



Press release  
January 2012

## **Anything but ordinary. A portrait of Benoit Jacob.**



Benoit Jacob has been Head of Design for BMW i, the new BMW sub-brand, since 2010. His approach to design has been a resolute pursuit of sustainability which goes far beyond customary automotive design work. It's a challenge the unconventional Frenchman embraces, since he sees himself as a kind of "special design unit". His path to this point was predestined; for Benoit Jacob there has never been anything else but cars, and he was aged just ten when he made up his mind to be a car designer. Today this laid-back creative talent is distinguished by an inexhaustible curiosity, a fascination with masterpieces of engineering, and a consuming passion for his work.

### **The apprentice years: a beeline for the target.**

Benoit Jacob is different from most people. Conventions are a bit of a thorn in his flesh and he generally prefers to take the direct route. This was true of his training, just as much as it is of his work today. Even the way he got into the industry was unusual: after leaving school, Benoit Jacob simply presented his portfolio of sketches to Renault and was hired on the spot for a year's work experience. This was followed by a course in one of the motor industry's most important crucibles of executive talent, the prestigious Art Center College of Design in Vevey, Switzerland. After all, even for an unconventional creative spirit like Jacob it is essential to know the rules before playing around with them in an

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inventive way. After completing his design degree he continued his career with Renault, where he was responsible for the design of various concepts and models. His time with Renault had a profound influence on him and opened his eyes to the multifaceted nature of his profession. For him design is a holistic, all-embracing discipline which involves far more than sketching cars. Above all it requires close collaboration with specialists from the engineering side, from marketing and from research and development. Benoit Jacob very quickly took on board the interdisciplinary character of his job, and as Head of BMW i Design he is now passing it on to his team – head to head and heart to heart.

### **His philosophy: vision as a guide to action.**

For Benoit Jacob, design is a culture strongly influenced by vision. This is innately connected with the fact that car design is anchored in the future. The drawings a designer produces today must endure for the next ten to fifteen years. But the visionary image also fits well with the idea of automobile design as a comprehensive discipline, in which an overview of all the factors affecting the final form is of crucial importance. Vision is an all-round perspective which allows the widest possible scope for action. The aim is always to develop a car that is intended to meet all its users' needs, without exception. With BMW i his aspiration even goes a step further: here Benoit Jacob is aiming to develop a culture of his own, a culture of sustainable mobility.

### **On the personal side.**

As a Frenchman, Benoit Jacob has a great penchant for pleasures of the gastronomic kind. He also spends many of his holidays with his family in France. Benoit Jacob lives in Munich with his wife and son.



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### **The BMW Group**

The BMW Group is one of the most successful manufacturers of automobiles and motorcycles in the world with its BMW, MINI, Husqvarna Motorcycles and Rolls-Royce brands. As a global company, the BMW Group operates 25 production and assembly facilities in 14 countries and has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2011, the BMW Group sold about 1.67 million cars and more than 113,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax for the financial year 2010 was euro 4.8 billion on revenues amounting to euro 60.5 billion. At 31 December 2010, the BMW Group had a workforce of approximately 95,500 employees.

The success of the BMW Group has always been built on long-term thinking and responsible action. The company has therefore established ecological and social sustainability throughout the value chain, comprehensive product responsibility and a clear commitment to conserving resources as an integral part of its strategy. As a result of its efforts, the BMW Group has been ranked industry leader in the Dow Jones Sustainability Indexes for the last seven years.

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