



Ford designers are choosing new colours virtually, harnessing the same computer process that enables them to create new vehicles without the use of clay to now develop colours without opening a single can of paint.

Ford designers go virtual in colour

The same virtual process that enables Ford designers to create new vehicles without the use of clay is helping designers develop colours without opening a single can of paint.

Ford Chief Designer Jeff Nowak is spearheading a team of software developers, paint suppliers and designers to develop unique solutions for mapping colours in the virtual world, pouring the traditional paint verification process down the drain.

Until now, designers couldn't create vehicles in the virtual world with their representative paint colour.

Jon Hall, an expert colour designer on the project, explains that picking colour is a lot more complicated than it seems.

"Colours appear vastly different on vehicles with different surfaces, contours and lines," he said. "By using the digital process, we can apply colour to the actual vehicle being designed in the virtual world. This can happen months upstream in the development process, when a physical property is simply not available."

Environments with different light sources can also be created: full sun, shade, a dealer showroom or an auto show floor. Hall said paint color that looks good in one lighting condition might not look good in another.

"We use this technology to share information globally, which is important as Ford expands its global product development process," Nowak said.

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