DESIGNER(S): Anna Haupt & Terese Alstin **PRODUCTION:** Hövding **YEAR:** 2010 **COUNTRY:** Sweden
IP STATUS: Patent **STATUS OF REALIZATION:** In production **WEBSITE:** www.hovding.com
NUMBERS: Approximately 105 million bicycles are made every year / 63,7% of the Swedish population rides a bicycle / 9 out of 10 Danes have a bicycle / In Amsterdam, 40% of all traffic movements are by bicycle / 60% of cycling fatalities are head injuries

INDEX:AWARD 2011 WINNER
HÖVDING

ENG AN INVISIBLE AIRBAG FOR CYCLISTS' HEADS

Hövding is a bicycle helmet unlike any other on the market. It's ergonomic, it's practical, it complies with all safety requirements and it's subtle and blends in with what you are wearing. Hövding is a collar for bicyclists, worn around the neck. The collar contains a folded up airbag that inflates only if you have an accident.

WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

Every year, about 30,000 people are injured or die in bike-related traffic accidents in Sweden alone. Many of these accidents would have been a lot less serious if the cyclists were wearing bike helmets. However, according to a Swedish government survey, less than 30% of all cyclists wear helmets — mainly due to lifestyle, vanity or cold issues. People do not want their hair messed up or cannot fit a warm hat under the helmet in cold weather.

"*The range of bicycle helmets available is extremely narrow, they all look the same and the lack of variety results in very few people wearing them. For most people, bicycling isn't a sport. They're just using their bicycles to get from A to B, bicycling to work, into town or to go out in the evening. Despite this, almost all the traditional bicycle helmets on the global market have a sporty design. At the same time, image is becoming increasingly important to us and our clothes and accessories are an essential part of the way we express ourselves. Lots of people are deciding not to wear bicycle helmets because they think they look horrible and because they really don't go with their own personal style. The fact that people are choosing not to wear bicycle helmets when we all know how important the protection they provide is, was a clear sign that the design needed a radical makeover, adapting it to the demands of today's bicyclists and all the latest styles. A helmet that just sits on the shelf is no good to anyone*", say inventors of Hövding, Anna and Terese.

The INDEX: Jury says:
"*We see this as a first step in fueling a paradigm change in the area of bike safety. It hinges on the professional competency of the designers, not the adaptive capability of the users, other than in the most superficial sense. This illustrates how design still provides users with what they never thought they could have.*"

TOO MANY CARS – TOO FEW BICYCLES

In the first half of the 20th century the bicycle was a much more common mode of urban transport than it is today. After the Second World War however, the ownership of private cars increased continuously to today's level of more than six cars for every ten people in some EU countries, meaning that a great number of journeys that previously occurred by bicycle are now undertaken by car. In these times of increasing anxiety about climate change, the question of environmental sustainability - in every aspect of our society - is of the utmost importance, and urban transport is just one of the sectors that need to be reformed, since the environmental problems caused by mass private car transportation in modern cities are many. The bicycle can play a part in the resurrection of our cities to sustainable places. Anna and Terese elaborate: "*Between 1990 and 2003, the number of bicycles produced in the world remained steady around 100 million bicycles per year. But since then, production has increased up to 130 million bicycles in 2007. The climate change is believed to be one major reason for the increase in bicycling – people are choosing the bicycle instead of the car. The financial crisis in 2008 had a vast negative impact on the automotive industry, while the bicycle industry was hardly affected.* "

The INDEX: Jury explains:
"*There is a global surge in biking in urban environments – for environmental reasons, lifestyle reasons and health reasons. Taking part in this change raises both problems and opportunities, shifting the intersection between lifestyle and a movement. This design is addressing exactly these issues.*"

AN AIRBAG WORN AS A COLLAR, TRIGGERED BY SENSORS

Hövding is a bicycle helmet unlike any other on the market. It's ergonomic, it's practical, it complies with all safety requirements and it's subtle and blends in with what you are wearing, because it is worn as a collar around the neck. The collar contains a folded up airbag that you will only see if you happen to have an accident. The inflated airbag is shaped like a hood, surrounding and protecting the bicyclist's head, and the trigger mechanism is controlled by sensors which pick up the abnormal movements of a bicyclist in an accident. The actual collar is the visible part of the invention, and it is covered by a removable shell that you can change to match your outfit. Hövding is a practical accessory that is easy to carry around, it has a great-looking yet subtle design – and it will save your life. "*The shell surrounds the collar, and the most important function of the shell is to enable you to change the look of your Hövding – every day if you feel like it. The shell is removable and attaches to the collar with zippers. It's easy to change the shell to match your outfit, to suit the season or to wash it. The shell's appearance can be varied in a virtually endless number of designs, colours, patterns and fabrics, turning Hövding into a fashion accessory. At the moment there are two different shell designs to choose from but we will be launching new collections all the time. Unlike the collar, the shell is washable*", says Anna and Terese.

