Shayp’s solution for smart water management with a smart product

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Everyone sees the evolution towards more digital technology in products to make them 'smarter'. But how do you successfully engage with this as a company? Let us inspire you with the Shayp story!

How can I use digital technology in my products to provide even better solutions to my customers? How can I successfully make my products 'smarter'? Because these questions are on the minds of a lot of product builders, we are organising another webinar on smart products on 7 February, where we will hear from two companies about their own product innovations. In the previous edition last year, Zineddine Wakrim, CTO at scale-up company Shayp, explained what 'smart products' mean to the company and how it went about it.

Why make a smart product anyway?

As a start-up, Shayp started from the observation that water leaks in buildings have been overlooked for too long as a cause of waste, costs and damage. Conventional water meters are suitable for the correct billing of water consumption, but not for detecting leaks. So they worked out a water management solution consisting of a dedicated wireless data logger and cloud-based

software to monitor consumption, detect leaks and track interventions. Insurance companies wanted to buy the product even before it was developed. This was enough confirmation of the need for Shayp to start building a first version of its product.

Integrating digital technology stepwise into product development

As it was starting its business from the ground up, it was crucial for Shayp to develop its product step by step. Regarding the electronics, it first used off-the-shelf hardware for prototypes and only for the first product version made its own basic electronics design that was then further optimised along with a dedicated housing for the final data logger. Those who would think of a smart product in terms of digital technology only, might underestimate the development cost for the mechanical aspects, such as the housing.

Even more than the hardware, the software is the result of a step-by-step development and expansion, which is still continuing today. Shayp's solution includes dashboards for various stakeholders, such as building managers, maintainers, insurers and end users, but it also provides a seamless integration into existing building management software. To keep all these developments manageable, it was important for the company to make clear choices and not start building software features for a single customer. Above all, the final product that ends up in the hands of the customer simply had to be easy to install and use.

For the specific software that analyses water usage and detects leaks, Shayp is making use of machine learning. The data coming from the smart water meters in the field provides insight not only into the occurrence of leaks but also into optimising water consumption. Through software updates, such new functionalities and services can be further validated and deployed.

From starting business to scale-up

Shayp offers its solution 'as a service' through a subscription model for the hardware and software combined. In addition to various recognitions for the societal impact of its innovation, this has also brought the company rapid growth and the necessary investments to further roll out its solution in the European real estate sector.

(Source image: Shutterstock)

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