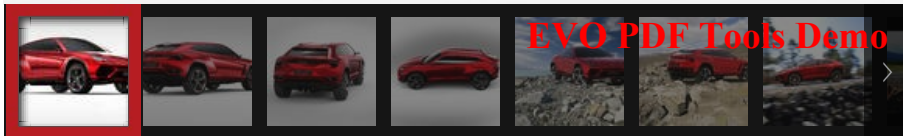


The rationale behind Lamborghini's Urus

CEO Stephan Winkelmann On Why The Supercar Company Is Building An SUV



Jan Tegler

If you've been following developments in Sant'Agata Bolognese lately, you'll know that the world's most unabashed supercar producer is adding an SUV. Code-named "Urus," it will join the brand's existing two-model (Aventador/Huracan) lineup.

It's a bold move for a company with a reputation built on iconic two-seaters including the [Miura](#), [Countach](#), and Diablo, and by its CEO's own admission the decision "will radically change Lamborghini." Why risk the company's exclusive, extroverted image on a vehicle associated with mundane tasks and parents who can't bear the thought of driving a minivan? Two reasons, says CEO Stephan Winkelmann.

"The SUV Segment is still fast growing worldwide," he notes. Indeed, global demand for SUVs is up 88 percent since 2008, making utility vehicles the fastest-growing segment around the world, according to IHS Automotive. Utilities now comprise 19 percent of the global vehicle market. In addition, "sales can be equally distributed over our three major regions...the Americas (the US is Lambo's top market), EMEA (Europe, Middle East, Africa), and Asia Pacific."

Lamborghini expects Urus to double sales from its current 2,500 cars per year to nearly 5,000. Adding a third model line "supports more consistent volumes and competitiveness of the company and our dealers," he continues.

Further, Winkelmann maintains that an SUV fits the DNA of Lamborghini. "Our brand has a history of many types of cars such as GTs, super sports cars, and with the [LM002](#) from 1986 to 1992, even an SUV. We learned together with our designers and product people that the SUV represented this opportunity the best."



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Structural implications include an expansion of the diminutive company's roughly 1,200-employee workforce by 50 percent, or 500 new hires, and the construction of a new facility near its headquarters to build the Urus. Building the new Lamborghini in Bologna is key to differentiating Urus from the other Volkswagen Group premium SUVs ([Bentley Bentayga](#); Porsche Cayenne; Audi Q7 and [Q8](#); and Volkswagen Touareg) that will share the same platform, and Winkelmann put great effort into persuading VW the move made economic sense.

"We worked many months building the business case for approval because we are convinced the SUV will be a success and the best place to build it is in Sant'Agata Bolognese," Winkelmann stresses. "We are not simply adding another line in an existing building. Rather, we are talking about greenfield construction. Our SUV will be the 'Lamborghini' amongst SUVs."

As for who will buy Urus, Winkelmann answers, "We are going to expand our clientele significantly. These will include Lamborghini super sports car customers who have driven SUV models from other brands, as well as families and customers new to Lamborghini."

Meanwhile, the company's CEO confirms that the much-lusted-after [Asterion](#) plug-in hybrid coupe unveiled last year at the Paris Motor Show was [strictly a concept](#), not a preview of a production version.



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"We said from the beginning its purpose was as a technology demonstrator, one which we also plan to test the market, in terms of design and shape. For instance, interior roominess, comfortable ergonomics, and its hybrid powertrain solution, which is completely new for Lamborghini. We are not planning a series or small series production of this car."

One element of the Asterion will likely surface again, however. Winkelmann didn't demure when we asked if some form of the 602-horsepower V-10/296-horsepower twin-electric-motor powerplant from the coupe concept could be dropped into the Urus.

"If a Lamborghini hybrid is coming in the next few years, the SUV will be the logical place for it to launch since the increase in weight due to the batteries will not have such a negative effect as in our super sports cars."

Lamborghini's second attempt at an SUV is scheduled to arrive for 2018.

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Featured Gallery [Lamborghini Urus Concept](#)



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Because already is the hottest SUV ever designed?

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Rubrbrnr

6 Days Ago

I think the short answer is..... because they will sell more Uri than all other models combined.

Has their been a luxury SUV that turned out to be a flop for any luxury brand? The Murano Cross-Cabriolet and the R-class are not SUVs IMO, BTW.

0



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RLC

6 Days Ago

Why are they building it? Because there is no shortage of douchebags in the world who will buy it. It's a jaded money grab, pure and simple. As for the utility, how many sheets of plywood fit in the back? None? I thought so.

0



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r_dezi

5 Days Ago

@RLC

How many sheets of plywood fit in an F150 Harley-Davidson Edition pick-up?...none ?, I thought so.

0



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over9000

6 Days Ago

because of status symbol

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6 Days Ago

all the uturus will do is show that lamborghini can no longer design beautiful cars. all of your cars have been the same design since the murcielago. and the uturus is the same ugly squashed jelly-bean design of most if not all crossovers on the planet. the nissan murano. the ford edge. range rover has one. benz just got one. the mazda x-9. you would have and could have done a better job of taking the asrterion and making it a rally fighter with a normal drive train. but you didn't. yes, an suv is a good idea. but this is the equivalent of a pontiac aztec. now you can try the asterion idea. or you can go find a troubled company and buy a small truck from them or rebadge something from someone else. but please don't do this.

-2



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PatTheCarNut

7 Days Ago

I think they misspelled it. It should be Anus.... jus sayin'

-3



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buffalo_z

7 Days Ago

@PatTheCarNut

Ironic that it has the worst rear end of all their cars, ever.

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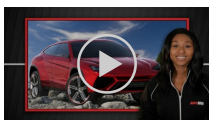
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