

NEWS RELEASE

YOKOHAMA

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Yokohama Rubber Establishes Yokohama Design Center (YDC) to Create Highly Competitive, Original Products

Tokyo – The Yokohama Rubber Co., Ltd., today announced that it established a Yokohama Design Center (YDC) inside the head office building of the Minato-ku, Tokyo-based company. The YDC is intensively equipped with advanced information technologies, workshop functions and audiovisual equipment so that it can contribute to the improvement of passenger-tire appearance and the reduction of product development lead-time at the company.

By establishing the YDC, Yokohama Rubber aims to create an enhanced environment for three-dimensional tire design. In particular, its solid-model molding system makes it possible to shorten the time necessary for conventional clay modeling (three-dimensional model creation) and review extremely lifelike models from various aspects, thus enabling the company to improve tire appearance to increase commercial competitiveness and reduce product development lead-time. In addition, the YDC is furnished with a plasma display panel that can show three-dimensional data, an audiovisual presentation system extensively utilizing animation and audio, and a tire exchange system that can mount a pilot design model to actual cars, in order to achieve dynamic product design. Also, Yokohama Rubber will use the glass-walled office of the YDC as a showroom to exhibit new designs. The company plans to actively utilize the YDC as its studio for the presentation of new designs to carmakers in Japan and overseas.

In passenger tire business, product appearance, in addition to tire performance, has a great importance in establishing brand identity and differentiation from the competition. In some cases, appearance even largely affects sales of a product. Hence, a project to develop a new product involves designers with thorough knowledge of user preference trend and the product's performance, in addition to product planners who investigate market trends and technologists who design the product to attain required performance levels.



The YDC's glass-walled office (left) can be used as a showroom and its studio (right) boasts advanced equipment and functions.

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