



reddot design award

## Press release

Essen and Hamburg/Germany, 26 September 2017

### "Every next big thing starts with a free thought" – thjnk is Red Dot: Agency of the Year 2017

Once a year, the Red Dot Award: Communication Design recognises convincing design achievements. It also awards a title of honour, "Red Dot: Agency of the Year", which in 2017 goes to thjnk. This is well-deserved recognition for the continuous and above-average design successes that the full-service agency has had in the Red Dot Award, winning a total of 21 awards for its design expertise in 2017 alongside awards received in past years. On 27 October, these achievements will be duly celebrated, when the creative heads at thjnk will be honoured as the best agency of the year during the Red Dot Gala in Berlin, Germany.

#### The most successful agency of the year

One Red Dot title stands out from all the others. No-one can apply for it. The title of honour "Red Dot: Agency of the Year" goes to an agency that wins over the jury of the international competition on a constant basis with its excellent design achievements. "This year, thjnk has succeeded in garnering a huge 17 Red Dots with its creations as well as four awards 'Red Dot: Best of the Best'", explains Professor Dr. Peter Zec.

"In addition to its most recent achievements, thjnk has also consistently scored highly in past years with creative and well-designed communication projects. Achieving such continuity combined with top-notch quality is an impressive feat, particularly as the agency is still starting out in the fast-paced creative industry. This accomplishment makes the agency well deserving of our title of honour. I would like to congratulate Karen Heumann, Armin Jochum, Michael Trautmann, Ulrich Pallas and the entire thjnk team sincerely on winning the 'Red Dot: Agency of the Year 2017' title", the founder and CEO of the Red Dot Award goes on to say.

The recipients are also delighted to receive this honour, which is also a motivation for them, as Armin Jochum points out: "We are proud of the

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record result that we have achieved this year with Red Dot – and we are delighted to receive the title of agency of the year. That is reason enough not to rest on our laurels."

#### "There is no I in thjnk" – reaching the finish line together

An agency that finds better answers – for clients and for employees. That was the ambition of Karen Heumann, Armin Jochum, André Kemper and Michael Trautmann – some of Germany's most respected advertisers – when they founded thjnk in Hamburg in 2012. Five years later, roughly 400 employees work in 10 agencies. Since the departure of the "k" in the company name (André Kemper), this joint approach is also reflected in the name of the agency – the "k" now stands for "and colleagues". Head of finance Ulrich Pallas joined the management team in 2016. Like Heumann and Jochum, he came from the agency Jung von Matt.

Teamwork also takes place at a different level. "We want to tread new and unconventional paths with our clients and make brands irreplaceable", says Armin Jochum. "That's why we enter into collaborations when we need to with the best specialists there are. We endeavour to always stand for excellence. From the very beginning, we have been open about our collaborative approach. For example, thjnk is involved among other things in the joint venture agency BOBBY&CARL for thyssenkrupp. It also works on ideas for McDonald's with agency Leo Burnett in LEO'S THJNK TANK, and works together with MarTech company Facelift as part of uplift to find new social advertising approaches. In order to facilitate excellent tailored solutions for its clients internationally on every market, thjnk has been part of the global marketing service group WPP since 2017, but continues to operate as an independent brand.

#### "Every next big thing starts with a free thought"

To provide contemporary answers to the communication challenges of its clients, the creatives at thjnk adhere strictly to their guiding principle: "Every next big thing starts with a free thought". From ten agencies – in Berlin, Düsseldorf, Hamburg, Munich, New York and Zurich – they work for high-profile brands such as Audi, BiFi, Commerzbank, DER SPIEGEL, Deutsche Bahn, granini, hagebaumarkt, HARIBO, IKEA, McDonald's, REWE and thyssenkrupp. Against the backdrop of the digital transformation and a rapidly changing

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media landscape, these clients appreciate the skills and impetus that thjnk provides as well as above all else its empathy, persuasiveness and diversity.

The basis for the success of thjnk as an agency and of its projects is always an idea – a thought basis that underpins the proposed solution in the long term. Together with a clear goal and a creative design, this results in works that have an impact and that in a best-case scenario change opinions, attitude and approaches.

#### Award ceremony and exhibition in Berlin

The winners of the Red Dot Award: Communication Design 2017 will be honoured at the Red Dot Gala on 27 October. The Red Dot: Best of the Best winners will accept their well-deserved trophies in the Konzerthaus Berlin. The highlight of the evening is the awarding of the "Stylus" trophy to thjnk, Red Dot: Agency of the Year 2017. The success will be celebrated well into the early hours at the subsequent Designers' Night in the E-Werk in Berlin.

In addition, the "Design on Stage" winners' exhibition will present the award-winning works at the after-show party. From 29 October, a selection of those works will be on show in the Museum for Communication Berlin. Until 14 January 2018, the studio exhibition "Best Communication Design – Red Dot Winners Selection 2017" will showcase all of the projects that won the Red Dot: Best of the Best, Red Dot: Grand Prix and Red Dot: Junior Prize. Furthermore, visitors will gain an insight into the creative achievements of thjnk, Red Dot: Agency of the Year 2017.

#### About the Red Dot Design Award:

In order to appraise the wide scope of design in a professional manner, the Red Dot Design Award is broken down into the three distinct disciplines: the Red Dot Award: Product Design, Red Dot Award: Communication Design and Red Dot Award: Design Concept. The Red Dot Award is organised by the Design Zentrum Nordrhein Westfalen in Essen, Germany, and is one of the largest design competitions in the world. In 1955, a jury convened for the first time to assess the best designs of the day. The name and brand of the award were developed in the 1990s by Red Dot CEO, Professor Dr. Peter Zec. Since then the sought-after Red Dot is the revered international seal of outstanding design quality. Further information: [www.red-dot.org](http://www.red-dot.org).

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