

# 35. hegge ID



## Solid Design



Industrial design agency hegge ID is a young business. After having worked as a freelancer for a few years, manager Frans Hegge set up hegge ID in 1999. The agency expanded over the years and now employs ten people. The manager is proud of this: 'customers choose us because of our no-nonsense approach', says Frans Hegge. 'We design solid products that look good without too much fuss. We try to do this in as few steps as possible. We have very diverse customers, ranging from toy manufacturers to the automotive sector.'

## We design solid products that look good without too much fuss.

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Without being aware of it, hegge ID has been working sustainably for all these years. 'We didn't become aware of this until a few years ago, when sustainability started to become a vogue word', says Frans Hegge. 'Using sustainable materials and taking care of the environment is something that's inside you. I've always economised. I don't like our throwaway culture; I recycle and try to save energy. Unaware of this, I've also always designed with sustainability in mind. It was always my objective to choose the right sustainable materials. We try to design products that can be produced with a minimum amount of quality materials. We are not haute couture designers, like furniture designers who display their products at fancy trade fairs like the design fair in Milan. No eco labels are stuck to our designs. What we do, is designing functional products that are aesthetically pleasing, but also solid and lasting.'

According to Frans Hegge, the majority of customers do not ask for a sustainable product. 'Customers approach us with a question. They ask how we can develop their product; want to know our views, etc. The emphasis may lie on the design, but we are also asked how we would materialise certain products. We begin with a design briefing. This briefing develops gradually. During this briefing, concepts like modularity, flexibility, reuse of parts



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and keeping the cost price down are used. We can help you create more sustainable products. To us this means products that last for years. For instance, we designed a hospital catering trolley. This trolley was given clearly visible fenders, so it is robust and can handle everyday use.’

hegge ID believes that not all manufacturers are ready for sustainable methods. ‘There is definitely awareness, which is great. I think we’re on the right track. Our way of working makes us very versatile; we can handle a whole range of projects. We continue to inform ourselves, follow seminars and actively search for information. This is typical of industrial designers. We particularly keep looking for new and innovative materials so we can help the customer the best way we can. In a few years time, the subject of sustainability will be printed in bold in our customer briefing.’

## What we do, is designing functional products that are aesthetically pleasing, but also solid and lasting.

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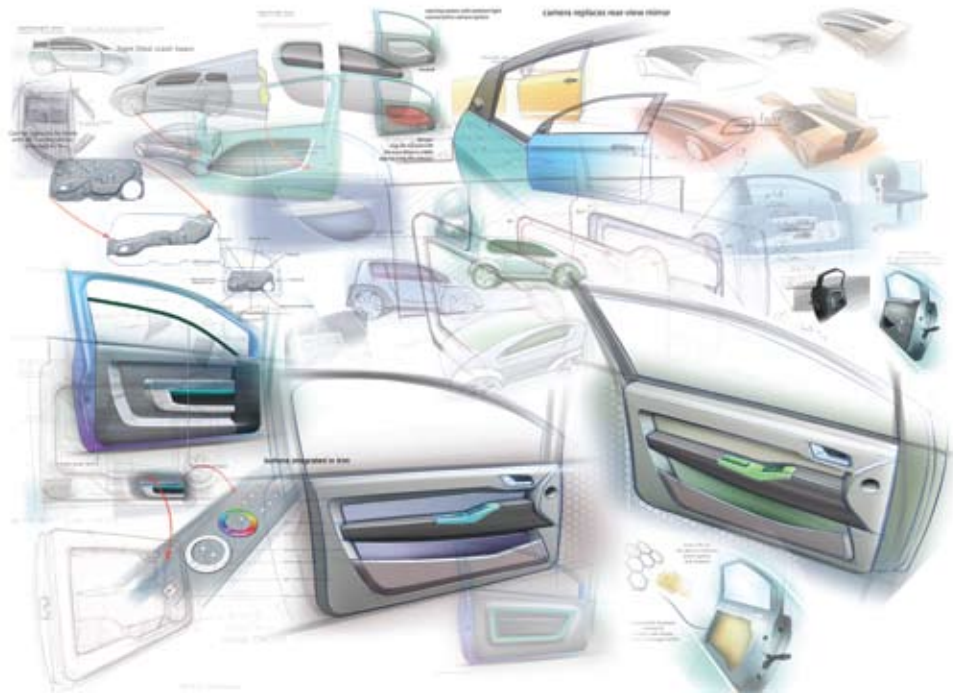
hegge ID has already designed many attractive and sustainable products, which they are very proud of. For instance, they designed a sustainable water carafe for REcentre. A sustainable carafe was demanded during the drinkKraantjeswater (drink tap water) campaign. A competition was organised. The hegge ID carafe was chosen as the winner out of several other entries. ‘It was important for the carafe to look nice, but production costs could not be too high. For technical and ethical reasons, we chose hotel porcelain. The carafe was produced by Berghoff, a company in Limburg.’

A totally different project hegge ID is extremely proud of is the design of an automotive door in consultation with Flanders’ Drive and a selected consortium. ‘The request was to design a door that is much lighter than standard car doors. For this, we cooperated with R&D people and materials experts of renowned companies. We designed the door by taking a different approach to material devel-



↑  
drinkKraantjeswater carafe  
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Light Weight Door  
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opment. We examined the limits of what can be made, but also made sure that it was aesthetically pleasing. The result is a door that is 25 percent lighter, but just as stable and strong. What's also important is that -despite using less material- the door does not look cheaper or feels unsafe or fragile. hegge ID is very pleased that they, as an agency, were involved in the development of the light-weight door. 'With the knowledge we gained, a spin-off will be created in which we are again involved. The aim is to develop a lightweight vehicle and to examine how it can be introduced to society. We need to find out how the environment and layout of the space should respond to this. We're glad that we are able to cooperate on this, as lightweight projects are the future. These are also very important projects with regard to sustainability. These projects are all a wonderful new challenge for the whole team.'

**We can help you create more sustainable products. To us this means products that last for years.**

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The design agency does not only take on very large projects, it also believes in smaller sustainable ones. New 'green globe' products were designed for a large toy manufacturer. 'The manufacturer was asked by several of its retailers whether they can develop biodegradable toys. Consumers are becoming increasingly critical. We created a 3D world based on classic themes such as the farm and the city made of cardboard. The units that connect the parts making it a 3D object, were made of corn granulate. We had to find the right material, as the first connection pieces broke off at a first attempt. The materials we did use are not world-shattering. But it is a new way of making 100% eco-friendly toys. We hope to continue to work on biodegradable toys in the future.'

hegge ID has received many awards for its designs in the past. Particularly, the Agfa printing presses won several

Red Dot Design and IF Awards, just like the office furniture designed for Pami.

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‘We are very proud of these awards, as it’s important to a designer that the designed products look good. But we would appreciate it even more if we won a Well-used award, an award indicating that products last for years, become classics and are automatically very sustainable.’

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Kizzy Vanhorne for REcentre  
Interviewee /  
Frans Hegge, Manager and Product designer

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Year of foundation • 1999  
  
Number of employees • 10  
  
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