

MINIM DEVELOPMENT FOR BRITISH GAS

Background

Following a decision by the UK Government to include the provision of an In Home Display (IHD) into the scope of the Carbon Emission Reduction Target (CERT) scheme, a UK obligation on energy retailers to provide energy reducing equipment to householders, BG and GEO came up with a concept of a simple display which could be provided at low cost and which could be given away to homeowner for self-fitment.

BG's requirements were that this could monitor whole house electricity consumption and could be fitted and set up in under 10 minutes, and could be posted to householders using normal mail. Following agreement on volumes and pricing, GEO undertook the design and agreed to have product in stock in the UK within a 6 month period from contract signing.

The design was based around the successful speedometer and odometer concept pioneered in earlier GEO designs, which has been created to give users a simple and intuitive display in monochrome for low cost. A current transformer which clipped very simply and quickly round the tail of the meter cable meant users could install the device themselves.

Tariffs were entered by the user and allowed for both high cost day rates and cheap rate night time electricity with ease. Powered by three AA batteries, the efficient transmitter radio design meant that batteries lasted for two years or more, an obvious requirement for long service life.



Delivery of the first batches of Minim units flowed into BG's warehouse on programme, and the initial response to the product was so good that the product was introduced as a core part of the BG Energy Smart proposition, gaining BG hundreds of thousands of new customers. The production line has run for over two years producing over 500,000 Minim units, making it one of the highest volume In Home Displays introduced into the market. This was achieved using production facilities approved to the quality, environmental and demanding CSR policies of the customer.

