



October 12, 2018

## Let it shine – how Volkswagen brings cars to life with lighting design

- These days, lighting design is both functional and emotional
- Leading us into tomorrow: the "extraterior" – the design of the surroundings
- How vehicles of the future will use light to communicate with people

Wolfsburg – halogen, xenon, LED, laser and OLED – in just two decades, lighting technology and lighting design for vehicles have undergone revolutionary change. In addition to functional aspects such as enhancing visibility in traffic, headlights nowadays also have an emotional component. Lighting design can give a vehicle, like people, a face with its own expression and individual personality. This development will significantly influence the work of Volkswagen designers in the coming years.



Durch das Licht werden Fahrzeuge zu emotionalen Designobjekten

**The future will be bright as day, intelligent and human.**

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the entire car. Distinctive lighting design is increasingly taking centre stage. "Headlights characterise our perception of a vehicle like no other design element. They attract our gaze, and our initial, automatic instinct is to look a car right in the eyes. They make the car human", emphasised Klaus Bischoff, Executive Director of Volkswagen Design.

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### Press contact

#### Volkswagen Communications

Jens Bobsien  
Head of Communication Technology,  
Innovation and Design  
Tel: +49 5361-9-32529  
[jens.bobsien@volkswagen.de](mailto:jens.bobsien@volkswagen.de)

#### Product Communication

Janine Zyciora  
Design Communications  
Tel: +49 5361-9-299600  
[janine.zyciora@volkswagen.de](mailto:janine.zyciora@volkswagen.de)



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Through the nature of light, the car of the future is to become even more "human". For in the next generation, a vehicle's lights will serve not only to increase safety, but also as a means of communication and interaction.

### **A new dimension: the extraterior**

In the near future, the design of interior and exterior will be joined by a new concept: the extraterior. This can be understood as the design of the surroundings – and is a process that breathes new life into the vehicle. What does this look like in practice though? One application is that the car, using its headlights, can "speak" with its environment. The new I.D. VIZZION<sup>1)</sup>, for example, can confidently "wink" via light signal at its owner, when they approach the vehicle.

A further effect: Especially in a complex, noise-intensive traffic environment, light is the optimal means of communication. The headlights take over the task of maintaining eye contact with other road users. Where does the car want to go? Has it noticed the pedestrian, and will it remain stopped? This naturally increases safety.

Lighting elements can also clearly indicate whether the car is in autonomous driving mode, or if it is starting up and pulling away. Furthermore, owners can tell just from a light signal whether the vehicle is still charging, or is ready for travel again.

<sup>1)</sup> *ID. VIZZION: Study.*

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#### **About the Volkswagen brand: "We make the future real"**

Volkswagen Passenger Cars operates in more than 150 markets worldwide and produces vehicles at more than 50 locations in 14 countries. In 2017, Volkswagen produced around 6.23 million vehicles, including bestsellers such as the Golf, Tiguan, Jetta and Passat. Volkswagen has a current workforce of 198,000 employees around the globe. Added to this are more than 7,700 dealerships with 74,000 employees. Volkswagen is consistently driving forward the development of automotive engineering. Electric mobility, smart mobility and digital transformation of the brand are the key strategic issues for the future.

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