

Setting the stage for brands in an appealing way

Black and white meets high-gloss: PLEXIGLAS® molding compounds permanently set the stage for Volkswagen's brand emblems

- **High-gloss emblems are a current trend in the automotive industry**
- **VW is relying on PLEXIGLAS® molding compounds for its new black and white emblems**
- **PLEXIGLAS® Hi-Gloss is a high-gloss molding compound available in jet black and in a brand new white coloring**

A circle surrounding the letters V and W – just one glance and it's clear that we're looking at a Volkswagen. After all, the logo of the automobile group from Wolfsburg is one of the best-known brand logos in the world. The basic shape of the logo has been in use since 1945 and has been subject to continued development over the years, with Volkswagen recently modernizing the logo in one of the world's biggest rebranding exercises. "The new logo represents Volkswagen's breakthrough into an electric, connected and CO₂-neutral era," says Klaus Zyciora, Head of Volkswagen Group Design.

The new logo has been reduced to its essential components and appears in a flat, 2D design. This change is also reflected in the emblems of the current ID models, such as the ID.3: In place of chrome-colored letters on a high-gloss black background, the new brand logo is resplendent in a modern black and white high-gloss look. This high-quality look underlines the positive perception of the premium brand, especially in combination with the increase in the emblem diameter by 4.5 centimeters, making it even more eye-catching when applied to the front or rear of a car.

High-quality class A surface

The combination of two PLEXIGLAS® Hi-Gloss products is used by Austrian automotive supplier, Ulbrichts GmbH, to create the modern look of the emblem. The company uses a special molding compound from Röhm GmbH which has been used for black, high-gloss components in the automotive industry – such as pillar panels – for almost 20 years. This molding compound is used to create class A surfaces with very high color depth. The contrast between black and white helps the letters of the current logo clearly stand out, regardless of the paint color beneath. Volkswagen has been using this effect for several years now, albeit in a modified version. Here, the famous chrome-colored letters stand out thanks to a high-gloss black background made from PLEXIGLAS® Hi-Gloss.

Whether a combination of black and white or black and chrome, the glossy appearance is retained throughout the entire life of the vehicle, as the brand polymethyl methacrylate (PMMA) from Röhm is resistant against fuels and many other chemicals, as well as displaying an unsurpassed UV and weather resistance. "A logo is vital for brand recognition and should not fade or become brittle," says Georg Scharpenack, CEO of Ulbrichts GmbH.

Significant development work required

However, before the high-gloss emblems were finalized, the European market leader for automobile emblems and lettering had to perform significant development work. "Volkswagen approached us for the first time back in 2012 with the task of developing high-gloss emblems," said Scharpenack. "Painted components were not feasible for cost reasons,

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which is why we experimented with various materials." The goal was to find a material which could be formed into thin and high-quality emblems using an automated injection molding procedure. "We initially thought PMMA was not suitable for this," Scharpenack reports. "However, Brenntag Austria and the high-quality products from Röhm convinced us otherwise."

Brenntag is the global market leader in chemical and ingredients distribution. Brenntag Austria is the trade partner of Röhm in Austria and therefore offers its customers the entire range of PLEXIGLAS® products. Alongside the high-gloss black PLEXIGLAS® molding compounds, which have proven their worth over many years, the portfolio was recently expanded to include a white coloring of the brand PMMA from Röhm. "We are aware of the strengths of the different materials – and PLEXIGLAS® Hi-Gloss molding compounds also have several benefits when it comes to producing emblems," says Joachim Schicker, Account Manager Material Science-Polymers at Brenntag Austria. These benefits mean it is possible to create the black and white high-gloss component with a class A surface in just one work step when injection molding. "There is no need to apply a subsequent high-gloss paint," says Scharpenack. "We can therefore significantly reduce the costs for each component – a key factor when considering the high number of parts required in the automotive industry."

Emblem evolution continues

Economic in production and permanently high-gloss: PLEXIGLAS® combines function and aesthetics and supports automobile manufacturers in the development of their model ranges. At Volkswagen, light is becoming an ever more central design element – or as Head of Volkswagen Group Design Zyciora puts it: "Light is the new chrome." The logo will also be illuminated in the future; not just on the vehicles, but also at the company sites and dealerships.

The ID.ROOMZZ concept car showed off this aspect with its particularly striking light elements and illuminated front and rear emblems. "While European legislation currently does not permit brand logos to be illuminated on the road, several Asian countries do allow it. PLEXIGLAS® molding compounds are also available for this, as they can be used for various lighting applications in and around the automobile, guarantee the homogeneous scattering of light and enable flexible design," says Siamak Djafarian, Head of the Molding Compounds business unit at Röhm.

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Text: The current VW emblem, as seen here on the ID.3, combines white letters and a jet-black background. Both elements are manufactured using two color variants from the PLEXIGLAS® Hi-Gloss series.

Source: Volkswagen



Text: Even more striking on the front and rear: The diameter of the current emblem is 4.5 centimeters larger than previous versions.

Source: Volkswagen

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Text: Cast in the same mold: The high-gloss surface of the emblem made from PLEXIGLAS® creates a homogeneous impression while allowing the brand to clearly stand out.

Source: Volkswagen



Text: Illuminated logos are the next step in automobile emblems, as shown here on the ID.ROOMZZ concept car. The covers of the illuminated emblems were made from PLEXIGLAS® with an optical coating, which makes them appear even brighter.

Source: Volkswagen

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About Röhm

With 3,500 employees and 15 production sites worldwide, Röhm is one of the leading manufacturers in the methacrylate business. The medium-sized company with branches in Germany, China, the USA, Russia, and South Africa has more than 80 years of experience in methacrylate chemistry and a strong technology platform. Our best-known brands include PLEXIGLAS®, ACRYLITE®, MERACRYL™, DEGALAN®, DEGAROUTE® and CYROLITE®.

Polymethyl methacrylate (PMMA) products from Röhm are sold on the European, Asian, African and Australian continent under the registered trademarks PLEXIGLAS® and PLEXIMID®, in the Americas under the registered trademarks ACRYLITE® and ACRYMID®.

More information is available at www.roehm.com.

About Brenntag

Brenntag is the global market leader in chemical and ingredients distribution. The company's almost 17,500 employees provide custom application, marketing and supply chain solutions. Its portfolio comprises special chemicals, industrial chemicals and ingredients. From the headquarters in Essen, Brenntag operates a global network with over 640 sites in 77 countries. In 2019, the company generated revenue of EUR 12.8 billion (USD 14.4 billion). Brenntag is listed on the Frankfurt Stock Exchange (BNR).