



Kenworth's W990: Behind the Design

Clean Slate Combines Tradition with New Ideas

LAS VEGAS, Nev. – For the design team at Kenworth, designing a truck that took in the heritage of the company's iconic W900 model was what Jonathan Duncan called a "once in a lifetime opportunity as a designer."



Kenworth W990

As Kenworth's design director, Duncan led the team that created the new Kenworth W990, starting with a clean slate to formulate ideas that blended tradition with the new. "First and foremost, we wanted to design a truck that had a significant 'wow' factor," he said. "There is nothing like seeing a long-hood Kenworth driving down the road, signifying image, pride and freedom. The long-hood conventional is the truck that gets noticed and commands attention; it is *the* truck you see garnering best of show ribbons at truck beauty contest across the country."

"We set out to design a hard-working truck that shares those memories. One that can be seen down the road that makes truckers stare and nod their heads in appreciation. One that will be proudly displayed at truck shows. The Kenworth W990 features the latest in technology, and is built on our 2.1-meter cab that features creature comforts and other driver amenities that are second to none," Duncan said.

According to Duncan, the Kenworth design team knew that the new Kenworth W990 was going to have to make a strong statement and be authentic, genuine and uniquely Kenworth.



Kenworth W990

"We also knew that the W990 had to be a true driver's truck – nothing less would do," said Duncan. "We want drivers to take pause at the end of a hard day, look over their shoulder, and admire their ride. We wanted to reward the driver with the smoothest ride, and sharpest-looking truck out there; a truck that will make other drivers do a double take. I feel we've succeeded."

The two biggest visuals on the legacy Kenworth W990 are the hood and the grille. Like its cousin, the W900L, the "long hood" has a bumper-to-back-of cab (BBC) measurement coming in at a whopping 131.5-inches.



Kenworth W990

"The grille is really the face of the new W990," said Duncan. "Having real metal was important. It had to be pure Kenworth and it needed to be instantly recognizable as the top-of-the-line. We maintained the traditional cathedral shape to the grille and the inset surfaces at the top to give it a serious, tailored look. That powerful center spear signifies this is part of the new generation of Kenworth trucks and the tapered grille spears are there for a classic touch. It's elegant, beautiful, and full of brawn."

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The design team added a host of other design elements, including a functional, yet very stylish sculpted side-hood cove. “We paid close attention to the shape of the reflection of the side air intakes in that hood side surface. In some colors, it can make the intakes look twice as deep,” said Duncan.



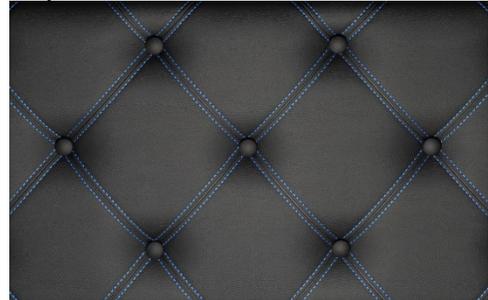
While the truck certainly stands out, Duncan said that inside, it conveys a special attitude as well. “Behind the wheel, the driver’s view over the hood is a huge part of the appeal of the W990. It’s really one of the keys to the success of this design. The powerful wind-split (where the hood comes together in the center) is designed to accentuate the length of the hood and the dynamic shape reflects the powerful engine underneath. The side air intakes wrap over the top of the hood so that they are visible from the driver’s seat. All of this creates a strong visual impact from behind the wheel.”



Feeling good about the ride is one thing, added Duncan. But “enjoying” the ride is another. “The interior of the W990 follows that of our flagship T680 with all the room, dash and sleeper amenities,” said Duncan.



“But we went one step further by designing the Limited Edition interior package. We combined great color schemes along with leather and embroidery. The Limited Edition comes in classic midnight black with a glossy dark Ravenwood trim. The diamond-trim panels on the door pads and in the sleeper, feature Royal Blue stitching and W990 embroidery,” Duncan said.



“The heated and cooled leather seats have perforated leather that is dyed blue on the backside so that the edges of the perforations are blue. That’s a small touch that the driver will notice every time they get into the cab. We also added Royal Blue stitching on the leather Kenworth SmartWheel®, another detail that only the driver will know about and a reminder that they’re behind the wheel of something special,” he said.



Knowing that the owners and drivers of the new Kenworth W990 will want to add their own special touches, Duncan said a special effort was made to get PACCAR Parts involved early in the process. “We worked together to create aftermarket enhancements, like a special LED lighting package and stainless trim pieces,” he said. “We feel like the W990 driver is going to want to customize this truck to really be able to call it their own. Personally, I’m really looking forward to seeing what they end up doing with them. I feel like we’ve given them a great place to start.”

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