

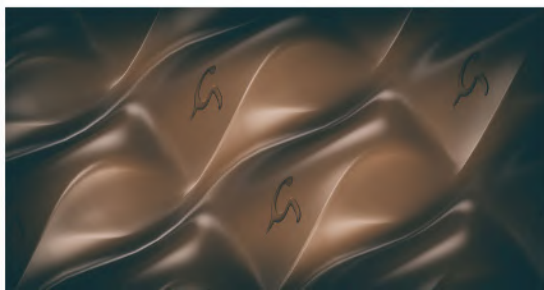
BEYOND MOBILITY

Although Astheimer Design is focused on the development of mobility solutions for a sustainable future, in our 12 years of history we have also developed many products in a broad range of other sectors.

We spend the majority of our time working on nearly all forms of mobility: public, commercial, marine, aerospace, leisure and passenger vehicles; but we have also developed numerous successful design projects in sectors including consumer electronics, furniture, FMCG, architecture – even jewellery and many others – and we will continue to work in sectors beyond mobility.

There are few reasons why I think it's important that we continue to work in a variety of sectors, even though as a business mobility is our core.

Firstly, the variety of projects enables us to get a deeper understanding and perception of people's needs and desires. The changing trends, technologies, materials and processes that are being developed in these different sectors. This knowledge helps us to cross pollinate findings and ideas between sectors. A great example would be mobile phone interfaces now becoming the dominant HMI (human-machine interface) in passenger vehicles, with Apple Play and Android Automotive.



Secondly, working in a range of sectors means that we get to experience these different realities and markets which operate in different ways. We also get to meet and work with people who have had vastly different backgrounds and experiences, and for a team of creatives, learning something new is fundamental to keeping the mind stimulated and keeping fresh.

Thirdly, it's beneficial from a financial perspective. Different sectors work on different economic cycles and working in these different sectors helps to balance workloads and cash flow. A vehicle project can take up to 24 months to define the design, whereas a mobile phone project generally takes us six months to production, as would a piece of furniture. The shorter projects help fill the gaps and bring variety into the day-to-day.

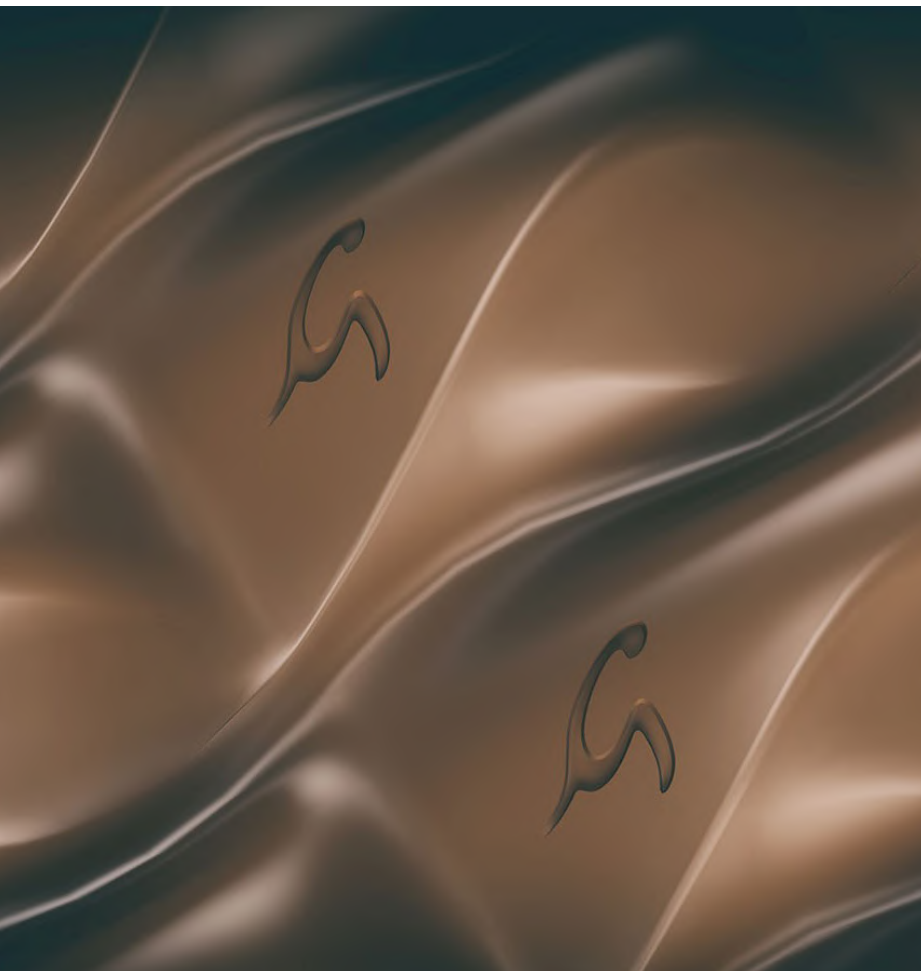
Lastly and maybe most importantly, the transport industry is going through a revolution, and so too will the design of vehicles, which as they move through to full autonomy will bring in design influences from different sectors, including furniture design, and the mobile phone industry.

