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INTERNATIONAL AUTOMOTIVE COMPONENTS UK



HOW DID IAC GET INVOLVED WITH THE GRENADIER PROJECT?

First of all, our UK team brought their colleagues in mainland Europe and India up to speed on the story behind the Grenadier and the vision for the product. From there, the enthusiasm really grew to become part of enabling that vision.

To us, the idea was genuinely bold. When we saw the quality of the INEOS Grenadier team – and their diverse automotive backgrounds – it became clear that success was feasible. Later on, the acquisition of the Hambach plant reinforced that view.

WHAT MADE THE GRENADIER PROJECT SO ATTRACTIVE TO IAC?

How many times do you come across a brand new OEM? What a great opportunity it represents – to contribute to its success by applying the lessons we have learned over the years, by redefining best practices and lean methods. It was as clear then as it is now that this is a truly exciting project.

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WHAT CHARACTERISTICS DO THE TWO COMPANIES HAVE IN COMMON?

I like to see IAC as an organisation ready to take on any challenge, together with our customers – just as a Grenadier will be a reliable partner on any journey.

OF ALL YOUR COMPANY'S CORE COMPETENCIES, WHICH PROVED ESSENTIAL TO THE PROJECT'S SUCCESS?

We are a global company with a full-service supply capability. Having common business processes across our organisation meant we could hit the ground running. We operate with a high level of core team empowerment, which keeps things moving. Nevertheless, having senior management fully engaged meant that issues requiring a swift decision or direction from the top were discussed and processed in a timely and robust fashion. Regular, timely and open communication with INEOS Automotive and Magna Steyr continue to be crucial. This cooperation with both the OEM and their vehicle development partners is not unusual in the OEM world today and we have a great deal of experience working with multiple stakeholders. Very early in the process we established a tri-lateral senior decision forum enabling INEOS, Magna Steyr and IAC to review topics requiring cross-functional decisions on a weekly basis.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES FACING INEOS AUTOMOTIVE?

There is a lot to learn when you're designing and building a vehicle from scratch – and much of this process still lies ahead. It will include the fine tuning of the vehicle to meet customer demands and really 'living' the new brand. These are the factors that will determine how well the Grenadier differentiates itself in what is a fiercely competitive market. It involves answering a lot of fundamental questions about what to make standard and what to offer as an optional feature – and how to provide customised solutions to a diverse customer base.

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF BEING RESPONSIBLE FOR A COMPLETE VEHICLE INTERIOR?

Being responsible for the complete vehicle interior provides a greater degree of freedom and allows the optimization of the fit and function as individual elements come together. Another advantage is the immediate visibility you have of any issues as they arise. Our proven IAC business processes and procedures ensured our programme delivery teams worked to a high level of consistency and ensured robustness in our developments. Our responsibility for the entire interior also made things simpler for INEOS and Magna Steyr, who could focus on the overall programme as a result.

HOW DID YOU STRUCTURE YOUR PROJECT TEAM TO SUPPORT THE ENGINEERING PROCESS FOR A COMPLETE INTERIOR?

Our approach to the Grenadier programme – in spite of its many unique aspects – was similar to other programmes, in the sense that we divided our engineering team according to the different zones of the vehicle (Cockpit System, Greenhouse System etc.). Due to the wide scope, we additionally implemented several senior roles to enhance our vehicle system approach and to co-ordinate delivery in line with INEOS Automotive’s expectations. These senior roles allowed INEOS and Magna Steyr to discuss and review any vehicle-level challenges that arise throughout development.

WHAT DID YOU DO DIFFERENTLY TO SUPPORT SHORT TIMELINES LIKE THIS?

When supporting any timeline, the team – both internal and external – need to be fully abreast of the deliverables for each gateway, the steps that need to be taken to get there, and the correct structure and guidance to ensure that delivery is achieved.

Our gateway and deliverables management was robustly monitored and assessed throughout all phases of the project. From the start, our organisational structure was resourced to ensure the programme timings were met, but as always, you meet unexpected challenges along the way. With the outbreak of Covid 19, we increased our

UK-based resource to mitigate the resulting organisational and logistical challenges, so we could keep to our delivery deadlines.

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WAS THERE ANY SPECIFIC PHASE THAT WAS EXCEPTIONALLY CHALLENGING?

The development kick-off in early 2020 coincided with the global health crisis. This was a challenge in terms of working locations, infrastructure for the teams and being able to deliver functions and responsibilities. Cooperation between the different IAC regions enabled our teams to relocate from the office to remote working scenarios, which itself meant design stations in team members’ homes. Throughout this challenging period, our global teams have maintained communication as well as the tracking of project gateways and deliverables.

We were impressed and motivated by the proactive communication from the INEOS management team, who made it clear that the Grenadier project would continue in spite of the global uncertainty in the second quarter of last year.

WHAT MAKES WORKING WITH INEOS AUTOMOTIVE DIFFERENT?

If creating a new vehicle is a challenge, then creating a whole new automotive company is probably the adventure of a lifetime. We were attracted by the spirit that drove this project in the first place and it has kept our motivation high throughout. As suppliers, we are grateful to INEOS Automotive for always treating us as respected partners and equally empowered members of this incredible team.

