

HOW FUN FUELS DESIGN

INNOVATION AND CORPORATE CULTURE WITH THE FOUNDER OF GILO INDUSTRIES



Gilo Industries' commitment to pushing the edge of technology and design has made it a highly sought-after partner in the aerospace, defense and recreational vehicle industries. The company's drive to bring exhilarating products to market is no surprise considering that its founder and namesake, Gilo Cardozo, is constantly in pursuit of the next big thrill. We spoke with Gilo to hear his inspiration for creating some of the most groundbreaking aerospace and transportation products on the market today.

HOW DID YOU BECOME INTERESTED IN DESIGN AND ENGINEERING?

When I was a very small boy, I loved pulling things apart and seeing how they worked. I became fascinated with engines at a very young age and even built one from scratch on a lathe and a mill. For me, it's about a pure love of making little intricate things and seeing how they work. And ultimately, that grew into this business.

CAN YOU TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT WHAT YOU DO HERE AT GILO INDUSTRIES?

The driving force behind the business is moving people through the world and having fun doing it. Whether it's on the ground, in the air, or on the water, it's about making machines that change the way we interact with the world. My role is to come up with the new product ideas. I suppose, I'm kind of the inspiration behind a lot of things we do here.



ARE THERE THINGS YOU DO TO ENCOURAGE CREATIVITY WITH YOUR DESIGN TEAM?

I think one of the things that gets the best out of people is keeping them doing fun things. If they're going to spend 80 percent of their waking hours working, let's make sure it's a fun experience. Let's make sure you're doing things that you'd be doing if you had free time. For example, we have rally days where everyone gets a car and then they race around a racetrack. It's just a lot of the stuff the guys love doing—the jetboard is another good example.

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— Gilo Cardozo, Founder

CAN YOU TALK ABOUT THE INSPIRATION FOR THE JETBOARD?

Years ago I went to California to meet this guy who had made this big, yellow, powered jetboard. It was really big and he needed a trailer to carry it down to the water. Well, we can build pretty much anything we want now—we've created a business that's strong enough to make this board a reality. So we decided to take what we've learned from what others have done with jetboards, bring it together with our passion and make a really brilliant product.

WHAT'S THE FIRST STEP WHEN YOU HAVE AN IDEA TO MAKE A PRODUCT LIKE THE JETBOARD?

When we start a new product design operation, I come up with a sketch—often loads of sketches—of how the thing is going to fit together. When it comes to turning it into a reality, we use SOLIDWORKS. Using SOLIDWORKS has been a complete game changer for us, frankly. It allows us to speed up that process of taking literally pen and paper into reality on a screen and then scoping out how things are going to come together.

CAN YOU TALK A LITTLE BIT MORE ABOUT THE ROLE SOLIDWORKS PLAYS HERE?

When I brought in people in the early days who knew how to use CAD properly, SOLIDWORKS was the most user-friendly and I've stuck with it ever since. All my sketches were hand drawings when I started out, so just the speed in which we can move things now is extraordinary.

WHAT'S THE CULTURE LIKE HERE AT GILO?

Literally, people say, "You're going to work?" And I say, "Guys, this is not work." People don't want to go on holiday because it's more fun than holiday. All the guys who work here, we want them to be able to use the stuff that we build, because that's going to inspire them to make things with more enthusiasm and motivation. We set up this program called "Fly to Work" where we teach everyone how to fly a parajet - one of our backpack aircraft. Essentially, they earn one from the company.

WAIT, YOU MEAN PEOPLE ACTUALLY COMMUTE TO WORK ON YOUR PRODUCTS?

They can basically fly to work in the morning on one of our backpack aircraft. I think more than half the company now fly parajets, and it's going up all the time. I think 10 machines were sold in the last two weeks to people who started here recently and learned how to fly parajets. It's brilliant fun.



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To learn more about Gilo Industries and the design of the Mako Boardsports Slingshot Jetboard, watch their story at – www.solidworks.com.

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