

Styling Design of New CIVIC

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ABSTRACT

The new CIVIC was developed under the grand concept of “Distinctive Smart CIVIC” following the keywords “Clean & Energetic” and “Smart Technology” (new values that anticipate the era) and “Fun to Drive/Fuel Efficiency” (the basic performance expected of a car).

The exterior design is based on the concept “Clean & Energetic” and expresses a unique dynamic monoform framework that looks powerful and clear. The interior design is based on the concept “Smart Futuristic Cockpit” and embodies a functional, spacious and advanced cockpit. The colors and fabric were also developed to bring out these characteristics.

1. Introduction

Since the arrival of the first-generation CIVIC in 1972, successive generations have offered innovative packages, leading-edge technologies, and new value for each era so that customers in 170 countries of the world, and particularly the US, have loved each model.

The previous generation of the CIVIC, the eighth overall, offered distinctive new value with a streamlined silhouette and a monoform framework creating an interior that evoked a sense of spaciousness and the near future. In the main market of the US, several generations including the baby boomers have endorsed such value, as has Generation Y, which particularly hopes to lead a smart lifestyle. The advanced technology and refined exterior design were highly praised.

Generation Y is the main target of the recent full model change. The aim of the designers was to make Generation Y glad to own the CIVIC by building new value with an evolved interface that makes their lifestyle rich and smart through the new CIVIC’s unique and dynamically evolved monoform framework. Figure 1 shows the grand concept of the new CIVIC.

2. Design Goals

The styling design of the new CIVIC was developed with the keywords “Clean,” “Smart” and “Refreshing” so that the main target Generation Y customers could lead rich and smart lifestyles.

The aim was a novel and advanced interface which the driver could instantly recognize and intuitively operate without having to think about it, and a roomy interior space beyond that of the car’s class to ensure that driving the car is refreshing. Another aim was to achieve a design with unique presence and new value by creating a dynamic monoform framework characterized by a large cabin that makes the roomy interior space obvious from the outside.

3. Package Layout

The package layout was based on the concept “Distinctive Package,” aiming to achieve a unique monoform framework with presence and a spacious and refreshing interior beyond that of the car’s class. To prevent a loss of fuel efficiency, the exterior size was kept the same as the previous CIVIC generation, but to achieve the concept within that size the designers endeavored to make the interior space as efficient as possible while pursuing



*DQR: Durability, Quality and Reliability

Fig. 1 Grand concept

an open and visually roomy feel with a wide front field of vision (Fig. 2).

To make the interior space efficient they went back to Honda's starting point of vehicle manufacturing - "Man maximum, mechanism minimum." In doing so they specified, in 1 mm units, the dimensions of those parts in which people are particularly sensitive to roominess.

A look at how the CIVIC is used in the US market indicates that it is primarily by the driver alone for work and school commuting, etc. To provide comfort in the front seat space and impart the feel of an automobile one rank higher, the space between passengers on the left and right was increased by 10 mm, and at the same time the interior width was increased by 75 mm by making the door lining thinner.

The rear seat space, moreover, is important to the global market. The distance between front and rear passenger is about the same as in the previous CIVIC generation, but a lower floor makes it possible to give back seat passengers more foot space, while improvements to the shape of the front seat-backs increase knee space for a roomier back seat space (Fig. 3).

With the aim of further increasing the roomy feel, the lower end of the front pillar was positioned forward similar to the previous CIVIC. The front pillar was made slender and improved in cross-section ensuring a wide and open-looking forward field of vision.

Meanwhile, the front quarter-window was positioned on the door side to widen the field of vision. This offers a refreshing and open space with a clear view above the instrument panel to the left and right (Fig. 4).

The lower end of the front pillar is positioned forward to also contribute to the visual roominess that one can feel from the back seat. Further, the front seat-back was shaped to appear smaller so that the interior space looks wide open even from the back seat.

The monoform framework developed not only presents such a refreshing space, but also embodies the CIVIC's unique proportions - namely the long cabin, short nose and short deck.