PEOPLE WOULD RATHER GET HURT THAN MESS UP THEIR HAIR

The most effective protection against serious skull injuries is to wear a helmet when bicycling. Although people are well aware of the risks on the roads, a large majority are choosing to ride their bikes without wearing a helmet. And this decision is for the most part based on not wanting to look "stupid", as many cyclists put how they look with a helmet on. So by approaching the problem from an entirely different angle – and by eliminating the classic shape and design of the bike helmet – the designers have come up with a very cool and attitude-changing solution to a problem that has been draining government treasuries (helmet campaigns) and killing cyclists for many years. Anna and Terese shares their process: "*We started out with a survey, asking people on the streets why so few people wear bicycle helmets. They came up with plenty of reasons: 'They're a pain to carry about, they all look hideous, they ruin your hair, nobody else wears them, you can't get your hat on underneath.' Some good arguments, it's true, others more like excuses. It was clear that bicycle helmets are a hot topic that everyone has an opinion on and strong feelings about. Bicycling is something we do every day and there's a sense of freedom that goes with it. Although people are well aware of the risks on the roads, the vast majority are choosing to bicycle without a helmet. When it comes down to it, people really do want to protect their heads in road accidents, but there are limits. It isn't the bicyclists who need to change, it's the product.*

"When we asked people what they'd ideally like the bicycle helmet of tomorrow to look like, we got responses like these: "Something small that you can fold up and put in your pocket. Something that lets you change what it looks like, like you can with mobile phone skins or wigs. Invisible. The instant we heard the word invisible, we realised that was what the world was waiting for. An invisible bicycle helmet. That wouldn't ruin your hair."

"The team behind Hövding defined the problem, not as a design of a helmet, but as a solution to a problem. We applaud the shift in frame from helmet to protection as it is an important part of the design thinking approach. The solution takes into account both safety, protection and an underlying streak of vanity", The INDEX: Jury says about the decision to select Hövding as a winner of INDEX: Award 2011

DK EN USYNLIG AIRBAG TIL CYKLISTERS HOVEDER

Hövding er en cykelhjelm, der ikke ligner andre hjelme på markedet. Den er ergonomisk, den er praktisk, den opfylder alle sikkerhedskrav og den er diskret og passer til det, man ellers har på. Hövding er en krave for cyklister, der bæres rundt om nakken. Kraven indeholder en foldet airbag, som pustes op, hvis man kommer ud for en ulykke.

HVAD ER PROBLEMET?

Hvert år kommer omkring 30.000 mennesker til skade eller dør i cykelrelaterede ulykker i Sverige alene. Mange af disse ulykker ville have været meget mindre alvorlige, hvis cyklisterne havde haft cykelhjelme på. Alligevel viser en undersøgelse fra den svenske stat, at mindre end 30% af alle cyklister bruger cykelhjelm – mest på grund af forfængelighed, eller fordi de fryser. Folk vil ikke have deres frisure ødelagt eller kan ikke få plads til en hue under hjelmen, når det er koldt.

"*Almindelige cykelhjelme ligner alle sammen hinanden, og manglen på alternativer gør, at for få mennesker bruger dem. For de fleste er det at cykle ikke en sport. De bruger deres cykler til at komme fra A til B. De cykler til arbejde, til byen eller for at gå ud om aftenen. På trods af det har næsten alle traditionelle cykelhjelme på markedet et sporty design. Mange mennesker vælger ikke at bruge cykelhjelme, fordi de synes, de er grimme, og fordi det ikke rigtig passer til deres personlige stil. Det faktum at folk vælger ikke at bære cykelhjelm, selvom alle ved, hvor vigtig en beskyttelse de giver, var et klart tegn på, at designet behøvede en radikal forandring, således at det kunne tilpasses de behov, som nutidens cyklister har. En hjelm, der bare ligger på en hylde, gør ikke nogen noget godt*", fortæller opfinderne af Hövding Anna og Terese.

INDEX: Juryen siger om Hövding:
"*Vi ser det som det første skridt mod et paradigmeskift indenfor cyklistsikkerhed. Designet udspringer af designernes professionelle kompetencer, ikke brugernes evne til at tilpasse sig, på nær i den mest overfladiske betydning. Det illustrerer, hvordan design stadig giver brugere noget, som de aldrig troede, de kunne få.*"

FOR MANGE BILER – FOR FÅ CYKLER

I den første del af det 20. århundrede var cyklen en meget mere almindelig transportmåde i byerne, end det er i dag. Efter anden verdenskrig steg antallet af private biler voldsomt, og i nogle europæiske lande er der i dag mere end seks biler for hvert tiende menneske. Det betyder, at en stor del af de ture, som tidligere fandt sted på cykel, nu køres i bil. Med det øgede fokus på klimaforandringer er spørgsmål omkring miljømæssig bæredygtighed – i alle områder af vores samfund – meget højt på dagsordenen, og bytransport er bare én af de sektorer, der skal transformeres, da miljømæssige problemer skabt af massiv privat biltransport i moderne byer er massive. Cyklen kan spille en rolle i byers indsats på bæredygtige områder.