Below are some examples of projects beyond mobility that surprisingly have had direct positive influence in our ability to create unique, relevant and desirable projects for mobility

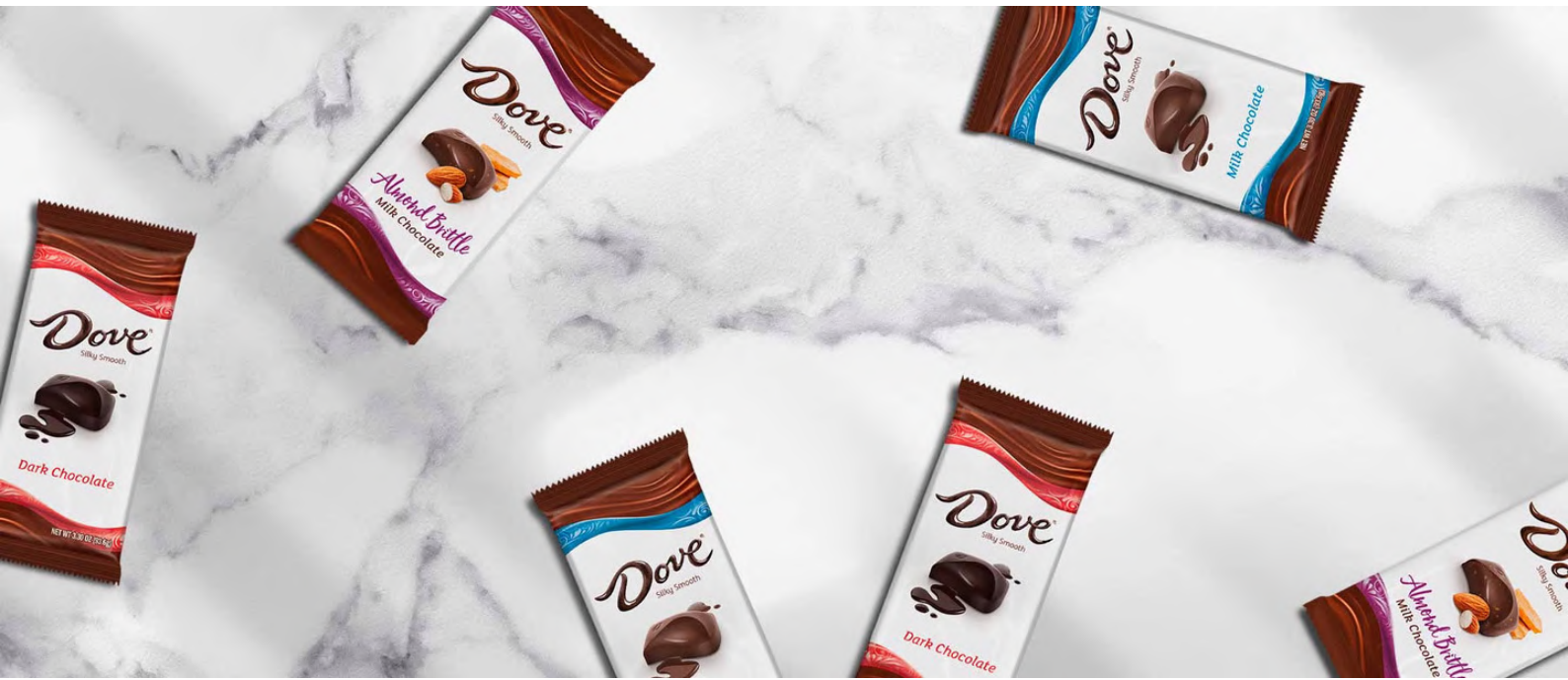
CONFECTIONARY

Prior to our work in the confectionary space with Mars and their Galaxy product range, our team held a great degree of experience in the yachting industry having worked on a variety of projects with Sealine and other major brands in the marine sector.

One design trait of yachts and superyachts is the abundance of fluid forms and advanced surfacing. We saw an opportunity at this time to further explore our expertise in surface language and 3D form development.



At the same time, Mars were working hard to effectively capture and convey the essence of their Galaxy brand, particularly regarding their Galaxy Dove products sold around the world.



Having already explored other avenues like graphics and the structural packaging, they too saw the opportunity to find a partner that could really distil their brand DNA down to its core elements and create a design language that would be instantly recognisable to their customers. The feeling of silky-smooth chocolate that sets them apart from this crowded marketplace.

Mars were keen to break away from the standardised blocks of tablets that were popular at the time and build a single design system that could be used across a range of different products while staying true to the brand identity



One parallel that can be drawn in developing a coherent design language across a variety of sectors is the importance of emotional cues and how the choices made in the design language are consistent with the values and feeling that brand or products aspire to represent and provoke.

Ultimately, whatever is being designed is done so with the customer and their experience at the centre of everything. Whether that's a bar of chocolate or a new EV concept.

The foundation of this work with Mars is that they were determined to better understand their end customers; the experiences and touchpoints they have with the Galaxy Dove brand, what they value, and how those experiences could be improved.



