 007 sedan automatically drove into the parking space. This was done by the new G-Pilot driver assistance system, a direct competitor to BYD's 'God's Eye' system. G-Pilot is currently capable of up to L^3 driving automation.

The car was then charged with more than 300 kW at 800 volts. Integrated into the charging station is a compact robotic arm equipped with a camera on the charging plug. After a few seconds, the robotic arm extended, gripped the high-voltage charging cable from the charging station, and plugged it precisely into the charging slot of the 007 in a single attempt. This requires a motorized charging lid. An LED display running across the front of the Zeekr 007 indicates the charging status and the amount of charging current.

Zeekr Power explained that the system has been extensively tested and works reliably, and is ready for series production. Initially, it is to be installed in a limited number of underground parkades of showrooms of the Geely brands Zeekr and Lynk & Co. Whether the system will be deployed outside China is not yet clear; Zeekr is currently present in Norway, the Netherlands and Sweden.

General News

Continental Seals a New Start: Aumovio

GENERAL NEWS

NIKOLAI. SETZER (L), PHILIPP VON HIRSCHHEYDT (R) (CONTINENTAL IMAGE)

Continental is splitting off their automotive operations to a company called Aumovio. Pictured above are Continental CEO Nikolai Setzer and future Aumovio CEO Philipp von Hirschheydt.

Setzer explained the move by saying that with growing technological requirements and ever shorter development phases, geopolitical challenges and dramatically changing supply chains, flexible and focused companies can exploit opportunities better than complex organizations.

It remains to be seen how the independent companies will fare in the future. What is certain is that the remaining Continental AG will benefit from the separation. In the past, the profitable tire division often had to compensate for the lower figures of the other divisions.

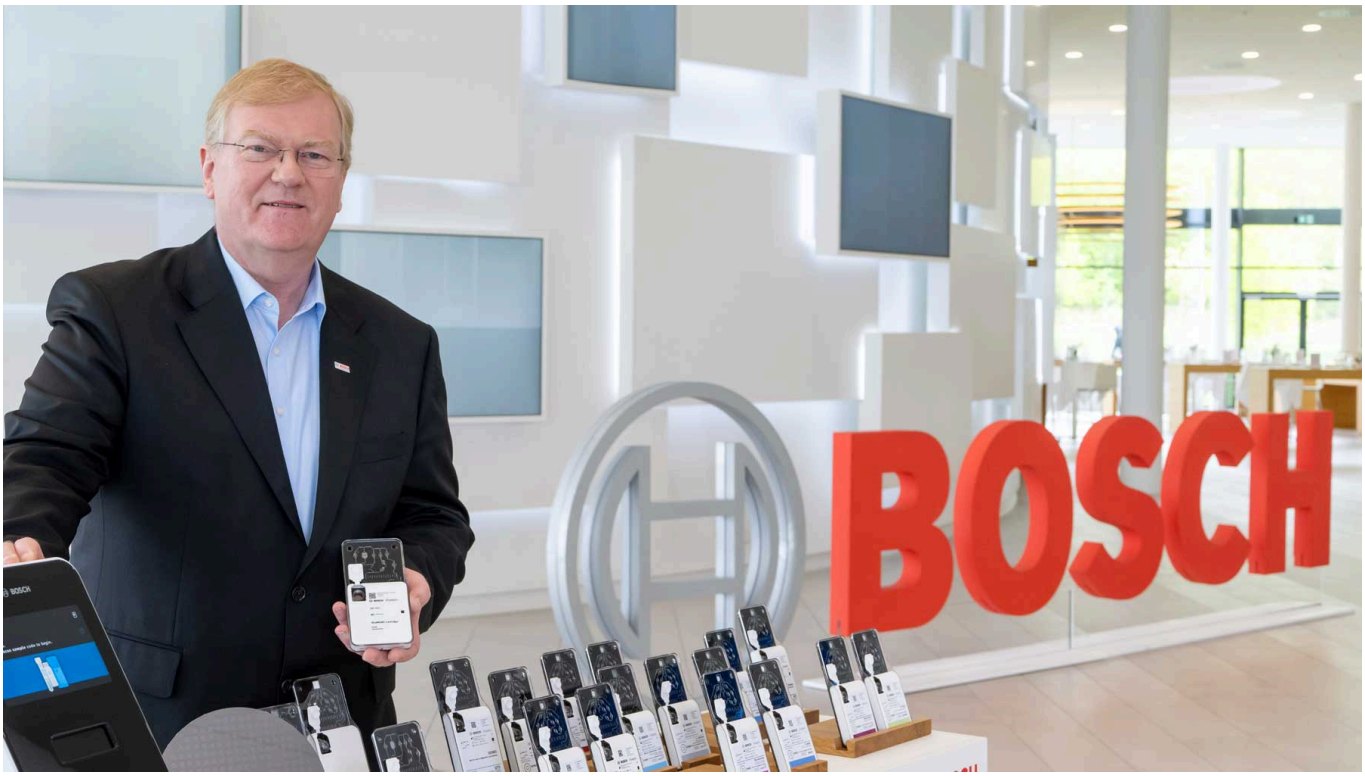
The automotive spinoff was approved as expected, with 99.95 per cent Yes votes. The spinoff is to take effect retroactively from 1 January 2025.