Anna og Terese uddyber: "*Mellem 1990 og 2003 lå antallet af cykler produceret på verdensplan på omkring 100 millioner cykler om året. Men siden da er produktionen steget til 130 millioner cykler om året. Klimaforandringer er set som en af de afgørende grunde til, at folk vælger cyklen i stedet for bilen. Den finansielle krise i 2008 havde også en stor negativ indvirkning på bilindustrien, mens cykel-industrien knap nok blev berørt.*

INDEX: Juryen siger:
"*Der er en global stigning i cykling i urbane miljøer – af miljømæssige årsager, livsstilsårsager og sundhedsårsager. At tage del i den forandring skaber både udfordringer og muligheder i krydsfeltet mellem livsstil og en global bevægelse. Dette design forholder sig til netop disse emner.*"

EN AIRBAG BÅRET SOM EN KRAVE OG UDLØST AF SENSORER

Hövding er en cykelhjelm, der ikke ligner andre hjelme på markedet. Den er ergonomisk, den er praktisk, den opfylder alle sikkerhedskrav og den er diskret og blander sig naturligt med det, man ellers har på. Hövding er en krave til cyklister, der indeholder en foldet airbag, som pustes op, hvis man kommer ud for en ulykke. Den oppustede airbag er formet som en hætte, der beskytter cyklistens hoved, og udløsermekanismen er kontrolleret af sensorer, som opfanger anomale bevægelser ved en ulykke.

Den faktiske krave er den synlige del af opfindelsen, og er dækket af en skal, som man kan udskifte, så den kan matches med det tøj, man har på. "*Skallen omkranser kraven, og dens vigtigste funktion er at gøre det muligt at skifte Hövdings udseende – hver eneste dag hvis du har lyst. Skallen er sat fast på kraven med en lynlås, og skallens udseende kan varieres i et uendeligt antal designs, farver, mønstre og stoffer. Lige nu findes der kun to skal-designs at vælge fra, men vi vil lancere nye kollektioner hele tiden. Modsat kraven er skallen vaskbar,*" forklarer Anna og Terese.

HELLERE KRANIEBRUD END HATTEHÅR

Den mest effektive beskyttelse mod alvorlige ulykker er at bære en hjelm, når man cykler. Selvom mange folk godt er klar over risikoen ved ikke at bære hjelm, vælger et stort antal alligevel at køre på cykel uden. Ofte er beslutningen baseret på ikke at ville se "dum ud". Ved at eliminere den klassiske form og det klassiske design på en cykelhjelm er designerne kommet frem til en meget cool og holdningsændrende løsning på et problem, der har drænet statskasser (hjelmkampagner) og har dræbt cyklister i mange år. Anna og Terese forklarer om deres proces: "*Vi startede med en undersøgelse, hvor vi spurgte folk på gaden, hvorfor så få bruger cykelhjelme. De kom med masser af grunde: 'De er irriterende at bære rundt på, de ser allesammen forfærdelige ud, de ødelægger din frisure, ingen andre bruger dem, man kan ikke have sin hue nedenunder.' Nogle argumenter var gode, mens andre lød mere som undskyldninger. Cykling er noget, vi gør hver eneste dag, og det er forbundet med en fornemmelse af frihed. Selvom folk er klar over risikoen på vejene, vælger en stor del at cykle uden hjelm. I sidste ende vil folk gerne beskytte deres hoveder ved færdselsulykker, men der er grænser. Det er ikke cyklisterne, der skal forandres, det er produktet. Da vi spurgte folk, hvordan de ideelt set kunne tænke sig, at morgendagens cykelhjelm så ud, fik vi svar i retningen af dette: 'Noget, der er så småt, at det kan foldes og puttes i lommen. Noget der lader dig ændre, hvordan det ser ud, ligesom man kan med covers til mobiltelefoner. Usynlig. I det øjeblik, vi hørte ordet 'usynlig', gik det op for os, at det var det verden ventede på. En usynlig cykelhjelm, der ikke ødelægger din frisure."*

INDEX: Juryen siger samtidig:
"*Teamet bag Hövding definerede problemet ikke som design af en hjelm, men som løsningen på et problem. Vi bifalder rammeskiftet fra hjelm til beskyttelse, da det er en afgørende del af den tænkende designproces. Løsningen tager hensyn til både sikkerhed, beskyttelse og et underliggende strøg af forfængelighed.*"