Beyond simply churning out new designs and products, there was real scientific backing behind the work being done. For example, the way that changes in the surface design impacted melt rates. All this research is carried out to create an improved experience for the end customer and something that absolutely translates back to our work in other industries like mobility.

And ultimately this is what design is. Not just creating for the sake of creating but creating for a purpose. Creating for your customer. Pushing the limits of what's deemed possible and moving the dial each time you do.

Speaking to one of our senior designers, Tim Moore, about the benefits of working on projects outside of mobility, he had this to say:

***“At the centre of it all is the end user. And that is the thing which is dramatically changing with each project.*”**

Working on projects outside of mobility gives you a much, much wider viewpoint. You start to really understand the use case and you are exposed to multiple ways of working within those companies.

It is that which can be taken back into mobility and improve the design for the end user regardless of what you are working on.”

He built on this to talk about the importance of drawing on inspiration from a variety of different sources during the design process.

***“Working across a breadth of industries exposes you to a variety of things that can inspire designs that are really unique, really fresh.*”**

You're always having to push yourself to think outside of the norm and then you can bring that learning back into the mobility and I think that's where the key advantages of working across multiple different industries lie.”

Tim Moore – Lead Designer, Astheimer Design

FURNITURE AND INTERIOR DESIGN

In addition to our partnership role with British Design Shop, Astheimer Design have worked with a host of different furniture brands alongside our core capabilities within mobility.



With autonomy playing an increasingly significant role and drivetrains shifting from ICE engines to battery-powered, the consequent changes to vehicle architecture are impacting the way we approach mobility design and the types of experiences we're creating for the end user.

