

PUBLIC

## Design Effectiveness Award Entry 2010

### BT Freestyle 700 Family

Consumer Product Category (6.1)

Client BT plc.

Consultancy TheAlloy

3<sup>rd</sup> June 2010.



Image – BT Freestyle 750 (with answering machine base)

## PUBLIC

### Executive Summary (294 words)

The BT Freestyle 700 family is a range of 5 fixed line DECT telephone packages sold with / without an answering machine, and in bundles of 1 / 2 / 3 phones together. The range is targeted at elderly users or those who have physical impairments (A&D market), but is also widely used by people who wish to own an easy to use home telephone.

The submission seeks to demonstrate that it is possible and profitable to create truly inclusive products that answer the needs of the A&D market **and** a broader section of the population alike.

The 700 family was launched in July 2008, and has since generated significant revenue and positive brand associations for BT. The core evidence of this impact is seen below.

#### Strong sales

- Based on standard consumer electronics industry margins, the range has delivered a **30 times return on the design investment of £67,167**.
- Within 2 years of launch, the Freestyle 700 range gained **value market share of 6%**, in a market with roughly 500 individual products from global brands such as Panasonic, Siemens, Motorola & Philips.
- Within 2 years of launch, the Freestyle 750 twin was ranked in **3rd position by sales value in 2009, holding number 1 sales position in UK market for 15 out of 52 weeks**.
- Within a year of launch, the Freestyle 700 family had gained **42% more market share than the previous Freestyle 600 range**.

#### Awards

- Freestyle 750 twin was awarded **Which? Best buy 2009**
- Freestyle range awarded a **4 star rating from Able magazine**
- Freestyle range was used as a **best practice example at BT's Inclusive design conference** in early 2010.

#### Extensive media coverage

There has been extensive positive customer and media reviews, alongside coverage in mainstream radio and press media.



## PUBLIC

### Outline of Project Brief

TheAlloy have worked with BT teams for over 15 years to design hundreds of consumer devices. The team have been responsible for the design of all inclusive BT products. As such, TheAlloy often doesn't always receive a formal briefing document, but will attend market feedback sessions to understand where improvements can be made, and when ranges need to be renewed.

In this instance, the team was aware that the existing Freestyle 600 range needed to be improved and an outline brief was provided to remind the design team of key attributes and market segments. The core elements of the brief can be seen below.

**Key attributes** :- Clear controls, Clear display, Simple operation and Comfort.

#### User Types :-

- Partiality sighted
- Dexterity problems
- Technophobes
- Older segment of the population
- Less design conscious
- Comfort orientated
- Easy of use oriented

### Overview of Market

The fixed line telephone market is split into 2 main categories of corded handsets and DECT (cordless) handsets with DECT accounting for 91% annual market sales value.

There are a wide variety of retail channels, including internet retailers such as Amazon and the more established retail brands such as Argos, Currys and John Lewis. Argos is the largest retail channel by volume sales.

On average, there are about 500 individual products competing in the market from global brand such as Panasonic, Siemens, Philips and Motorola and from less established brands such as Binatone and MagicBox, and from networks such as BT. Prices range from £12.50p (single cordless phone, limited functionality, lesser known brand) to £118 (multi-pack advanced featured phones, global brand). The average SKU price is £32. No single product commands a value market share greater than 8%, making for a very crowded market place.

Within this market, BT offer a wide range of telephones aimed at distinct segments of the market, with prices ranging from £17 - £116. The Freestyle range offers price points from £34 - £80, with the best selling product selling for £63, almost double the median market price point.

## PUBLIC

**Project Launch Date**

July 2008

**Design Budget**

£67,167

**Outline of Design Solution**

The design solution was driven by TheAlloys proprietary *Experience Mapping* process that seeks to create better user experiences. In this instance the designers held 15 1 to 1 interviews with elderly users, using insights gained from these to inform internal empathic tools and techniques. The design team also simulated various physical disabilities (arthritis, macular degeneration etc) using an inclusive design toolkit that TheAlloy have developed. Key experience attributes were inspired directly from user responses to designer interviews and designer role playing exercises. Selected responses and their relationship to experience attributes can be seen below :

It is important to note that by focusing on the experience, the design team looked beyond form or style. For this project, it meant that the design specifications sent to the Chinese manufacturer included such elements as the volume and frequency of ringtones, the type and layout of the screen, and the methods used to apply graphics to complex surfaces. This process ensures that the design enhances the user experience, and not just the products' look and feel.

