

Auto designer Henrik Fisker planning a joint venture with Indian firm

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MUMBAI: Just over a year after the California-based electric car company bearing his name was sold to a Chinese auto parts company for \$150 million, Danish auto designer Henrik Fisker is firming up his India plans that include a joint venture with a home-grown firm and becoming a board member in an advisory capacity. Fisker told ET that he has visited manufacturing sites of a few Indian firms and is likely to make an announcement in the next three-four months.

"I like doing business with people in India," said Fisker. Fisker was a top design executive with BMW, Ford Motor Company and Aston Martin before he started Fisker Automotive in 2005. In 2013, when Fisker Automotive was sold to Wangxiang group, he set up HF Design & Technology, which produces cars, bikes and other transportation products.

He said he has been thinking of exploring opportunities in India and China to work in niche areas like designing and marketing products under his brand HF, and co-producing the products with joint venture partners in India. "I want to explore the existing manufacturing abilities of Indian companies and create products together," he said.

The designer's coach division in HF Design & Technology also makes low volume collectible cars and has created custom-made cars from BMW and Mercedes as the base cars.

Recently, he worked with Galpin, the largest Ford dealer in the world, to modify Ford Mustangs into a full carbon fibre, 725 horsepower rocket, priced just above \$100,000. His JV with Anders Kirk Johansen, heir to the Lego empire, resulted in a motorbike called the Viking. There are plans to launch the Viking bike in India. "I don't have to compete in the mass market. This bike, which competes with the high-end Harley Davidson or a Triumph appeals to the niche segment and is not price sensitive," he said.