

Case Study:

Creative Nottingham

Click2touch

Internet shopping has many advantages, but tactility isn't one of them. So how do you simulate the experience of touching silk cashmere on a computer screen?

Click2touch was founded in September 2003, with the mission to make fabric look better online. From an understanding of fabric construction, textile testing techniques and studying the sense of touch, the objective of Click2touch is to improve online consumers' understanding of how a fabric feels. It not only makes internet shopping more interesting, it better represents the product and therefore lessens the potential for 'buyer's remorse' when it arrives. Using Click2touch, customers can view 3D images of a product, zoom in on details and scrunch the fabric and see how it creases or reacts to their touch, just as it would if they were handling it in-store. Famous knitwear designer John Smedley is now using Click2touch.

Starting the business

Managing Director, Nicola Davison developed the idea for Click2touch while studying a Master in Arts Degree. After graduation and positive feedback from industry Nicola decided to commercialise her idea. Nicola joined The Hive, Nottingham Trent University's business start-up incubation unit; here she was able to use the support on offer and address several key milestones in creating Click2touch, such as researching fabric construction and testing.

Benefits of being based in Nottingham

Click2touch has found Nottingham a fantastic place due to the support and funding opportunities available. As well as being awarded a DTI research and development grant Click2touch undertook an investment readiness programme, which opened up investment and growth opportunities.

Achievements so far

Click2touch won the Bank of England Innovation Award at the Spirit of Enterprise awards in 2004. The company has received international media coverage and as a result have received worldwide enquiries for the product. Although Click2touch was initially developed for clothing, after working with a high street retailer, it has now developed 'sensations' related to home furnishings.



Plans for the future

Click2touch is now looking at opportunities to licence the software abroad and the company plans to continue to grow in the clothing and home furnishing market, both in the UK and abroad.

Nicola Davidson said: "Nottingham is a great place to meet and network with other science-based businesses, which in turn encourages growth. The Nottingham Science City status will encourage other science and creative businesses in the area, creating opportunities for collaborations and future growth."