

High-performance home: Porsche Cars Australia opens new national headquarters

04/04/2024 Porsche has unveiled its latest high-performance creation – and it's not a sports car.

Landmarks abound in Melbourne. Many locals say the city's swarm of stadiums, Gold Rush-era architecture and vibrant Arts Centre make it Australia's home of sport, history and culture. But there is one long-standing marker that matters to local sports car fans: the large red PORSCHE wordmark that illuminates busy Victoria Parade.

"This important site has been home to Porsche Cars Australia since 1998," said Daniel Schmollinger, the company's CEO and Managing Director, referring to the sports car brand's national head office. "Because Australia became one of the earliest official Porsche markets outside Europe, it's story here is long. It's also fascinating, and many of these chapters have been written here."

Thanks to a 6-month reconstruction project, this chapter book now has a new cover. The Porsche Cars

Australia headquarters has undergone a complete refurbishment, with new offices designed in an open-plan layout supported by state-of-the-art facilities and various multi-purpose meeting rooms, each named after famous Australian racing circuits. Team members now enjoy sit-stand desks with twin computer screens and the new digital working environment also enjoys abundant natural light, a multitude of indoor plants and a living green wall.

Porsche commemorated the opening of its newly transformed Australian HQ with a number of activities, including an official ribbon cutting ceremony. Joining the festivities were several Porsche AG executives, including Matthias Becker, Vice President of Region Overseas and Emerging Markets, and Dr Thomas Friemuth, Vice President Product Line Panamera.

“Porsche has grown substantially in Australia, especially over the last few decades,” said Matthias Becker. “Local sales grew almost eight percent last year, and with a record number of new products scheduled for 2024, this special event shows we are setting up for the future.”

A growing family needs space

Porsche was officially introduced to Australia in 1951 when Norman Hamilton became the brand’s first local distributor. His son Allan took the reins in 1972 and 20 years later Porsche Cars Australia officially commenced. The following years saw the product range, official dealer network and community of passionate owners all grow.

The Porsche Cars Australia team today has doubled in size over the previous decade.

“Our team’s expansion has not always been driven by sales growth,” said Schmollinger. “It’s also been driven by the notion of ‘better’: better support for our customers and our official Porsche Centres; better support for our team members; and better support for the growing number of Porsche sportscars driving on Australia’s roads.”

Amongst this special fleet are the first two Porsche sports cars Norman Hamilton imported into Australia in October 1951: a fish silver grey 356 cabriolet and a maroon 356 coupe. These two cars made Australia the first right-hand drive market for Porsche.

“The right support requires the best people. And as Porsche has grown over time, so has the need for more of the best performers.

“The people behind Porsche drive this history-making sportscar brand. And driving each of them is our performance-driven mindset.”

A performance-driven philosophy

Growth might be a natural driver for more space, but high-performers need the right environment.

Daniel Schmollinger: “Our new headquarters reflects long-term commitment and success. It also signals the invisible forces that power Porsche in Australia: our company's performance-driven culture.”

The Porsche Cars Australia CEO and MD says its underpinnings can be found in the company's long-standing competitive spirit.

“You will find the performance-driven mindset everywhere at Porsche. It's in every design studio, prototype workshop, and testing facility. You will also see it in every product planning office, marketing department and communications team. High performance runs through the culture at Porsche.”

It was a point echoed by special guest, Ant Middleton. The UK soldier, adventurer, TV host and best-selling author made a surprise appearance at the opening of the new Porsche Cars Australia headquarters, leading a fascinating conversation and Q&A session about the importance of high-performance.

“The Porsche success story glows in the range of sports cars it creates and the motorsport successes it has achieved,” he said, referring to models such as the new 911 S/T and the company's record-setting 19 wins at the annual 24 Hours of Le Mans. “It's the focussed zero-excuses approach the company has taken over the last 75 years that has made these successes possible.

“Porsche shows what a remarkable high-performance culture can achieve.”

The power of competition

Expanding on Ant Middleton's observations, Daniel Schmollinger delved into the competitive spirit woven through the brand's performance-driven mindset. As a former athlete, he knows the topic intimately.

“Competition isn't necessarily about winning trophies,” he said. “Competition is about change; specifically changing who you are, for the better. This is because every race, every battle and every encounter forges you into a more competitive shape.

“Since the 1950s, Porsche has sought out the most difficult motorsport challenges to push its ongoing success. For example, the gruelling Paris-Dakar rally was chosen during the development of our all-wheel drive technology. And the annual 24 Hours of Le Mans endurance race has spawned and validated many forward-looking road car technologies, such as our hybrid powertrains.

“Seeking the better way, not always the easy way, identifies the best competitors. And this summarises the Porsche Cars Australia approach.”

Why change means opportunity

The topic of change was central to the event’s discussions about high performance. The extensive updates to the Porsche Cars Australia headquarters has resulted in a new working environment that inspires team members to produce their best work. These new surroundings are also a symbol of progress.

“This change is very similar to vehicle electrification,” said Schmollinger. “The advent of electrification is simply another opportunity for the world to experience the best of Porsche at work.

“The widespread change to how vehicles are powered has sparked new investments in people, technologies, and new products. As Matthias Becker said, 2024 will be the biggest year of product launches in the history of Porsche.”

Guiding their future Australian release will be the Porsche Cars Australia HQ.

“Porsche’s revitalised Australian headquarters might appear new but it's really the latest incarnation of what has always been here: a high-performance environment for people who love change, and who are leaders in their professions,” said Schmollinger.

Info

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