

Knowledge Transfer Partnerships

KTP BENEFITS

Knowledge Transfer Partnerships are designed to benefit everyone involved

- 🔄 Businesses will acquire new knowledge and expertise
- 🔄 KTP Associates will gain business-based experience and personal and professional development opportunities
- 🔄 Universities, colleges or research organisations will bring their experience to enhance the business relevance of their research and teaching

Knowledge Transfer Partnerships

Accelerating business innovation;
a Technology Strategy Board programme

<http://www.ktponline.org.uk>

SAFETY TECHNOLOGY INTERNATIONAL (EUROPE) LTD SAFETY TECHNOLOGY PROTECTS ITS COMPETITIVE EDGE

ABOUT THIS CASE STUDY

The aim of this Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) was to enable Safety Technology International Ltd (STI) to design and improve its product offering and to increase its market share. By developing an in-house design process, STI would then be able to boost sales and strengthen its competitive position, whilst also improving operational efficiency and customer relationships.

ABOUT THE SPONSOR

The Technology Strategy Board is a business-led organisation established by the Government. Its mission is to accelerate research into, and development and exploitation of, technology and innovation for the benefit of UK business - building economic growth and quality of life.

FAST FACTS

- 🔄 STI increased turnover and significantly improved profitability
- 🔄 New design process created substantial cost savings
- 🔄 Improved and expanded product lines enhanced competitiveness
- 🔄 The Associate secured a permanent position at STI
- 🔄 The Academic Partner gained valuable commercial insight which aided teaching

The Company



"The introduction of the KTP scheme really benefited us. Birmingham City University helped us to focus our attention on key areas for developing new contemporary designs for our existing product range. The link between education and the Company has been a rewarding experience for the Company and the new product range has helped us to secure various international contracts."

Ges Wallace, Managing Director, STI Europe

Safety Technology International (Europe) Ltd (STI) is a UK based safety specialist that manufactures and distributes customised fire alarms, extinguishers and protective accessories. The Company has over 50 unique safety products used by educational institutions, offices and hospitals to prevent false fire alarms, theft and vandalism.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Safety Technology International wanted to expand and improve its product offering range and increase its overall market share. The Company needed to develop an in-house design process to create and manufacture a new range of alarm protection systems, to enable it to gain wider market appeal, increase sales and strengthen its competitive position.

BENEFITS

The KTP, in partnership with Birmingham City University, helped STI build an effective in-house design framework into its manufacturing process, enabling it to create new, improved and more contemporary product lines, significantly broadening its market appeal. As a result, the Company won new business and increased its presence in overseas

markets, which substantially increased its sales turnover and profitability.

The new in-house design process developed through the KTP scheme also enabled STI to create more innovative and visually attractive products, which gave the Company a more competitive edge against other manufacturers in the safety market and increased procurement of new orders. The enhanced quality of STI's work also led to further contracts with existing, high profile clients resulting in further revenue increases.

By giving STI the capability to design its products in-house, the KTP project helped it significantly reduce outsourcing costs and manufacturing timescales, which led to major financial savings and allowed staff to dedicate more time to the creative process.

STI's staff also benefited from improved knowledge and expertise in the area of product design. This allowed clients to have more involvement in the design process, enabling staff to build closer relationships with customers and create more personalised, tailored designs, thus improving client satisfaction.

RESULTS

- 🌀 New, improved products increased sales by over 50%
- 🌀 STI increased its profitability by over 500% since the beginning of the KTP
- 🌀 Improved operational efficiency led to significant costs savings
- 🌀 New in-house design process created stronger relationships with customers
- 🌀 Enhanced product quality improved the Company's competitive position

The Associate

“As a former graduate of Birmingham City University, there is no doubt that strong educational partnerships involving industry, academia and professional institutions has dramatically shaped my career aspirations and life.”

Tony Cen, KTP Associate

With both honours and masters degree qualifications in product and industrial design from Birmingham City University, the Associate was able to bring a wealth of knowledge to the KTP. His academic design and research skills enabled him to create and present a successful in-house design strategy that would work efficiently as part of the overall manufacturing process.

BENEFITS

During the KTP project, the Associate undertook company-based training in Microsoft Project software, where he developed key skills in project management, significantly increasing his professional development and aiding his role in the project. These skills were complemented by a KTP driven NVQ Level Four in Management, providing him with core competencies to successfully drive the project.

The scheme provided him with valuable, practical experience of the design and manufacturing processes of an organisation, which complimented his academic skill-set and provided him with the opportunity for significant career development.

RESULTS

- 🌀 Became a member of the Chartered Institute of Marketing
- 🌀 The Associate has been employed as a product designer by the Company
- 🌀 Developed a wide range of personal and professional skills
- 🌀 Practical experience brought real world emphasis to his academic knowledge

The Academic Partner



“Working with industry is an integral part of the Product Design Programme at Birmingham City University. This was a truly collaborative process involving innovation and breadth of provision so as to fulfil the broad spectrum of creative skills development needs of STI Europe.”

Panch Suntharalingam, Lead Academic, Birmingham City University

BENEFITS

STI was facilitated by Birmingham City University's School of Product and Interior Design, where the research fellows academic leader took responsibility for the project. The School gained valuable experience and increased knowledge of the process of contemporary commercial practices, which brought practical, real world emphasis to its teaching.

The School's staff benefited from new material generated by the KTP, which will aid teaching in the areas of industrial collaboration and applied research and development. New design techniques developed through the scheme will be disseminated to product design students to aid their academic development.

Knowledge gained from the scheme will be used in forthcoming research assessment exercises to help the School secure more government grants for future research projects.

The insight gained will now be used as a basis for research papers and case study material on applied IT for industry.

RESULTS

- 🌀 Increased commercial knowledge and practical insight
- 🌀 Research papers have been written based on the KTP
- 🌀 Case study material from the project will be used in teaching programmes
- 🌀 Will help the School secure more government funding