Fig. 3 Rear space



Fig. 4 Front space

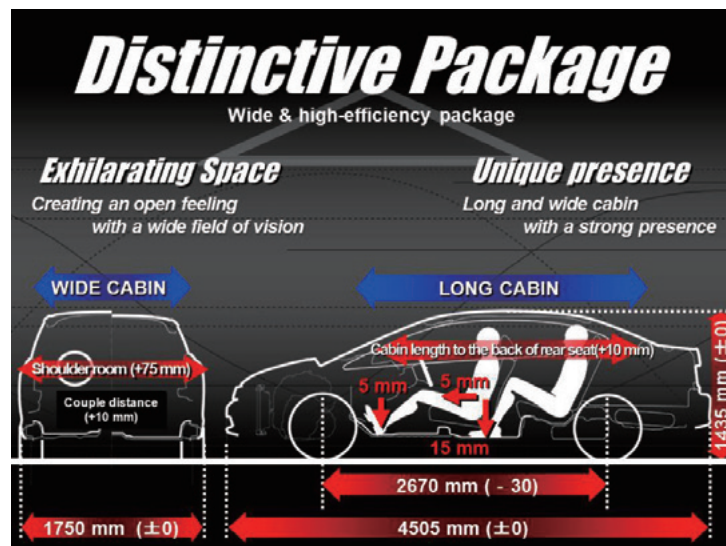


Fig. 2 Package layout

4. Exterior Design

The exterior was styled with the Clean & Energetic concept and expresses a unique dynamic monoform framework that looks powerful and clear. The styling emphasizes form continuity flowing from the engine hood to the cabin and trunk. The basic motif is a simple, clean monoform framework that looks honed and integrated (Fig. 5).

A surface has been built with an image of energy bubbling out from the inside of this clean body. An emphasis on the modulation and lively feel of the tension-filled body enabled a design evolved beyond that of the previous CIVIC generation. What particularly expresses this is the dynamic form modeling in which the surfaces twist and project outwards from the side shoulder line to the rear fender.

There is also a character line running down the lower part of the body side that gives a nimble and casual impression. Additionally, the lower end of the front pillar is positioned forward, making the side window graphics look long from front to back. This makes the interior space appear refreshing as well as gives the body a low, sporty bearing (Fig. 6).

The front view's design aimed to impart the feel of an automobile one rank higher by emphasizing the wide feel. The corner of the front bumper was modeled to project outwards, which achieves an automobile rank with modulation, a lively feel, and a stately presence. The front mask is designed as a horizontal line connecting the front

grill and headlights with a long-slit expression and intrepid-looking face. The front face succeeds to the identity of the previous CIVIC generation so that it is immediately recognizable as a CIVIC (Fig. 7).

The rear view features tension-filled modeling with continuity from the trunk center to the outside and emphasizes roundness through the rear combination lamp that wraps around to the body side. The outer lens's outside corner is designed to have an edge shape that optimizes air flow on the body side face and boosts aerodynamic performance.

The rear bumper, like the front, has corners that project outwards to emphasize the wide look and a design with lively feel that looks like an automobile one rank higher (Fig. 8).



Fig. 7 Front design



Fig. 5 Exterior design concept



Fig. 8 Rear design



Fig. 6 Final rendering

5. Interior Design

The interior was styled on the concept of "Smart Futuristic Cockpit," seeking to be an advanced driver's cockpit and a functional, roomy interior space (Fig. 9).

The cockpit panel was arranged so that the meters, where the driver's line of vision is most likely to settle, are

set back the farthest, and the surface modeling gives a sense of vigor from front to back in order to draw the occupant's vision. As it shifts toward the passenger side, the instrument panel is designed with a large curve as if it had been scooped out with a spoon. Both the upper and lower parts of the door lining use negative faces to achieve the greatest interior width in the class. The result is refreshing and clean form modeling that gives a feel of expansiveness in the horizontal direction (Fig. 10).

The design concept of the control system and display was to place driving interface including the speed meter in front of the driver, and information interface including the audio information display at the center of the instrument panel. Operability of the instrument panel was enhanced by positioning important displays on the upper section closer to the outside view, and control system near the driver's hands (Fig. 11).

The upper level of the multiplex meter, which offers excellent visibility, is used for the "Multi-Information Display" that provides a variety of information in an easy to understand way. The simple graphic design helps the screens providing fuel efficiency, and audio and driving support information to evolve into a functional, advanced interface that minimizes movement of the line of vision while cruising, and offers excellent instant recognition.

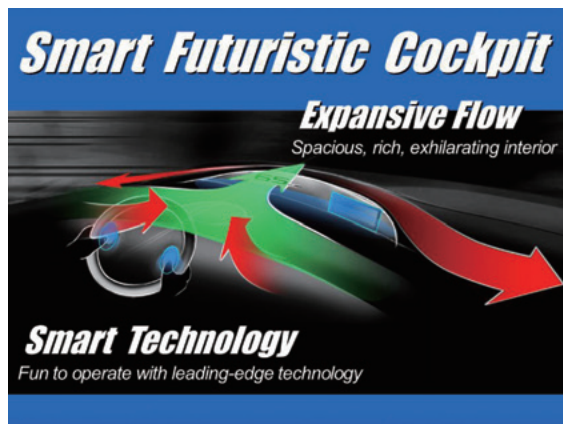


Fig. 9 Interior design concept

Additionally, a round cross-switch⁽¹⁾ has been used as the audio steering wheel switch for the first time in a Honda. By using a design that makes it easy to imagine the screen display content and switch operating direction, this smart operating system can be used intuitively without having to think about it or look at what the fingers are doing (Fig. 12).