The role of the driver is changing, becoming considerably more synchronous with that of the passengers. Mobility is moving further and further away from simply being about getting from A to B, with comfort, and access to entertainment and remote working becoming more prominent aspects of the experience.

This shift within mobility brings many of the design challenges within a project much closer to that of an interior design brief, making our background in tackling projects outside of mobility an increasingly valuable asset in consistently delivering designs that are unique, relevant and desirable despite these changing times.

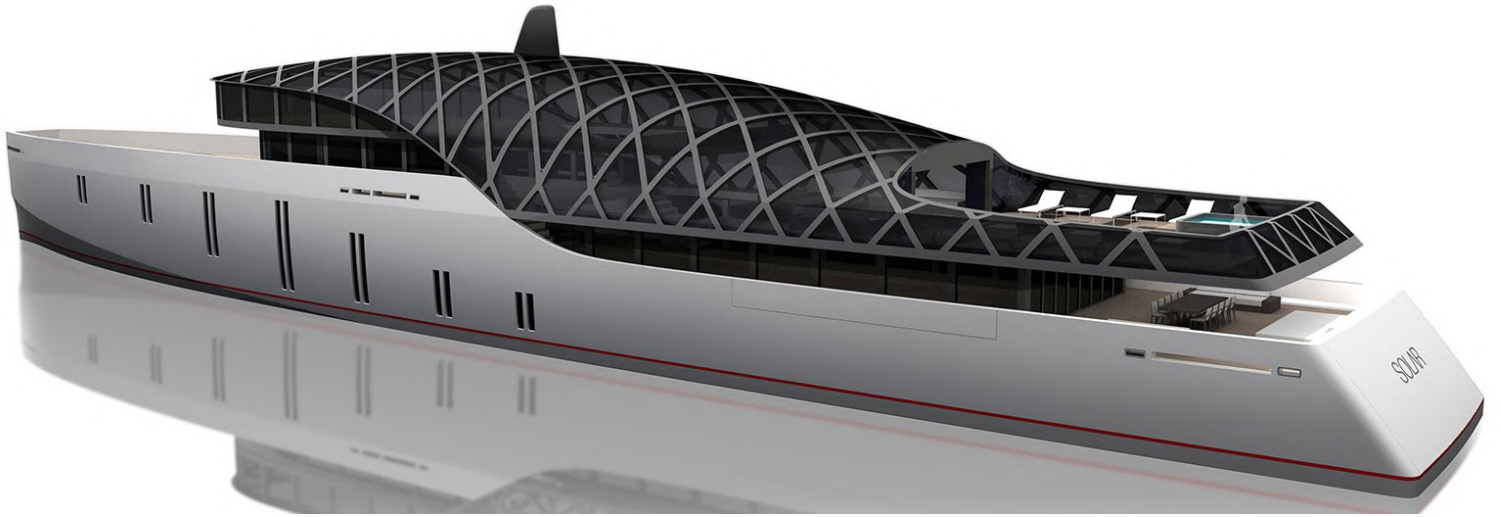
Our Aether concept encapsulates many of these changes. It nods to a driverless future where the cabin delivers a shared experience for all passengers. In this case, a deep understanding of spatial planning, colour, material and finish are crucial.



Our experience in the marine sector equally shares a range of attributes with the changing requirements for mobility design. The flow of a space, how you interact with different elements of it, and ergonomics are hugely important in these projects and aid in blending functionality and purpose with beautiful aesthetics to create a unique and memorable experience for the end-user.







Airstream presents yet another great example of our work in interior design, compounding the practical benefits of working in projects beyond mobility because these varied design challenges and briefs provide a much broader scope of inspiration to bring back into our core future mobility projects.



In addition to this, furniture is perhaps one of the hardest things to design well. The sustaining popularity of furniture dating back to the 1920s and earlier shows the timeless nature of great design in this sector. In all this time the physicality of humans hasn't changed much at all.

These great challenges offer powerful drivers for our team in continuing to expand their horizons and develop their skillsets and experience, ultimately making us a much more creative and effective team in developing solutions for the mobility sector.

