

HOME UTILITIES & DESIGN

New service offering for heating & hot water solutions

Design in innovation insight series:
Baxi Heating, Tenshi & Freestyle Innovation



Working
ACROSS DISCIPLINES



Working
HUMAN-CENTRED



Benefit
RETHINK STRATEGY



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“With the approval of our senior leadership team we set up a 16 week programme working to a design process, the double diamond model. Tenshi helped us scope out the project. We didn’t just want a training programme, or a few exercises. We wanted new skills, a tool kit with longevity and some really good insights. The Discovery stage of the double diamond is the bit that tips the balance in the quality of ideas you can generate later on. We were eager at first to get to the ideas, but in the discovery stage we learned attitudes and perspectives we wouldn’t have known otherwise.”

*Oliver Moffat, Customer Insight,
Baxi Heating*

BAXI HEATING Smart heating & hot water solutions

Baxi Heating is an established business with over 150 years in the heating solutions market. To maintain their position as one of the largest suppliers of heating and hot water in the UK, they know they need to lead with innovative services. Funding from the Design Foundations initiative enabled Baxi to bring in designers from Tenshi and Freestyle Innovation to help develop an in-house design-led innovation unit. Baxi’s Customer Insight Manager, Oliver Moffat, explains how they pooled resources and talent from across the whole business to start building a new innovation culture from within.

Human-Centred - a design led innovation culture

“As a non-design lead business Innovate UK introduced us to the benefits of design thinking,” Moffat explains. “Engineers are the developers of our products and they mostly work on optimising the function of the boilers. Working with Tenshi and Freestyle Innovation taught us not to do innovation aimlessly, but to really investigate what our customers’ experiences are. The crucial element was to get our colleagues involved from the start. Our R&D engineers rarely get to talk to customers. We wanted to understand what heating and hot water means to a person? It turns out that people care a lot more about hot water than heating. They are happy to put on an extra jumper when it is cold, but not to miss out on a hot bath or shower.”

Across Disciplines - valuing colleagues

“To build our cross-functional team, we brought in talent from across the business. Colleagues were seconded to us one day a week. We wanted people with marketing experience, but also those who were curious

and risk-takers. Those members of staff who joined our team were championed in the company and we know this approach has been successful because managers now want their people on our team. At the ideation stage we put the challenges on display and invited an even wider range of staff to get involved. This demonstrated the value we put on the experience of our colleagues, building confidence while digging out concerns and opportunities. Tenshi and Freestyle Innovation taught us how to unpick bad habits and approaches by asking questions we want answered. They encouraged us to bring in real life experience, to use simple language, and make the tools accessible. We wanted to build a toolkit that is useful for everyone and would continue to be operational after they left.”

Celebrating design-led innovation

“We hosted the Baxi Heating innovation conference to celebrate the programme and it was hugely gratifying to see members of the team present the process back to the company as a whole, building up momentum and excitement about design-led innovation.”

Design in innovation

Thanks to increased awareness about the benefits of human-centred design, more businesses want to bring designers on board in the early stages of innovation. Too often, however, companies struggle with finding or justifying the budget required for such a collaboration. Through the Innovate UK Design Foundations programme in 2017 £4 million of funding was awarded to 93 businesses of varying sizes. The objective was helping businesses work with designers to identify innovation opportunities and find viable routes to market. This insight series selects several of those projects to highlight a variety of design approaches.



**This project
rethought strategy
through:**

- **Building design-led culture**
- **Design innovation toolkit**
- **Innovation conference**