The front seat has sufficiently thick parts where it supports the lower back from the side, yet it makes the space seem bigger with its smooth, round shape where it stretches from the lower back to the shoulders at the top. Furthermore, for rear seat passenger comfort, the back of the front seat has a pared-down shape providing more knee space.

The rear seat emphasizes spaciousness with horizontally oriented graphics, and features side supports of a three-dimensional shape, enhancing riding comfort for rear seat passengers (Fig. 13).

Storage space retains the basic specifications of the previous CIVIC generation, including the position and module, and for the first time includes a USB terminal in the console box which allows a music player, etc. to be put away while still plugged in. And because the music player, etc. can be finger-operated with the aforementioned steering wheel switch while cruising, it is possible to enjoy music in smart fashion (Fig. 14).

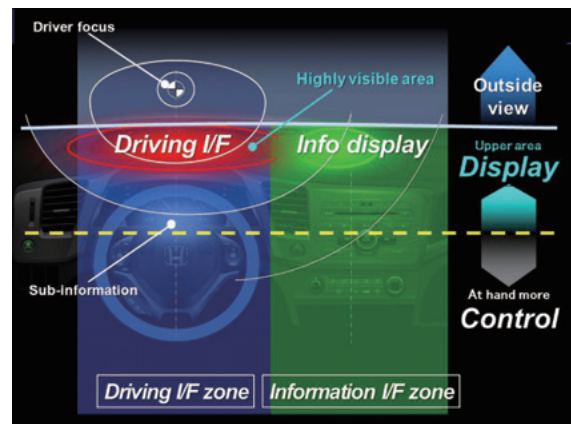


Fig. 11 Multi-information display concept



Fig. 10 Instrument panel



Fig. 12 Drivers cockpit



Fig. 13 Seat design



Fig. 14 Storage design

6. Color and Fabric Design

Colors are coordinated to fuse function and design based on the “Clean & Emotional” concept.

The keywords for the exterior colors are a clear feel like glass and strength of hard metal. There is a lineup of 11 colors, including five new.

The theme color COOL MIST M. is a white metallic color with fine polarized pearl pigment. Soft color-shifting and multilayer-looking highlights invoke a futuristic feel and make the styling presence all the more prominent. GREEN OPAL M. is a color for hybrid cars only and directly expresses an advanced eco-responsible image. Bright aluminum flakes emphasize the rich form, and the color shift from blue to green offers a refreshing look.

CRIMSON P., DYNO BLUE P., and SUNBURST ORANGE P. (which is for the Si sports grade only) were each selected for their lucid character to meet the preferences of various customers. Each color contains coarse, bright aluminum flakes to emphasize three-dimensional shadowing with deep shades and highly chromatic highlights (Fig. 15).

Interior coloring was based on the keywords of advanced and confidence-inspiring character. The lineup of four colors makes the roomy styling more prominent.

The interior theme color, PALE MOSS GRAY, is a new

light color whose essence is pale green. Coordinated to be bright and clean, it expresses a refreshing and advanced feel.

Other interior colors are a modern gray (with a bright gray base), beige (expressing a warm, high-quality feel), and black (expressing a powerful sporty feel and available only on the Si sports grade) (Fig. 16).

The new concept of “Hide and Seek Surface,” which harmonizes organic surfaces and form, was used on the instrument panel and upper part of the door.

Two different organic textures are blended to express a gentle texture. Shape and the reflection of light cause the look to change into various expressions in which the two textures are sometimes independent, sometimes overlapping. This visual effect imparts the look of even greater expansiveness and depth to the already roomy interior space (Fig. 17).

The seat fabric consists of tricot suede, pleasant to the touch, printed with a line-based design that looks as if it were drawn freehand and gives a light and lively feel. The line-based design running freely over the entire seat is repeated three times more often than normal, making the dynamic nature and roominess of the seat styling more prominent (Fig. 18).

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Fig. 15 Exterior color image and line-up

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Fig. 16 Interior color variation

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Fig. 17 Surface design

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Fig. 18 Fabric design

7. Conclusion

Forty years have passed since the arrival of the first-generation CIVIC, and customers around the world have consistently loved the model over all of this time. Honda has continued to provide original, innovative packages, leading-edge technologies, and new value to delight customers in 170 countries around the world.

For the recent full model change that resulted in the ninth generation of CIVIC, Honda endeavored to develop a design based on the grand concept of the “Distinctive Smart CIVIC.” With its powerful, clear and original dynamic monoform framework, and its functional, advanced interface offering excellent instant recognition, the new car expresses the unique presence handed down from the first generation plus new value.

It is Honda’s hope that over the coming decades customers around the world will continue to love not only the new CIVIC but the entire CIVIC line.

Reference

- (1) Abe, M.: Operability Enhancement of Steering Wheel Switch for Audio Remote Control, Honda R&D Technical Review, October, 2011, p. 66-69

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