When asked whether even more staff would be cut in the future — the Automotive division alone recently cut 10,000 jobs and closed locations — HR Director Ariane Reinhart did not clearly answer.

In addition to its core business with sensor solutions and displays as well as braking and comfort systems, Aumovio will drive the development of modern electronics solutions, autonomous driving and software-defined vehicle technologies worldwide.

The World's 20 Biggest Automotive Suppliers

GENERAL NEWS



BOSCH CEO STEFAN HARTUNG (BOSCH IMAGE)

Consulting firm Berylls Strategy Advisors has identified the largest suppliers in the world, ranked on turnover in the previous calendar year:

Unternehmen	Land	Rang	Δ· 2022	Umsatz· in·Mio.· €	Umsatz-Δ	Profitabilität· 2023	Δ
Robert·Bosch	DE	1	0	56.167	6,8%	4,2%	0,8%
Denso	JP	2	0	46.849	5,3%	5,6%	−0,2%
ZF· Friedrichshafen	DE	3	0	42.897	7,5%	3,2%	0,7%
Hyundai·Mobis	KR	4	1	41.939	9,8%	3,9%	0,0%
Continental	DE	5	−1	41.421	5,1%	4,5%	2,6%
Magna	CA	6	0	39.579	10,1%	5,2%	0,8%
CATL	CN	7	0	37.239	11,4%	-	-
Aisin	JP	8	0	31.478	2,0%	2,5%	0,9%
Michelin	FR	9	0	28.343	−0,9%	9,4%	−1,2%
Forvia	FR	10	0	27.248	7,0%	5,3%	0,9%
Cummins	US	11	2	26.665	20,5%	11,2%	−0,4%

Bridgestone¤	JP¤	12¤	−1¤	22.396¤	−5,4%¤	9,7%¤	−1,9%¤
Valeo¤	FR¤	13¤	1¤	22.044¤	10,0%¤	3,8%¤	0,6%¤
Hasco¤	CN¤	14¤	−2¤	22.010¤	−1,6%¤	5,2%¤	−0,5%¤
Lear¤	US¤	15¤	0¤	21.702¤	9,4%¤	4,8%¤	0,6%¤
Aptiv¤	IE¤	16¤	2¤	19¤	11,6%¤	7,8%¤	0,6%¤
Goodyear¤	US¤	17¤	−1¤	18.125¤	−5,3%¤	4,9%¤	−1,4%¤
Tenneco¤	US¤	18¤	−1¤	18.067¤	0,2%¤	-¤	-¤
Sumitomo· Electric¤	JP¤	19¤	1¤	16.562¤	11,2%¤	5,5%¤	4,7%¤
Panasonic¤	JP¤	20¤	1¤	16.211¤	18,9%¤	-¤	-¤

Bosch continues to reign supreme; with automotive sales of well over €50bn and solid growth of almost 7 per cent, the Stuttgart-based supplier leads the industry.

Denso secured second place with a turnover of just under €47bn. The Japanese company boasts a margin of 5.6 per cent. ZF Friedrichshafen takes the № 3 spot and, at 7.5 per cent, they're growing much more dynamically than the two frontrunners.

Hyundai Mobis moves up to fourth place. The Koreans benefit from a considerable growth spurt (+9.8 per cent), and Continental took № 5. Magna is in sixth place with double-digit revenue growth (10 per cent) and a solid margin. Chinese battery giant CATL consolidated its position among the top suppliers with an 11-per-cent turnover increase.

Aisin (Japan) holds eighth place despite meager growth and a weak margin. Michelin is struggling with a slight decline in turnover, but shines with a top margin. Forvia rounds off the top ten with 7-per-cent growth.

Continental figures include what is now Aumovio.

The analysis shows that the transformation of the automotive industry is reshuffling the balance of power. Battery and electronics specialists are storming to the top, while traditional component suppliers are struggling with margin pressure. Those who actively shape the technological change will secure growth and returns. The leading group asserts itself through broad portfolios and high innovative strength.

The momentum is increasingly coming from Asia. South Korea in particular is positioning itself well for future technologies. Clearly, concentration will increase in the coming years, and specialization and economies of scale will become more important. Competition for the best positions in the transformed value chain is well under way.