

Interface - The knowledge connection for business

Design company taps into solar power expertise

Edinburgh based 442 Design is a brand and interior design company that works with a wide range of companies including BAA, Tesco and ProInvest. Focussing on brand identity, its specialist areas include: interior and graphic design, large format print graphics, signage and rebranding.

The company was interested in expanding its focus from retail interior space to developing external promotions and point of sale showcase units for pedestrian precincts. The new product design involved creating glass units to showcase products from nearby shops e.g. clothes, books, accessories etc. and include touch pads enabling shoppers to find out more about the products and encourage them into nearby stores.

Aimed at driving increased footfall and spend, the product is intended to be a highly engineered, glass display case used for promotion. Using solar energy to charge the display lighting, it is intended for outdoor environments. The customer benefits include lower installation and power supply costs, reduced carbon emissions and clear environmental responsibility profile.

442 Design sought to power these small showcase units by solar energy, however it required an investigative study to provide recommendations on energy requirements, size, cost and design. For this they looked to find the relevant expertise within Scottish Universities.

The company was referred by The University of Edinburgh to Interface - The knowledge connection for business, which brokered links to Professor Tariq Muneer from the School of the Built Environment at Edinburgh Napier University. The relationship developed and the feasibility study yielded beneficial results identifying initial target cities and clients.

Interface also supported the company in identifying a source of finance to offset some of the costs – feasibility funding under the Scottish Government supported SEEKIT programme hosted by Edinburgh Napier University.

Professor Muneer calculated the energy and carbon emissions saved by lighting the pod using solar rather than conventional energy. This is crucial information for customers as corporate responsibility is increasingly important.



For more information on 442 Design please visit www.442design.com

“We wouldn't have been able to do it without Interface and Professor Muneer. The glass 'buypod' units have been hugely successful and this adaption of the product being run on solar energy is a very exciting development.”

Laurence Smith, Project Director at 442 Design.

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Professor Muneer comments: "The commissioning and completion of this project is a good demonstration of the three-way collaborative links – industry, the academic world and Interface, who acted as the matchmaker.

Quite often research work carried out by universities resides only within the campuses or in academic journals. Through organisations such as Interface, application of the above research work can achieve its flowering."

Looking ahead, Professor Muneer will compile a detailed report on light/lux levels at various locations, and will take lighting specification for the pod and advise on variances in hourly levels of solar energy required to light the pod throughout the year. This information is vital to customers to enable maximum impact throughout the year.

Both bodies benefited through this new partnership. 442 Design

is now familiar with the potential capability of solar technology, where the links with Edinburgh Napier University have provided invaluable assistance.

Working with Scottish Enterprise innovation advisor, Jim Shields they are now identifying scope for further activity in prototype design and are investigating their eligibility for R&D/innovation grants.



About Interface - The knowledge connection for business

There is a wealth of world-class technology, skills and research facilities available within Scotland's universities and research institutes.

With established links to thousands of world-class leading experts, Interface finds and introduces companies to the perfect academic partner.

Interface overcomes the challenge facing companies in understanding what is available or who to contact

in academia, for R&D or expertise capabilities by matching relevant expertise to specific business requirements.

Collaborating with academic partners brings significant business benefits:

- Develop innovative new products, services and processes
- Improve performance using technological advances
- Increase competitive advantage in key markets

- Enhance profitability in existing and new markets

Many companies don't know that innovative solutions to help their business grow can be developed with academic assistance.

Interface is here to help make the right connections for businesses.

For further information please contact:
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