

Ideal Heating Case Study

bimstore

Introduction

Ideal Heating is the market-leading British manufacturer of high-efficiency commercial and domestic heating solutions. The company was founded in 1906, and with over a century of experience manufacturing boilers in the UK, they are uniquely qualified to meet the ever-changing needs of the UK marketplace and are proud of their reputation for delivering extremely high-quality products that are all backed by excellent customer service and training.

The company's commercial division is the market leader in commercial heating and has been for some time, being particularly strong in wall-hung and floor-standing boilers, and more recently in commercial heat pumps. In keeping with the company's forward-thinking approach, they have been making the transition to low carbon product offerings.

Heather Thompson is Ideal Heating – Commercial Products Brand Manager, Chris Caton is the Product Director for the Commercial Heating Division, and Richard Brown is the Head of Specification Sales, joining the company in 2021, 2014, and 2016 respectively.



The Challenge

In 2014, Ideal Heating identified there was a move towards BIM and it was just starting to be promoted as the future in terms of modelling, clash detection and so on. The company saw it as an opportunity to be ahead of the game and ready themselves for the customer enquiries that would inevitably follow once BIM started to become more widely adopted.

In 2014, Chris had just started with the company, and he inherited a partially finished commercial products BIM portfolio, which he ensured was completed and launched the same year. This resulted in Ideal Heating being one of the first in the HVAC commercial heating sector to launch BIM content, as well as be in line with BIM Level 2 in the UK, meaning they were ready to support the types of projects which required that.

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Chris Caton
Product Director

The Solution

Due to Ideal Heating being BIM pioneers in their sector, they required a partner who matched their vision and ambition. Chris and the team reviewed the available options and concluded that bimstore was the stand-out option, as they could provide thought leadership, commercial guidance and technical support.

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Chris highlighted the technical support that was provided by bimstore as they got started on their BIM journey. The team at bimstore assisted with parts of the implementation and provided guidance on what data needed to be included in the objects. In the early days, Chris and the team got quite a few technical questions back from customers about the content, such as the scaling of certain items, the data behind them, and so on. They found it very beneficial to have the bimstore team on hand to be able to provide answers and best practice advice.

The Progress

Ideal Heating first launched their BIM objects on bimstore and then replicated the content on their own website. This gave them separate sources of information, which needed to be collated for reporting purposes, so to solve this challenge they implemented a 'bimshelf'. This is a highly customisable iFrame that enables manufacturers to embed their BIM content on to their website and provides reporting and insights collated in one place.

Today, the company values being able to provide an efficient service to a customer who wants any of their products as a BIM object, as Chris remarked:

“It is great for us when a customer asks if we have the BIM object for a particular product and we can direct them straight to it on the website. We also know that the object has all the associated data that they will need.”

Heather utilises the reports from the platform to gather insight on which products are popular and spot any trends. The leads that are generated are passed through to the respective sales managers and specifications team, so they are aware of who is interested and using their BIM objects.

Richard and his specification team have identified how much easier it now is for the engineers involved on a project to obtain their BIM objects. This makes their lives easier and can help to secure or tighten a specification. Richard went on to say:

“We’ve noticed that with contractors if they find something that works and they are used to, then it helps them a lot. With our BIM objects being used in a design, there’s less inclination to break a specification, due to all the product data being present and the process being quicker and efficient for them. There’s no real need for them to look elsewhere.”

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Richard Brown
Head of Specification Sales

The Results

The ability to meet customer requirements is one of the main benefits that Ideal Heating identify as a result of utilising their BIM content. The collaboration of their Marketing, Product Management and Specification teams provides a highly effective process for ensuring new and existing products are brought to market successfully and get specified into projects. Heather, Chris, and Richard also represent and champion BIM internally across the organisation.

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Ideal Heating has been able to vastly reduce the number of product data related queries they receive from customers, and this is down to having high quality BIM objects available, with all the correct associated data included.

The company has also been successful in how they have generated awareness and promoted the presence of their BIM objects on both bimstore and their own website, which has helped contribute to an increase in views of products, year-on-year.

The Future

Ideal Heating is excited to be launching a lot of new products over the coming months, which are in line with the decarbonisation of heating equipment. The company will continue with their approach of ensuring that the BIM content gets produced alongside launching these products and making the BIM objects available to their customers via bimstore and their own website.

As Richard remarked, “One of the first things that comes to my mind when we’re launching new products is if we have got the BIM objects for it, because we know we’re going to get asked for them!”

In terms of how they promote new and existing products, Heather is always looking at innovative ways to communicate with their target audience. By utilising the marketing support offered by the team at bimstore, that gives them an extra channel for their promotional activity.

Heather commented, “I will continue to ensure that we make use of the marketing support offered by bimstore. The team there have helped to publicise our case studies and help to get our products in front of more people. Over the last year or so, we’ve been far more proactive in this area and we’ve seen the results in the increase in product views, so I’m looking forward to seeing what else we can do in the future.”

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Commercial Products Brand Manager