**User Response - *"The things (icons) are too small and mean nothing to me"*.**

**Design Attribute** – The design team replaced icons with words and specified a simplified display with large characters, back lit for clarity. For example, the phonebook icon of an open book was replaced by the word 'Phonebook'. The button itself was made larger and more central so that it was easier to find and use, as it was one of the most commonly used functions.

**User Response - *"I have problems holding things that are too small"*.**

**Design Attribute** – Certain forms of disability such as arthritis restrict hand movement, particularly grip, so smaller objects are harder to pick up and hold. The design team created a larger sculpted handset with grip texture on the sides. The devices could have been substantially smaller and have used less material in production, yet such form factors impair the user experience.

**User Response - *"When I have the TV on I find it difficult to hear the phone"*.**

**Design Attribute** – The most common forms of hearing loss not only reduce volume, but also impact most at certain frequencies. The design team specified

## PUBLIC

lower frequency rings and increased viewing angles of the calls light so that it was easier to see the phone ringing.

*User Response - "I find it hard to make out the keys when they are close together".*

**Design Attribute** – The design team provided a clear space between each key to enable easier use. They also designed large individual high contrast keys sculpted to avoid miss hits.

*User Quote - "I some times find it hard to hear the other person".*

**Design Attribute** – Not all users in a household have reduced hearing, so the design team needed to provide an intuitive solution where the speaker volume could be adjusted. The solution was to create no-look tactile bumps for easy volume adjustment.

Aside from increasing the volume on the telephone to provide greater clarity, a common challenge is that the user often does not place their ear in the optimal place for maximum audio impact. The design team created a large comfortable ear bowl that would mitigate such discrepancies, and also guide the user for better sound quality.



## PUBLIC

## Summary of Results

The following pages provide evidence of the claims made in the Executive Summary

### Sales

The market research data used to generate the claims below are confidential but have been made available to the judges to validate the claims.

**Based on standard consumer electronics industry margins, the range has delivered a 30 times return on the design investment of £67,167.**

**Within 2 years of launch, the Freestyle 700 range gained value market share of 6%, in a market with roughly 500 individual products from global brands such as Panasonic, Siemens, Motorola & Philips.**

**Within 2 years of launch, the Freestyle 750 twin was ranked in 3rd position by sales value in 2009, holding number 1 sales position in UK market for 15 out of 52 weeks.**

**Within a year of launch, the Freestyle 700 family had gained 42% more market share than the previous Freestyle 600 range.**

### Awards

#### **Freestyle 750 twin was awarded Which? Best buy 2009**

This award demonstrates that the Freestyle range appeals to the mass market, and not just the A&D market.

Please see appendix 1

#### **Freestyle range awarded a 4 star rating from Able magazine**

This award demonstrates that the Freestyle range also is highly regarded by the A&D media.

Please see appendix 2

#### **Freestyle range was used as a best practice example at BT's Inclusive design conference in early 2010.**

A case study was presented at an internal BT conference that cannot be published.

## PUBLIC

### Media Coverage

Please see appendices 3, 4 & 5 for positive reviews from the Sunday Mirror, Sunday Times & Daily Express.

### Research Resources

All data referenced in this submission have been provided by BT and their market research agency GfK. The complete market research statistics have not been included due to their complexity.

More detailed statistics are available on request.

### Other Influencing Factors

BT does not support its retail product range with large scale consumer advertising campaigns.

There is a small amount of PR support used to generate media awareness of new devices and device propositions. This support is not focused on any single range and therefore the time or cost associated with promoting the Freestyle 700 range cannot be accurately identified.

BT sales teams develop strong relationships with key retail partners and do provide price promotions on an ad hoc and seasonal basis. We have been advised by BT product teams that no major price promotion campaigns were associated with the Freestyle 700 range in the periods studied.

The BT brand is well known and respected. It acts to reassure and has a perception of being high quality to users. We therefore must acknowledge the role it has in helping to generate sales for all BT products and services. However, the submission focuses on a single range of devices within the BT portfolio that outperforms other BT ranges, so the exceptional performance of the Freestyle 700 range cannot be solely ascribed to the corporate brand.

