

INSIDE WATCH DESIGN

Designing a watch is extremely challenging. Watches are tiny, compared to such products as furniture or cars, which limits design opportunities. Add to this the fact that there are so many watches and brands on the market today, and it's more challenging than ever to have a unique design.

by Keith Strandberg

The Challenges

The over-riding task of every watch designer is to come up with a new design that doesn't look like anything else on the market. Considering the small size of a watch, and the conventions associated with timepieces, it's a tall order to design something truly unique.

"The biggest challenge for us is that there are so many watches and every client wants something new," says Claudio D'Amore, owner of independent Cosanova Design. "The detail makes the difference. We need to find the balance to all the little elements. We work hard on finding innovation in watches, to find the proper character."

Smaller brands can get away with really outlandish designs, because they don't have to sell it to the masses.





"For high end brands like Hautlence, it's important to be different in the design but also in the global brand building," says Guillaume Tetu, COO, Hautlence. "We are relatively new players, people have to recognize the product at the first glance."

Other companies have a wider audience, so they can't be as daring because it may result in failure.

"To offer something different than the others, to be recognizable among all the other watch brands, and to maybe have the chance to have some PR coverage – that's the challenge we face," says Matthias Breschan, president, Hamilton International Ltd. "Having a unique design doesn't mean a top seller, however, it can be too special and become a flop."

The design of a watch has to embody the spirit of the brand, so people know right away what the brand is. "Today every brand is looking very hard for a distinct design," says Thomas Morf, president, Carl F. Bucherer. "At the end, it's about creating something with timelessness. There is so much design trash within the industry, just to be different by all means. Carl F. Bucherer watches aim to be timeless, yet fresh and contemporary."

