

Press Release
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Hansgrohe AG is Among the World's Top 11 in Design

Hansgrohe AG received its first prize for design in 1974. In the years that followed, several hundred awards have been added, so it's no surprise that since the introduction of the "International Forum Design" (iF) corporate rankings in 2008, the German bathroom specialist has occupied a top position in this hit list of good design. This year Hansgrohe has successfully improved its position again and climbed to Number 11 among the approx. 1,900 listed companies.

With 780 points, the company, which was one of the first in the sanitary industry to tackle bathroom design back in the late 1960s, has also increased its advantage over direct competitors. Renowned brands such as Audi, Daimler, Dell, Hewlett Packard, Miele, Sony Ericsson, Thonet and Volkswagen are also positioned behind the Black Forest-based sanitary specialists.

"It can be seen here," enthuses Philippe Grohe, head of Axor, the designer brand of Hansgrohe AG, "that we are able to develop a design culture that has evolved over more than 40 years." In addition, the fact that Hansgrohe AG has relied exclusively on co-operation with external designers since the very beginning has paid off.



The prize-winning Axor Urquiola single lever wall washbasin



Philippe Grohe, Patricia Urquiola and Alberto Zontone at the Design Award ceremony

"We don't just work with one team of designers," says Philippe Grohe, "Instead, six of the world's most successful creative minds, Phoenix Design, Philippe Starck, Antonio Citterio, Jean-Marie Massaud, Patricia Urquiola and the Bouroullec Brothers, work with us as our design and development partners."

This is unequalled in the fittings industry and is reflected in a unique diversity of visionary design and spatial concepts. "Our co-operation follows the aspiration of improving life in the bathroom a little bit every day. Together with our renowned design partners, we rethink the bathroom repeatedly," explains Philippe Grohe. "In this way, we obtain so many pioneering stimuli for technological innovations and for the further improvement of the user friendliness of our products."

A clean sweep of prizes and growing demand

For Hansgrohe AG, a good design is never an end in itself. Instead, it simply fulfils their purpose if it involves outstanding functionality and an emotionality, which is striking. Evidence suggests that this is a proven formula, on one hand, by the record results achieved in 2010, continually growing demand

this year for products from Schiltach and the corresponding increase in turnover both in Germany and abroad.

On the other hand, countless awards, which have seen Hansgrohe's trophy collection grow to a proud 373 prizes, again prove the outstanding design skills of the company and its creative partners. In the coveted "iF awards" alone, the company was successful six times in Spring 2011. In addition, two "red dot awards" and three "Plus X Awards" - the "Innovationspreis Architektur und Technik", the state award from the state of Baden-Württemberg "Focus Open" in silver and eight American "Good Design Awards", including seven "Green Good Design Awards", which reward the sustainability and environmental profile of a product as well as the good design.

"Prize of Prizes"

However, the climax was the silver award of the "Design Award of the Republic Germany" once again, which went to Hansgrohe AG for the second time in a row in 2011. From the approx. 1,500 products nominated for one of the 25 "Prizes of Prizes", the jury decided on the wall-mounted wash basin from the Axor Urquiola collection.

"Of course, it would be great if we could get the "hat trick" in 2012," declares Philippe Grohe. "As far as I know, no other company in our industry has managed this and it would further strengthen our reputation as a brand manufacturer setting international standards in design." The chances are not bad. Seven Hansgrohe AG products are nominated for the coveted "Designpreis Deutschland 2012".

Ends

About Hansgrohe – the original from the Black Forest

During its 110-year history, the company Hansgrohe (www.hansgrohe.com), with headquarters in Schiltach in the Black Forest, has acquired a reputation in the sanitation sector as one of the innovative leaders in technology and design. With its mixers, showers and shower systems, Hansgrohe creates the original products that make the bathroom more functional, more comfortable and more beautiful.

It is no coincidence that they can be found in prominent prestige projects such as on the giant cruiser Queen Mary II, in Terminal 5 of Heathrow Airport in London, in the tallest man-made structure ever built, the Burj Khalifa in Dubai, as well as at the Chancellor's office in Berlin, in the Yoo luxury apartments in New York or at the Masdar City Institute of Science and Technology in Abu Dhabi.

In 2010, the company generated sales of about EUR 693 million with its Axor, Hansgrohe, Pharo and Pontos brands (2009: EUR 610 million). The Hansgrohe Group currently has a global workforce of about 3,200 employees, with around two-thirds of them working in Germany. The company, which takes tough action against product piracy and intellectual property theft, manufactures its products in six German plants, in France, the Netherlands, in the U.S. and in China.