

**THIS MONTH**

**Mark Huslig**

President, Huslig Collective

Formula 1 is a global circus and, when the caravan is in Europe, life for teams in the paddock revolves around what used to be called “the motorhome”. Now these structures defy such humdrum definition; these homes-away-from-home must serve a variety of purposes as well as presenting a professional face to the outside world. Racing Point’s new unit is the work of a company best known for VIP aircraft interiors...

**CV**

**2002 - Present**

Huslig Collective, President  
Bespoke design for VIP aircraft and motorsport

**1997 - 2002**

Studio RD, Managing Partner  
VIP aircraft interior design

**1996 - 1997**

Reese Design, Designer  
VIP aircraft interior design

**1996 - 1996**

Motorola - Advanced Messaging, Designer  
First generation two-way pagers and smart cellular phones

**1995 - 1996**

Raytheon Corporation  
VIP aircraft interior design

**F1 Racing:** What prompted you to set up in what must be quite a niche industry?

**Mark Huslig:** My background from university is as an industrial designer – automotive and product design and furniture – and I had a paid work placement in college with LearJet, working with them on new interior designs. I started my career with a company in Austin, Texas that was literally designing flying palaces. We would take Airbus A340s and Boeing 747s and make works of art in the sky. So from the beginning of my career I was working with really exotic programs. I had a short stint at Motorola, but went back into the aviation industry in partnership with three other designers creating interiors for VIP aircraft. Then, 17 years ago, I began my own company, and while 75% of the business is still VIP aircraft, we’ve grown into motorsport organically through clients. It started 10 years ago with a private motorhome, moved into team motorhomes and race bases, and recently culminated in the new Racing Point unit.

**F1R:** How crowded is your market? Do you have many rivals?

**MH:** In VIP aviation there are just a handful of companies who do what we do. In F1 it’s similar – a lot of times you’ll have an OEM [original equipment manufacturer] group, such as Gulfstream in aviation or Schuler in motorsport, who’ll say, “We can take care of everything for you.” What we do in both of those worlds is say, “How do we make this truly exceptional – a better, more innovative and functional product? How do we make this the perfect bespoke fit to our client’s needs?” Sometimes the OEM has such a tight focus on their own industry that they don’t have a broader view, or the willingness to bring in outside influences and fresh ideas. When you’re dealing with ultra high worth individuals and racing teams, they always expect it to go to that next level.

**F1R:** Good design is all about functionality as well as appearance, isn’t it?

**MH:** Indeed! In exactly the same way as VIP aircraft, in motor racing you have different components which have unique

**INTERVIEW  
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COOLING**

requirements. The racing team needs somewhere to eat together and get refreshed while the PR and marketing departments need space to host the press and sponsor prospects. Team management needs space to strategise and engage while the drivers need

privacy and comfort to prepare for the race ahead. So you have to think in terms of enabling the space to have many different uses. A lot of people think that interior design is all about choosing the perfect fabric or color. That’s just a tiny part of what we do – it’s about the entirety of the space.

**F1R:** What’s distinctive about your project for Racing Point?

**MH:** It’s a 19-container, three-story hospitality unit that’s state-of-the-art in every way; the layout planning and functionality, the speed at which it can be assembled and dismantled, and the integration of a central modern design theme. We’ve pushed into a direction that makes a lot of sense, not just looking at what ownership wants to have in terms of a beautiful interior and excellent comfort with all the necessary services, but also how it works through its entire life cycle. So we had laser focus on speed and ease of set-up, reliable and redundant interior systems, and minimising the equipment and furniture that needs to be lifted and moved round. Our modern glass wall exterior design offers amazing views of the paddock yet the perfect amount of privacy in allowing just enough visibility to see there are exciting things going on inside, all the while providing excellent thermal insulation.

**F1R:** How do you see your business expanding in motorsport?

**MH:** I see us continuing to help teams improve their paddock presence on the European circuit and there are huge opportunities for sponsorship and hospitality improvements at the “flyaway” events. In the US, hospitality has been very utilitarian as people just want to be at the heart of the action. NASCAR is the most popular motorsport in the US but there’s nothing that says ‘this is an elite sport’. We’re working hard with several companies and sponsors in Europe, the US, and elsewhere to transform and elevate the status quo.

