EU INNOVATE

SUSTAINABLE INNOVATION IN ACTION:

THE CASE STUDY "SNAPSHOT" SERIES

COZIFY

Energy Saving From Automated Home Appliance Management

www.eu-innovate.com

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About EU-InnovatE

Between 2014 and 2016, the EU-InnovatE project investigated the potential of citizen innovation and sustainable entrepreneurship to achieve sustainable lifestyles in Europe by 2050. The following is one of a series of case study "snapshots" illustrating how new enterprises are being created by passionate, visionary individuals to benefit society at large.

The Case of Cozify:

Saving Energy Through the Automated Management of Household Appliances

A wireless hub sits at the heart of an energy–saving system that can be programmed simply to run household appliances and a variety of electrical device automatically.

Cozify is a Finnish company that focuses on home automation. It was founded by Kimmo Ruotoistenmäki, an entrepreneur, who spotted a market opportunity when renovating his home. He wanted to build a wireless-enabled control system into his house, but found the existing technology to be expensive and complicated to install. By extension, his options were limited by the fact that several apps were needed to control different devices, rather than one universal app to manage them all. With a partner, Tony Risikko, he decided to design and build a simpler system to interface with the 'Internet of Things' (IoT).

The system that they devised operates wirelessly using a smartphone or tablet app. The technology is easy to install and use, and can be programmed to control and monitor a variety of different devices, such as thermostats, lights, home entertainment systems, motion detectors and security sensors. Using wireless adapters, it is possible to extend the system to include as many appliances as required. Systems can be programmed to respond to personal preferences ensuring, for example, that lighting and heating are switched on and a favourite music track is playing in the background as an individual arrives back home from work.

In 2013, the partners founded Cozify as a start-up business to produce the home automation system. They investigated consumer preferences for home automation in Finland, German and the USA and prepared a business case. It attracted € 1,000,000 from a Finnish business funding agency, family members and other investors, which enabled the company to prepare prototypes and test systems in 20 trial homes.

Collaborative Innovation in Practice

Feedback from the trial households assisted with fine tuning the system, including reconfiguring the 'Cozify Wireless Smart Home' hub and making adjustments to control devices. The trials were an opportunity to learn about people's preferences and needs and to understand how users interacted with, for example, the hub's energy management and home security features.

Noting behaviours and usage patterns enabled the company to simplify the app-based control system making it as easy to use as possible. It also helped to determine the most appropriate way to promote the system in preparation for Cozify becoming more widely available and against a background of people becoming increasingly familiar with the IoT installed in homes.

Summary of User-Driven Innovation

An investigation of people's home automation preferences assisted in preparing a business case for the system. Once developed, end user feedback from home trials resulted in modifications to the hub and control app, and a number of design simplifications. Monitoring behaviours and usage contributed to marketing and promotion strategies.

Influence on Core Business

Cozify was developed in response to a technical challenge. The founder was a traditional entrepreneur who did not set out to create a 'green' product. It was only once the product was installed in homes and user preferences were observed that it became clear how it could contribute to more sustainable lifestyles; it was a case of devising an 'accidentally sustainable' solution. However, growing acknowledgement of Cozify's contribution to sustainability influenced the way the company promoted and marketed the system to its potential customers.

Cross–Sector Relevance: Top Three Insights

- Sustainable products and services can result from entrepreneurs finding solutions to technical challenges.
- Involving end-users in developing a product or service can result in more user-friendly solutions and a better understanding of user preferences and behaviours.
- In view of large corporations being the main players in the supply side of energy, entrepreneurs may find green opportunities with products and services that contribute to sustainable energy consumption.

To Learn More About the Case…

Please contact the lead investigators from the EU-InnovatE research team:

Steffen Farny, Aalto University – steffen.farny@aalto.fi

Further Information

Cozify: www.cozify.fi

                                        www.facebook.com/cozify/?ref=page_internal

Aalto University: www.aalto.fi