

**CLIENT:** Herman Miller    **PROJECT:** LEAF

# Look Into The Light

## STRATEGY:

- To create the first lighting product, and build the category for a historically only furniture business
- Develop a complete strategy and statement: brand/product strategy & positioning, the product itself, naming and identity, communications strategy, packaging and web presence.
- To turn the first lighting product into a lighting business by building on the success of LEAF.

## BRANDING/PACKAGING:

- Develop and design a brand around the central product story of personal lighting control including Logo design, Packaging design/development and Merchandising strategy
- Further create a distinct brand by designing all brand touch points, like Art Direction, photography and Environment/trade show design

## PRODUCT:

- Created an innovative and iconic personal task light to launch Herman Miller into the lighting industry
- Built a technological and design breakthrough lighting product by innovating LED engineering and allowing the consumer to be in control of their lighting experience

## RECOGNITION:

- Spark Award – Silver Award – Packaging, 2008
- Red Dot Design Award, 2008
- IDEA - Business Week, Silver Award, (Strategy) 2007
- Spark Award – Product Award, 2007
- Popular Science, 'Best of What's New' home category, 2006
- Chicago Athenaeum – Good Design Award, 2006
- CES Consumer Electronics Honoree, 2006
- Best of Neocon – Gold Award, lighting category, 2006



“When a new technology comes into play, it often takes designers time to find the right formal expression of that technology. LEDs have actually been around a long time. But what's most interesting is that the Leaf lamp's very expressive form is justified by mechanical requirements.”

➤ Paola Antonelli,  
Design Curator, New York's Museum of Modern Art



## THE BACKGROUND

### *The Definition of Forward Thinking*

Herman Miller is one of the most acclaimed and innovative furniture companies in the world. It was one of the first to create design-partnerships, working with the best to create iconic pieces. Herman Miller has also been a leader in instituting and promoting sustainable business practices and a cradle-to-cradle production philosophy. This is most notable in the company's Design for the Environment (DfE) protocol, which goes beyond regulatory compliance and evaluates new products based on material chemistry, disassembly and recyclability. When the company decided to begin designing lighting products, it approached Yves Behar and the fuseproject team.



## THE STRATEGY

### *Building A Bright Idea*

Task lights are not known for providing options. Traditionally, task lights have been bulky and produce a single kind of light based on the bulb. Our challenge was to design a task light that would be suitable in the office or in the home, offer a wide range of functionality and interactivity, and build on the design methodologies associated with Herman Miller. It also had to comply with the Design for the Environment protocol. Finally, as this was the first lighting piece the company would be introducing, it needed to give Herman Miller brand a solid foundation upon which to build its new product line.



## THE DESIGN SOLUTION

### *Lighting the way*

More than 4 years of engineering and design development resulted in the LEAF, a new LED task light that combines innovation, sustainable design and the application of new technologies.

The LEAF lamp is an advanced LED task light that creates an entirely new lighting experience. It is the first lighting product that offers users the choice between a warm mood light and a cooler work light. It is remarkably energy efficient, using 40% less energy than an equivalent compact fluorescent. It offers a distinctive sculptural aluminum body; specialized engineering that makes it cool to the touch, and a universal touch interface.

### *Ardea: The Next Generation*

The LEAF was such a success both internationally and domestically that it was closely followed by the Ardea light, another personal task light, employing the same green principles and a design reminiscent of LEAF, but at a lower cost. The Ardea's light head flex-joint innovation gives the user flexibility and personal control over their lighting experience. With Ardea's fabric sheathed joints, the range of motion and light output is expanded significantly. With an emphasis on low-energy consumption, green design, and extreme motion possibilities, Ardea is an innovative mid-price entry.

Beyond designing the LEAF and the Ardea lights themselves, fuseproject developed the brand strategy, product, logo, packaging and art direction of the new lighting direction for the company. By completely integrating a full-scale branding program with the task light design itself, fuseproject was able to make Herman Miller an immediate player in the task lighting industry.



## THE BUSINESS IMPACT

### *Light Speed Ahead*

With the release of the LEAF lamp for Herman Miller, a lighting business was born. The LEAF lamp launched to critical and media acclaim, including winning the Best of Neocon Lighting category. The success of LEAF is self-evident in its impressive sales, its acquisition by museums worldwide and its being featured in numerous publications. LEAF is truly a first-of-its-kind product, allowing total user control of their lighting experience. The success of LEAF spawned a next generation product, the Ardea light, and other projects still in development.