“We encourage our team to draw inspiration from many different places and experiences. If you're just drawing car seats every day, you're probably going to draw lots of things that look the same.

Whereas, if we're looking at it from furniture, this is a huge industry which spans from chairs to sofas and everything in between. It's definitely valuable to have a bigger pool of inspiration to draw from.”

Russel Gillott - Design Director, Astheimer Design

CONSUMER ELECTRONICS

Something that's really interesting about working across different sectors is that there is a massive change in scale, going from designing the flow of a room or a whole host of rooms with interior design or a superyacht all the way through to the things people are holding in their hand.

What's great about working with consumer electronics is that generally they're small, placing a huge emphasis on attention to detail, because these details are really small.

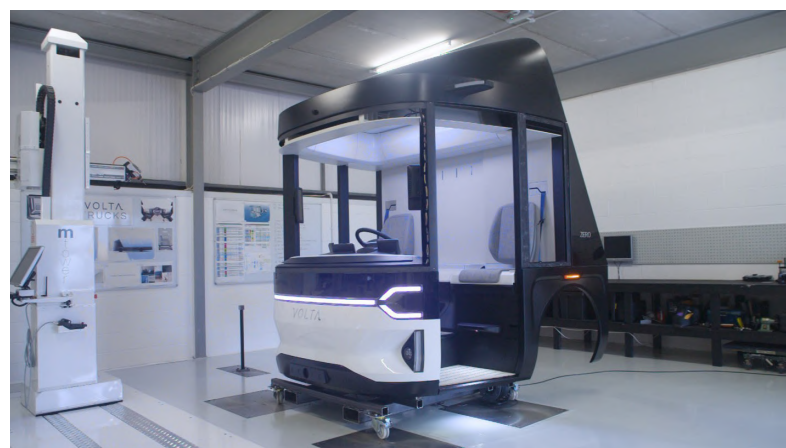
“A phone effectively is a collection of details, and you really need to craft all of these details to work with each other. Real clarity and attention to detail is something that, from working on consumer electronics, you really start to bring that back into bigger objects as well and that's really useful”

Russel Gillott - Design Director, Astheimer Design



Working with things people have to interact with, whether it's a screen or its buttons or physically holding it, you learn a huge amount about user interface and how you should design things to enable people to use them in a simple, intuitive way.

This comes back to ergonomics as well, but a different type of ergonomics. Drawing upon our work with Volta Trucks, the steering wheel, buttons, screens and controls are all influenced by our prior experiences working on smaller scale consumer electronics projects.



Building on this, the exposure to the latest trends, technologies, and materials in the consumer electronics space is hugely valuable in assessing what can be reappropriated for the mobility sector.

Different industries develop and change at different speeds, and consumer electronics happens to be one that's rapidly changing not just annually but throughout each year too.



Working with Bullitt, we've been involved in a range of projects designing 'rugged' phones for business like CAT and Jaguar Land Rover, built to last and survive in harsh conditions.

A key example of finding innovations across industries is the idea to introducing graphene into a mobile phone project to make it tougher and more drop-proof, and this may well be suitable for other applications. Additionally, bioplastics are commonplace in consumer electronics now but scarcely found in mobility sector.

The drive to work across industries, as has been mentioned frequently throughout this article exposes our team to different ideas, processes, materials, applications and solutions. It helps us to think creatively and develop unique, relevant and desirable solutions to our client's briefs.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

I hope you have found this an enjoyable and insightful read.

Working beyond mobility is not only an interesting change of scenery for our team but a hugely valuable asset to our enduring progression and innovation as a business, and something we will endeavour to keep doing.

If you haven't had a chance to do it yet, you can see a whole range of our recent projects on our website: <https://astheimerltd.com/our-work/>

If you have an upcoming project that could benefit from design support and you're interested in the work we do, reach out to either myself here on LinkedIn or get in touch via our website here: <https://astheimerltd.com/contact/>

Thanks for reading!

CARSTEN

Carsten Astheimer