## PUBLIC Appendices

Appendix 1	Which Magazine Best Buy
Appendix 2	Able Magazine Rating
Appendix 3	Sunday Mirror Review
Appendix 4	Sunday Times Review
Appendix 5	Daily Express Review



# PUBLIC

## Appendix 1 Which Magazine Best Buy

 BT Freestyle 335 twin From £24.99	 BT Freestyle 3500 Single From £40.00	 BT Freestyle 350 Quad From £123.97	 BT Freestyle 350 Single From £47.99	 BT Freestyle 350 Triple From £79.99
 BT Freestyle 350 Twin From £54.99	 BT Freestyle 610 Single From £34.00	 BT Freestyle 610 Twin From £36.90	 BT Freestyle 650 Eco single From £40.00	 BT Freestyle 650 Eco twin From £51.40
 BT Freestyle 650 Single From £36.00	 BT Freestyle 650 Twin From £51.40	 BT Freestyle 710 single From £30.07	 BT Freestyle 710 twin From £48.89	 BT Freestyle 750 single From £33.64
				

view

Internet | Protected Mode: On

## PUBLIC

## Appendix 2 Able Magazine Rating

35

4 STAR PRODUCT


**able**  
OVERALL RATING

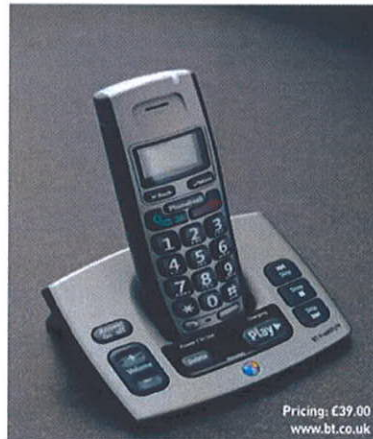
## ABLE RATINGS AWARDS

CATEGORY: TELEPHONY

## BT FREESTYLE 750

When it comes to cordless phones designed to make life easier for elderly and disabled people, the BT Freestyle 750 is both practical and remarkably easy on the eye

**K**eeping with the practical, the handset's easy-to-grip texture means it's easy to hold, and the well-spaced, large buttons make dialling problem-free, accurate and comfortable. The backlit screen, meantime, displays big characters and icons that are easily read. Indeed, the only immediate criticism with the layout of the controls are the "up/down" buttons on the side; these control the volume during a call and allow the user to scroll up and down different menu screens. Unfortunately, our tester found that she was constantly touching them accidentally (and getting a lot of beeps) while using the phone. Simply moving them nearer the top of the handset would almost certainly solve that problem.


 Pricing: £39.00  
www.bt.co.uk

### Hearing Aids

It's useful that the Freestyle 750 is compatible with hearing aids; our tester also found that the sound quality was better than her previous phone when she chose to use the speakerphone setting.

The lightness of the unit also ensured it wasn't a problem to carry it around the home in her pocket – in truth, the heaviest part of the phone are the two standard-sized, rechargeable batteries, and the tester remarked that, unlike her previous handset, it was easy enough to change these when required. The range of the signal from base unit to handset was more than needed within the house, extending well into the back garden.

### Style

As for style, the Freestyle 750 has it in loads; nothing overstated, it stands erect on its little platform and looks more luxurious than the asking price – £39.99 for a single unit, with discounts when you buy more than one unit (to place around the home).

### Set-Up

Initially, our tester found the set-up complicated by the fact that certain controls

on the phone have multiple functions; so those older people who are unfamiliar with multi-level functionality may have to rely on children or grandchildren to enter names and numbers into the phone's directory and memory.

The process isn't overly complicated, however, although the ability to set up single-digit speed dials wasn't at all marked in the instructions sheet and only "happened" by accident. Another slight annoyance was the 8 character limit when inputting names into the memory; potentially problematic if you know people with longer names, or indeed several people with the same first name!

After a few tries, our tester also found the built-in answerphone system easy enough to use, although again the set up – despite the step-by-step instructions – needed a bit of concentration.

### Overall Able Rating: 4 Star Product

Overall, though, the phone's pluses well outweigh its few negatives. ■

### INTRODUCING THE NEW-LOOK ABLE ONLINE BUYERS' GUIDE

As you may already know, Able isn't just a printed magazine. We have an online presence that currently attracts around 11,000 visitors every month – visitors who are checking out our news content and ever-expanding range of features. If you haven't already visited, however, we'd like to explain one particular feature found at [www.ablemagazine.co.uk](http://www.ablemagazine.co.uk).

We've recently relaunched our online buyers guide, which we've designed to help disabled people make informed choices about the purchase of specialist products and services. Following our "can do" attitude, the new buyers guide section links both editorial and advertising. So if, for example, you fancy a foreign holiday, then not only can you find useful and authoritative information from the magazine's extensive and updated archive, but you'll also find links to selected companies offering accessible holidays.

