

## Red Dot Design Award for PDD

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PDD, the award-winning product innovation consultancy, has added another prestigious design accolade to its collection: Quartz Electric, a revolutionary electric shower, manufactured by Aqualisa and with a creative identity developed solely by PDD, has been recognised for its high quality design with a Red Dot distinction from Germany's Design Zentrum.

Aqualisa's marketing and sales director **Simon Greenstreet** commented,

*"We are extremely proud of Quartz Electric's Red Dot success; PDD have a longstanding relationship with Aqualisa and because they have also worked with us in a technical capacity in the past, were able to immediately understand the functionality of Quartz Electric, whilst simultaneously creating a solid concept for the shower's aesthetics that reflect the sophistication of Quartz's Electric's performance."*

The shower, which has significantly increased Aqualisa's share of the electric shower sector, triumphed in the product design category. PDD worked with Aqualisa's R&D team to create and hone Quartz Electric's visual language. It is the second impressive win for a PDD Aqualisa collaboration in a matter of months – in September 2007, Opto Digital, another shower recognised for its innovation scooped the CORGI 'Product of the Year' award.

PDD's **Simon Browning, Head of Industrial Design**, commented,

*"We are all absolutely delighted with the recognition that Quartz Electric has received from the Design Zentrum. Within the design community, the Red Dot Awards are internationally respected and the distinction is a great achievement for both PDD and our client, Aqualisa, whom we have a longstanding relationship with and whom we have enjoyed great success with Quartz Electric."*

PDD commenced work with Aqualisa on the Quartz Electric project in January 2006. Electric showers are frequently considered as uninspiring boxes on the bathroom wall; PDD was briefed to develop the visual language of Quartz Electric to complement the new platform's user friendly features and up the ante in design appeal. The only constraint was that the shower's design, whilst needing to be progressive, would need to be consistent with Aqualisa's brand values and other products, particularly with other variants within the Quartz range.

The PDD team initially looked to reduce the overall visual weight of the shower's fascia. The lack of surface features on a relatively large unit – Quartz Electric's casing features only an on/off button, a temperature control and discreet branding – meant that the project centred on refinement rather than elaboration of these constituent features.

Simon Browning explains,

*"We wanted to reduce the visual weight of Quartz Electric, whilst also creating an impression of value and sophistication. However, with so few surface features to use, this was quite a challenge. Our approach was concentrated on our execution of detailing across the product, ensuring that every aspect from the shower's form, finish and control features were perfectly refined."*

Commenting on Quartz Electric's consumer appeal, Simon Browning continues,

*“From the beginning of the project, we were battling against popular perception that the more lights, buttons and dials a shower has, the better it must be. However, Aqualisa shared our view that this isn’t necessarily the case. We wanted Quartz Electric to buck the trend and the restrained approach to the shower’s external detailing is actually intended to add premium appeal and complement the intelligence of the product’s functionality. Similarly, making the shower’s casing busier and adding unnecessary visual features – as is the norm for many electric showers – might actually have compromised the user friendliness of Quartz Electric, something that Aqualisa’s showers are renowned for.*

PDD produced full size visual models– with the team taking extra care to bring even small details, such as the shower’s distinctive blue halo lighting– to life. This attention to detail ultimately resulted in a shower that has not only exceeded the expectations of the design brief, but established a new benchmark for electric showering.

#### **Notes to Editors –**

#### **PDD: Building deep relationships that deliver meaningful innovation**

PDD is a leading product and service innovation consultancy with over 25 years of experience in user research, design and technical development. PDD has brought award winning innovation, technology and creativity to a wide range of markets including the transport, consumer, medical, telecoms, industrial, commercial and service sectors.

PDD delivers meaningful innovation and insightful solutions that translate into competitive advantage. PDD works as a strategic partner with clients, covering the spectrum from developing an innovation strategy to the conception of an idea and if needed, the out-sourcing of production. Our services include strategy, behavioural research, cultural trends and analysis, product innovation, as well as technological problem-solving and solution implementation.

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#### **The Red Dot Awards**

With more than 7,000 submissions from 60 countries, the international “red dot design award” ranks among the largest and most renowned design competitions in the world. It is divided into the “red dot award: product design”, the “red dot award: communication design” and the “red dot award: design concept.” The award-winning products are publicly exhibited in the red dot design museum.

Each year an international jury reviews and evaluates the submitted products. Criterion includes degree of innovation, functionality and the formal quality. This ensures the seriousness of the competition and its international acceptance. The group of jurors is made up of renowned designers and design experts from all over the world whom reach their decisions on which designs are good enough to receive a red dot award independently and impartially.

A red dot award is regarded as a seal of quality; it stands for membership of the best in design and business. The winners receive the awards in person on the occasion of the gala ceremony in Essen’s Aalto-Theater, 23 June 2008, in Germany, with more than 1,200 guests in attendance.

#### **Aqualisa**

Aqualisa is one of the UK's most successful shower manufacturers. Founded in Kent over 30 years ago, the company has always been at the forefront of groundbreaking, original showering. Aqualisa first made the headlines in 1977 with its innovative bi-metallic shower valve. Developed especially with the British water system in mind, the valve changed showering forever. Much more recently, Aqualisa has won plaudits for its revolutionising showering with the development of digital showering technology. Debuted in 2001, digital showers have been one of the bathroom industry's biggest and fastest-moving success stories – and digital is now widely regarded as the future of the bathroom. Aqualisa is a British owned company, has a turnover of £40m and continues to be based in Westerham, Kent, where it employs over 200 people.

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