



## When quality and safety matter most Sunflow choose the BSI Kitemark™

"Being a market leader is important to us. We're about to launch a brand new range of heaters. They are different to other products on the market as they use new technology, so we need a way to prove the quality and safety"

**Suzanne Gillbe**  
Managing Director  
Sunflow Ltd.

### Customer objectives

- Demonstrate a clear commitment to quality through independent certification
- Differentiate their products from competitors
- Embed excellence in Factory Production Control and manufacturing processes
- Deliver high levels of customer satisfaction

### Customer Benefits

- BSI Kitemark has helped to attract new customers
- Improved levels of customer satisfaction
- BSI Kitemark has helped to put a robust quality system in place
- Saved time and money bringing new products to market



## Customer background

Sunflow Ltd, based in Royal Wootton Bassett, Wiltshire, are the only British manufacturer of slimline electric refractory clay core heaters. They were established in 2010 with a team of just 3 people and over the last 4 years have grown significantly now employing over 40 people. In addition to this a UK wide field based team of certified heating engineers and electricians is employed to install the products in clients homes.

Sunflow position their products at the forefront of heating technology. They are designed to achieve maximum efficiency and heat transfer as the elements are embedded directly into the kiln clay core by hand. This helps to optimize the efficiency of the products. As consumers have seen their energy bills rise in recent years, so Sunflow have seen their sales grow in response to the demand for more energy efficient heating solutions from homeowners. But Sunflow have had to work hard to prove that their products are different and to prove their quality.

Innovation is at the heart of what Sunflow Ltd do. "We don't just stand still and build radiators", says their Managing Director, Suzanne Gillbe. "Being a market leader is important to us. We're about to launch a brand new range of heaters. They are different to other products on the market as they use new technology, so we need a way to prove the quality and safety".

## The challenge

When Sunflow first started trading in 2010, there was no UK production and instead products were imported from overseas. This situation presented Sunflow with a number of challenges as they were not in full control of the supply chain and product quality was not as high as Suzanne and her team wanted it to be.

Because of this, the decision was taken to bring all manufacturing in house in the UK. This meant that quality systems could be

## BSI Case Study: Sunflow Ltd.

managed by Sunflow and they were in full control of key decisions such as selection of their component suppliers. For example, the controls for their heaters are now sourced from a British company. These changes gave the team at Sunflow an opportunity to review the way that quality was managed

## The solution

Sunflow started the journey of getting their heaters certified to the BSI Kitemark. "We looked at the standards we needed to meet before we started manufacturing," says Suzanne. "This meant we had the right processes in place to get things right from the start and we didn't have to backtrack and rework things which could have been costly". They also recognized that achieving BSI Kitemark certification for their products would send a clear message to their customers about the quality and safety of the products. This was especially important to Sunflow as being a new brand, the BSI Kitemark could help them to gain recognition and to differentiate themselves. A BSI Kitemark shows that a product has been independently evaluated by BSI. It's a voluntary quality mark and if standards aren't continually met BSI can decide to suspend or even withdraw the certification

## How Sunflow achieved the BSI Kitemark

Like thousands of other businesses around the world, Sunflow had to go through a number of rigorous checks to achieve their BSI Kitemark. Their factory production control processes were inspected and will continue to be inspected every year to ensure consistency and quality. After that, initial samples of their products were tested at the BSI Centre of Excellence in Loughborough.

Once this was done, an independent Certification Manager thoroughly reviewed all test results and associated evidence to make sure everything met the required standard to award a Kitemark. But the BSI Kitemark process doesn't stop there.

Every year production samples of the certified products must be sent to BSI to be independently tested to check that standards have not slipped. Suzanne and her team want Sunflow to be known for high levels of customer satisfaction and the quality of their products. They believe that achieving independent certification with the BSI Kitemark sends a strong message to their customers so that they can be confident about the quality and safety of their heaters. Sunflow heaters are now certified with the "BSI Kitemark for electrical safety of household appliances".

## Additional benefits from the BSI Kitemark

Sunflow have also used The BSI Kitemark in their marketing to boost their brand. Quite quickly, Sunflow's market research identified that the BSI Kitemark has very high levels of recognition amongst their target customers. Consumers associate the BSI Kitemark with a quality product they can trust. So, as part of Sunflow's marketing strategy of regularly advertising in national UK newspapers and in consumer magazines, they decided to prominently display the BSI Kitemark in their adverts as well as in all their brochures and other publicity material. This helped to reinforce their commitment to quality with a recognized symbol of quality, safety and trust. National advertising like this continues to be an effective channel in helping Sunflow to grow their sales and also helps underline their commitment to quality and pride in being British manufacturers.

**Contact us to find out how the BSI Kitemark™ can help your business make excellence a habit.**

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