

Press Release

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New design direction injects emotion into Volvo's transformation journey

The Volvo Concept Coupé is the first expressive interpretation of a new brand direction where design has an elevated strategic importance to deliver more emotion into the Volvo brand.

"Our transformation plan includes a commitment to create a more premium vision of Volvo Cars. Releasing the emotional power of our human-centric design heritage is one of the key elements in this strategy," says Alain Visser, Senior Vice President Marketing, Sales and Customer Service at Volvo Car Group. He adds: "A more premium image is vital to gain momentum in our journey towards an annual sales volume of 800,000 cars. It also supports our price position versus our main competitors in the premium segments."



Building on recent success

The introduction of the Volvo V40 in 2012 was the first step in this direction. The positive media and customer feedback emphasizes that Volvo Cars is running with the best in several important areas, including design.

The upcoming introduction of the new scalable architecture enables the company to accelerate the transformation.

The Volvo Concept Coupé is the first of a series of three concept cars that demonstrate the

design possibilities created by the new Scalable Product Architecture (SPA). They pave the way for the introduction of the all-new Volvo XC90 in 2014.

Technology as an enabler for emotion

The new in-house developed architecture and engine programme are the enablers for a stronger emotional expression of the brand, both when it comes to the exterior design and a new approach to the interior, user interface and connectivity

“Volvo’s unique human-centric approach and the aim to inject more emotions into the car design are perfect partners. Volvo Cars’ caring, human-centric values are an integrated part of the Scandinavian culture and lifestyle. The challenge is to express this with a bolder, more distinctive design that is an all-important customer criteria for premium cars,” says Thomas Ingenlath, Senior Vice President Design at Volvo Car Group.

Design creates premium desirability

Truly premium brands are based on a complex mix of rational, qualitative parameters and strong emotional values that create desirability – and there are several examples of brands that have moved from mainstream to premium through a stronger focus on design.

“Case studies of brands that have made a similar journey to ours give us valuable input into the mechanisms that trigger the consumer’s perception of premium. This, together with our own studies of people’s views of Volvo Cars, becomes a valuable base for our design development,” says Alain Visser.

Rational properties with added emotional value

The emotional aspect is also important when shaping the future of properties that are established Volvo territory among consumers:

- Focus on safety has moved from offering protection in worst-case scenarios to creating features that support the driver and enhance the user experience.
- Modern environmental care is able to combine low emissions and reduced fuel consumption with an enhanced driving experience – for instance through ingenious plug-in hybrid technology.
- The classic functionality has moved beyond being practical. Volvo Cars’ approach is to create human-centric features that actually make today’s hectic life easier for the user.

“Reliable functionality has always been a non-compromise prerequisite for Scandinavian designers. Up here, designs have to deal with a harsh reality that demands meticulous attention to detail and quality,” says Thomas Ingenlath. He concludes: “Combining this with a distinctive design language that is inspired by this unique Scandinavian environment will give us a competitive edge that no one of our competitors can match. You could say that we will continue to do what Volvo always has done. We will just do it much better and make it much more emotional.”

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