The BT Freestyle, an inclusive design success story?

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Inclusive Design and BT

- 1984 special section devoted to ‘older and disabled consumers’
- 1998 saw the launch of BT’s first Big Button phone
- Before 2005, BT’s approach to inclusive design was ad hoc

Impetus was needed to drive inclusion

Our vision is to be dedicated to helping customers thrive in a changing world.

BT has undergone a major transformation

Inclusive design in BT

BT’s journey to the adoption of inclusive design was triggered by Scope and a meeting with the Centre for Inclusive Technology and Design (CITD)

BT funded a 3 year project that commissioned the development of the online inclusive design toolkit

So what happened in BT?

Realisation that inclusive design had business benefits

The endorsement of senior management

Freestyle Concept to Market or C2M

- Pre concept
- Concept
- Specify and Plan
- Test and Trial
- Launch
- Closure/review

Realisation that inclusive design had business benefits

The endorsement of senior management

Research (C2M pre-concept)

The function buttons - I like the fact that the phonebook and back button are different sizes as this will be easier to locate for visually impaired people. It looks like pressing the back button could activate either the call or clear buttons.

Perhaps a solid option as indicated in red.

Again to aid navigation, is it possible to have the call and clear icons etched or raised on the button.

The R and Intercom buttons again being different shape help in navigation.

These line drawings generated 3 pages of feedback

What our customers thought (C2M concept)
Getting down to the detail (Specify and Plan)

• Easy to hear – comfortable ear bowl, easy volume adjustment, inductive coupler for digital hearing aids
• Easy to read – high contrast, large characters (on and off screen)
• Easy to see who is calling – 2 line dot matrix display, large characters
• Easy to answer and end calls – large, separate send and end keys
• Easy to hear phone ringing – lower frequency ringer and increase the size of the calls light
• Easy to understand – no icons, no abbreviations, keys with single functionality, intelligent function hierarchy
• Easy to dial – large comfortable keys

Getting it right (Test and trial)

• 180 trialists used it in their own homes
• BT disability user panel trialled it
• Inclusion team review it
• Never too late to test BUT equally it is never too early

Getting the product out (Launch)

The breakdown shows a top ten of call to the Freestyle 750 helpdesk

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initial Setup</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calls List/Phone Book</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAM</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Dial Tone-Phone Fault</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Call Display</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio Issues</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blank Display</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Call</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registration</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre Sale Enquiry</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentage shows the number of calls relative to the sales

How did it go? (Close and review)

We aimed for an easy to use telephone

• Easy to dial
• Easy to read
• Easy to hear conversations
• Easy to hear ringing
• Easy to understand
• Easy to answer and end calls
• Easy to see who is calling

We think we got there but what do others think?

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The BT Freestyle 710 single headset

"If you want accessible and usable, you can’t have style, cord, or, most of all, small and neat. But then you ask ordinary people what they want from, for instance, a mobile phone, and they’ll say something with reasonable-sized buttons and numbers, and a screen they can read which isn’t going to get lost too easily, with hearing aids."

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Yes……… and they leave unsolicited comments.

We still have a way to go and I wouldn’t say we have it right yet…. but we are on the right path.
Bringing it all together