In other words, with just three clicks of your mouse, you could find yourself checking out a photo of the exact product you're looking for, along with the full contact details of a supplier that's keen to get it to you, pronto. Perhaps this is why the people at Microsoft have told us that more than three quarters – 76% – of our website visitors come with a clear intention to spend!

We're continuing to upload more editorial from past issues of the magazine, turning it into a searchable archive for every conceivable topic of interest to disabled people.

Our buyers guide is split up into sections for ease of use and you'll only ever see six specialist advertisers on each one – so no fear of having to trawl through long lists to find the best... we've already done that for you!

We're determined that the Able website will become THE place for you to turn when thinking about a major purchase and are looking to track down the wisest choices. Whether you're looking for information on the build-quality and features of specific bathing aids, or the kinds of questions you should ask a stairlift installation company, the Able website is your one stop shop!

All this, plus the views of other Able readers on our online forum. Check out the Able website today: [www.ablemagazine.com](http://www.ablemagazine.com).

[www.ablemagazine.co.uk](http://www.ablemagazine.co.uk)



## PUBLIC

## Appendix 3 Sunday Mirror Review

**phones**  
... tested by Caramel Quin



**iDECT S2i Triple, £9999**  
([www.currys.co.uk](http://www.currys.co.uk), 08445 616263)

THIS triple pack with answerphone is almost as well laid out and easy to use as the BT, but with a sleeker design. Sound quality on the three handsets is good but not great. However, the speakerphone sounds so good that no one would know you were chatting hands-free.

**Freestyle 750, £7999, BT**  
([www.shop.bt.com](http://www.shop.bt.com), 0800 783 7225)

FANTASTICALLY easy to use, this is ideal for every generation of the family. The three handsets are a bit bulky but have big, simple buttons. The answering machine on the base station is equally straightforward. Call quality is excellent, with a good range and decent speakerphone.

Alloy Design Effectiveness Awards Entry 2010 – BT Freestyle range



PUBLIC

Appendix 4 Sunday Times Review

26 ingear ? NET



**TEST BENCH**  
Cordless home phones



**BEST BUY**

**BEST FOR CALL QUALITY**  
**BT FREESTYLE 750 £40**

This phone stands out for clarity of calls and easy operation, and don't be put off by the badge on the base station — the Freestyle works with all telephone lines, not just BT's. The simplicity starts as soon as you open the box, as this has the most straightforward setup instructions of any phone on test (if you want the full version of the manual it can be downloaded to a computer, and there's also a free 0800 number to dial for help). The handset has big buttons and a clear two-line display to tell you exactly what's going on. Call quality was the best on test — so clear that nobody would guess you were on a cordless handset. Even the speakerphone sounds good, and the Freestyle is the only phone here to offer inductive coupling for use with digital hearing aids. However, it may not suit the largest or busiest homes: the digital answering machine in the base station can store only 15 minutes of messages, the phone book holds only 50 numbers and its wireless range is short.

Verdict A winner thanks to its price, simplicity of use and great call quality.  
★★★★☆  
shop.bt.com

PUBLIC

Appendix 5

Daily Express Review

# Gifts for tech-mad dads

**BEST DESKTOP ENTERTAINMENT**  
Technika ViewBox, £74.98. Stockists: 0800 505555/www.tesco.com  
Neat iPod speaker system (check model compatibility) which plays music, displays photos and shows videos downloaded from a PC. A great little desktop companion.

**BEST PHONE FOR GRANDDADS**  
BT Freestyle 750, £39.99 (single) Twin (£59.99). Stockists: 0800 783 7225/www.bt.com/shop  
Perfect for elderly grandparents – an excellent cordless digital phone with large, well-spaced buttons, simple menus, hands-free setting and an ‘easy-grip’ texture. It is also compatible with hearing aids.

**BEST FOR DECORATING DADS**  
Dulux PaintPod, £69.99 (plus emulsion paint £29.99 colours, £19.99 white). Stockists: 01753 833 32259/www.dulux.co.uk  
This electronic paint system (the size of a small vacuum cleaner) takes the sweat out of decorating – something dad would really appreciate. One squeeze of the trigger and the paint flows from the main unit to the roller which cuts out all those messy trays and best of all, is spatter-free.

**BEST FOR ELECTRONIC READING**  
Sony PRSS05 Reader

**GADGET GUIDE**

Dad cannot fail to have a merry Christmas if he has a new toy to play with. So this week, BONNIE ESTRIDGE finds some great gadgets to keep fathers of all ages amused