

ePatrol: BMW Group DesignworksUSA shows futuristic vision of police vehicle of the year 2025.

Automotive world in creative competition mood at L.A. Autoshow/ Jury of L.A. Design Challenge to choose winner on 29th November 2012.



Los Angeles/ Munich. The L.A. Autoshow is not just the place to inspect new models of automotive companies. For the 9th time, it is also the place where the design teams of the top automotive companies enter a creative competition of the most exciting kind when presenting visionary concepts around the topic of individual mobility. In 2012 the challenge for the design teams was to create the ultimate 2025 highway patrol vehicle. The solution delivered by BMW subsidiary DesignworksUSA demonstrates that BMW's design think tank has more to offer than a rich 40 year history of product design. The visionary concept ePatrol gives a glimpse into the forceful power of innovation and future thinking that the mother company BMW Group as well as external clients from manifold industries may expect from DesignworksUSA in the 40 years to come.

Design Challenge

In 2012 the design teams were tasked with exploring creative solutions for futuristic patrol cars based on a set of criteria which included: future needs for

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advanced technology; speed and agility on future freeway systems; creativity of the solution; and meeting a specific region's emission standards and environmental sensibility (including maintenance and recyclability). Furthermore the teams were challenged to look into the future to envision and create the trends and tools that haven't been imagined with the added complexity of a vehicle fit for law enforcement. Laurenz Schaffer, President of DesignworksUSA comments the solution delivered by the design team: "DesignworksUSA's role as a think tank is to challenge the status quo of existing product solutions", he says. "We wanted to present a visionary impulse to the theme of highway patrol. Hence our contribution to the L.A. Design Challenge is a vision concept with no links to BMW's future design strategy. We took the liberty to think out of the box. To emphasize the conceptual approach our design is independent from BMW design elements and known visual cues but looks at new product typologies and fresh ideas on shapes", Schaffer continues.

ePatrol: A dream project for designers.

The BMW Group DesignworksUSA team began the challenge by selecting Los Angeles as the region to create a 2025 scenario. Being aware that there will be more traffic, faster vehicles, and vehicles with alternative drive trains the design team explored how a patrol team functioned today and in the future and determined that teamwork and accessibility were the two key elements to a successful patrol effort. For teamwork, the design team was inspired by the partnership between a patrol officer and their canine. The clogged highways today and in the future inspired the design team to focus on a solution to increase accessibility.

Design Solution

The design of the ePatrol Vision centers on a modular structure and drone technology that enhanced both teamwork and accessibility. The main structure can deploy three drones. The top drone sits above the main structure and is a flying drone, while the other two are one wheel vehicles attached to the rear. In the case of a pursuit during heavy traffic areas, the patrol officer sitting in the two passenger main structure can deploy either the flying drone or one of the single wheel drones to chase the suspect and report back data to the main structure. When all drones are deployed, the main structure can continue to function. All drones have added protection benefits in that they can send an impulse to another vehicle and disable it. Throughout the exterior design, the team strived to create a powerful stance with an aerodynamic aesthetic and flowing lines.

The interior design was inspired by a woven structure made of aluminum wire inside carbon fibre and polymer resin. The seats form a significant connection between driver and architecture. From a manufacturing standpoint, the 3D woven carbon fibre structure has the advantage that tooling is not required. All interfaces within the interior are touch screen. For greater protection to the patrol officers, windows are not included in the vehicle. The windshield is replaced with a large screen that on the exterior can communicate critical information such as accidents or route information to other drivers. On the interior, the large screen acts as a monitor on which data from the drones can be displayed.

About BMW Group DesignworksUSA.

BMW Group DesignworksUSA is a creative consultancy that's been driving innovation for forty years. The company, which was acquired by the BMW Group in 1995, today operates globally from its locations in Europe, America and Asia transferring knowledge from their work for the automotive area to clients from the most diverse industries and vice versa. With clients including Coca Cola, Dassault Aviation, Embraer, John Deere, HEAD, HP, Microsoft, Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART), Siemens and Intermarine DesignworksUSA is deeply immersed in a broad cross-section of industries. Earlier in 2012, DesignworksUSA opened its new studio in Shanghai. In 2010, Fast Company magazine ranked DesignworksUSA as the world's "#1 Most Innovative Company in Design". www.designworksusa.com

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