

Blond is a London based design studio, founded in 2014. They create contemporary products, spaces and digital experiences for a diverse range of brands, ranging from boutique start-ups to global businesses.

Blond's multidisciplinary design team has experience collaborating with brands across the world, spanning sectors such as Consumer Products, Toys, Furniture, Lighting, Interior, Transport, Aviation, Visualisation, Workplace, User Interface/Experience and Packaging.

With a love for narrative, detail, materiality and a holistic design process - Blond produce ideas and products that last.

Summary

Duo is the result of a case study, conducted to pinpoint the immediate future of induction charging. The product suggests how consumer electronics brands can utilise their existing technology, yet target an increasingly style/interior conscious consumer.

The Technology

Most large consumer electronics brands offer an induction charging solution. However, many have yet to approach the technology in a manner that allows the product to sit comfortably and effortlessly within the home environment.

Induction charging technology is becoming a standard part of modern portable electronics. Various Android phones have in-built inductive charging capabilities while the Apple Watch also offers the same technology. It is rumoured that Apple will be pushing this technology further with their release of the iPhone 7, necessitating inductive charging products like Duo. Currently, the method of charging your mobile devices through induction provides little more than an added convenience and is desired only by the tech savvy; Blond expect this to change. Their research showed a gap in the market for a high quality product that is not embedded into furniture but a product that can be moved around the home to suit modern living.

In order to bestow the induction charging plate with more presence and purpose, allowing its integration into the home environment; Blond suggests that the product be merged with other portable electronics. For the purpose of this particular case study, a portable speaker has been selected.

Modern Living

Consumers once celebrated the plastic encasing of technology. In recent times, however, we have seen the demand for more interior focused products.

Blond's design process was heavily influenced by materials; chosen specifically for their compelling nature. Instead of focusing on plastics, tactile and emotive materials were selected that would be at home in a modern interior. Blond allowed the materials suited to the purpose to inform the design choices and shape the product.

A robust, precision-milled aluminium grill encases the speaker itself. This protects the technology from knocks, designed to naturally wear and patina with use. The charging docks are made from Corian and, much like the grill, they are milled to achieve fine tolerances. The man-made stone provides a tactile finish and helps the product feel at home, in the home.

The product exhibits a muted, contemporary aesthetic and has been designed to sit comfortably in a variety of modern interiors. The two colour directions are not driven by trends, but instead; modern living, thus designed to encourage a longer product life cycle.

Design Details

Duo is a robust, portable speaker designed to be used inside the home and beyond. Connected to your mobile device for ease of operation and convenience. Simple touch controls - volume, power and bluetooth connection, are all located on the top of the product, within easy reach. The cylindrical form has been created to allow 360 degree sound.

Two docks have been designed for two purposes. The elongated base acts as a charging dock for the speaker, but also as an induction charging plate for your mobile devices. The smaller base is simply a charging dock, to provide a second home for the speaker; Blond purpose that each product be sold with these two variations. In addition, selling the docks separately will allow the user to expand his/her collection.