



DESIGN BEHIND THE BIKE

AESTHETICS

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The aesthetics of cycling products are a consideration for the designers and manufacturers of bikes, clothing and accessories used in the sport. Aesthetics not only influence but are influenced by both the consumer and the professional rider. As the sport develops, the importance of aesthetics is not underestimated by industry leaders.

THE RELEVANCE OF AESTHETICS

JAMES FAIRBANK, HEAD OF DESIGN, RAPHA

Cycling is one of those aspirational activities that a lot of people want to identify with. Once you get to that stage, so the aesthetics of cycling and the way the sport itself looks is then a transferrable marketable thing.

PHIL HAMMILL, BRAND DIRECTOR, GENESIS

Aesthetics, you know, is so important to get right. A younger customer would maybe want bright colours, whereas an older customer maybe a little bit more understated, so it's a fine art trying to get the colours right.

JAMES FAIRBANK, HEAD OF DESIGN, RAPHA

I think the sense of uniform is very strong to cyclists. People are really particular about the length of socks they wear, the colour of shoes they've got on, if they wear shoe covers or not, the way their sunglasses are worn. It's partially rule driven and it's partially like putting on a suit of armour.

ROGER HAMMOND, FORMER PROFESSIONAL CYCLIST

The branding has a huge impact with the consumers. It does come down to that, I mean if you're going to spend an awful lot of money on a bike you want it to look good. There have been brands in the past that have concentrated purely on the mechanics and the engineering of the bike and then totally overlooked the branding and the finish of the product.

PHIL HAMMILL, BRAND DIRECTOR, GENESIS

We can design the best bike in the world but if it doesn't look good, it's not going to sell.

2 - THE PROCESS OF DESIGNING AESTHETICS OF BIKES & CYCLE WEAR

V.O.

As the image of the sport of cycling grows in the public eye, the process of designing the aesthetics of bikes, clothing and accessories is increasingly influenced by trends, high fashion and other industries.

BEN SPURRIER, HEAD OF DESIGN, CONDOR

We always start by asking ourselves who the person is, who is going to end up buying this bike? What kinds of other bikes are out there on the market that they will be influenced by? What are we trying to sort of coax them away from in order to buy our product?

JAMES FAIRBANK, HEAD OF DESIGN, RAPHA

We try to look to wider culture to provide cues of where we should be going so as opposed to being driven by potential future trends in cycling we'd either look back to the history of cycling and try to bring things that we like there, elements of that out, or alternatively look to kind of menswear fashions or womenswear fashions and try and bring in elements of those and try and kind of combine the two.

PHIL HAMMILL, BRAND DIRECTOR, GENESIS

We have a graphic designer. He spends probably two three months at least sort of doing a brief of the graphics and then once we've got all of that together we will sit together as a team and then decide which graphics we would like, what suits what model, what colours are on trend, you know that's a massive thing as well, in such that one year we will have fluoro colours that are quite in at the moment and then it will go back to darks or then we will see whether we want full on colour frames or whether you want colour hits, small detailing its quite a, it's the games is always changing every year.

BEN SPURRIER, HEAD OF DESIGN, CONDOR

It is important that we at Condor are always aware of any trends or fashions, be it in other industries or within the bicycle industry itself. The way in which we go about deciding on those colours and the nature of the graphics will involve a lot of research mainly. We look at the other products that are in those particular sectors of the market, so be it racing cars, be it the graphic elements that you get on other modes of transports. Planes, motorbikes, the snow sports industry, you name it we're looking at it all the time. All designs start with pencil and paper. We will pull bits of colour out of magazines, out of papers, out of whatever to mock up ideas and put ideas down on paper so that we can communicate to each other exactly what we are all thinking. It is easier to communicate those ideas with a sketch than it is on a screen.

JAMES FAIRBANK, HEAD OF DESIGN, RAPHA

With design in general you don't really notice good design and that definitely extends into cycling clothing as well. You just make the product that allows you to focus on riding the bike. And whether you're a member of team Sky or whether you're someone who uses cycling as an escape from your daily existence, it's the same reasons we're designing to try and solve the same problems. You know we don't want to get in the way of people riding, it's just to allow them to enjoy it as much as possible.

3 - PRO TEAMS INFLUENCING & BEING INFLUENCED BY AESTHETICS

V.O.

The aesthetics of the kit has become an essential factor when aiming to satisfy both the professional and the amateur cyclist. Professional teams in events such as the Tour de France are now dictating the designs.

ALBERT STEWARD, GENESIS PRODUCT MANAGER

The kit that the pro riders use has a massive effect in that it is portrayed as the best, the lightest, the most optimised so it's sort of only natural that the consumers, consumers will want to aspire to own the same kit.

JAMES FAIRBANK, HEAD OF DESIGN, RAPHA

We have a sample room in house that when we identify an interesting fabric we can make it into a garment very quickly so we have existing patterns that will then come down and cut the garment to suit and then we can put it on peoples' backs to test.

Probably the best example of that recently is a series of mesh jerseys we used with Team Sky at this year's Tour. They went from design to realization in 8 days and then they were being worn in the Tour because demand suddenly came from the team that they wanted a jersey which was completely mesh.

BEN SPURRIER, HEAD OF DESIGN, CONDOR

In terms of aesthetics, it's such an aspirational thing the Tour De France, you know now the whole nation is getting swept away with the success of Chris Froome, Bradley Wiggins, that, the eyes of everybody of the, the eyes of all our consumers are suddenly on these guys.

ROGER HAMMOND, FORMER PROFESSIONAL CYCLIST

Every day those guys have to put those clothes on and ride around in the general public. People are looking at them every day. So we want them to look good because we're showcasing our brands and the bikes that we're using but also they have to feel good about what they're doing.

JAMES FAIRBANK, HEAD OF DESIGN, RAPHA

The psychological aspect of getting dressed to ride can't be underestimated because you know when you pull sunglasses on suddenly the colour of the world changes and it's the final act in getting dressed before you go out to race. So one of the things we've learned through working with Sky is that the psychological side of things just can't be underestimated.

END STING