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Aqualisa ‘Quartz’

Award-winning, innovative shower technology

a **science group** company

Leading UK shower manufacturer Aqualisa was looking to develop an innovative new product in order to retain market dominance. Other manufacturers had already developed electronic, rather than mechanical, mixer valves, but these were complex, unreliable and commercially unsuccessful. Aqualisa identified a strong market for a remotely controlled, reliable, electronic, thermostatic mixer valve which was easy to use and install. Aqualisa's in-house expertise lay in mechanical product development – the company needed a partner skilled in electronics to help it realise its vision.

We worked with Aqualisa, and a team from industrial designers Seymour Powell, to provide a seamless interface between project teams and project phases. This enabled Aqualisa to retain control of the development cycle, maintain the integrity of its original vision, and achieve a highly successful product launch.

A radically different approach ¬

Aqualisa proposed an electronically-controlled system which represented a radically different mixer valve design. We identified a range of innovative product concepts that met the initial brief, technically appraised the short-listed options and drew up a comprehensive product specification. This defined the parameters of the new valve, which had to be low-cost, compact, easy to install and ensure a consistent water temperature.

We then developed innovative control electronics that allowed fully operational prototypes to be built. During the subsequent manufacturing support phase, Sagentia assisted with the mechanical integration of the electronics, and guided Aqualisa through electrical and mechanical product safety approvals including EMC testing.

A new direction ¬

When launched, the 'Quartz' remote mixer shower was unique in the marketplace and represented a new direction for the shower industry. The shower established Aqualisa as a true innovator; it quickly became the company's best-selling product and, in 2004, was named 'Best Consumer Product' at the UK Design Business Association's Design Effectiveness Awards.

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