



GranBaristo

If the GranBaristo were a car, it would be in a class of its own. The team behind the new fully automatic coffee machine has re-imagined not only the equivalent of its exterior, but its chassis, dashboard and engine as well. The bean-to-cup experience, first created by Saeco in 1985, has been completely reinvented. The stylish, slim machine is even more compact and easy to clean. A greater variety of coffee styles has been made possible with a unique hydraulic circuit, and the choice is offered via a crisp and intuitive new user interface. All crafted by coffee lovers, for coffee lovers.

ESSENTIAL INSIGHTS

The Saeco coffee lovers began with a business insight. They noticed that the market for fully automatic coffee machines (those that grind the beans to make each drink) was growing in certain key countries like Germany and Russia. But that growth was fueled mainly by aggressive ad campaigns rather than innovation.

The team at Saeco knew they could do better. This was the company behind the first bean-to-cup machine in 1985, a hugely popular innovation that changed the way people drink coffee in their homes. So they set out to build on that technology, and attract a new generation of connoisseurs to their fully automatic coffee machines.



Saeco's first bean-to-cup fully automatic machine, 1985

GATHERING INSIGHTS

To do so, they first had to discover what this new generation wanted. "We went back to basics," explains Edward Tonino, who headed up the design of the new machine as part of a multidisciplinary team of innovators, business leaders and market specialists at Saeco. "That included going on what we call a 'consumer safari' to visit the coffee shops of Frankfurt and people's homes to observe how they drink coffee in their day-to-day lives."

What they found was a big change from the past. Until recently, consumers would generally stick to one type of coffee, which meant that the machines on the market reflected this by offering a narrow choice of preparation. "But during our research, we were amazed by the sheer variety of drinks each person had in a day," explains Edward.

"We saw people starting the morning in a rush with a big mug of strong coffee, having a luxurious milk-based

specialty like a cappuccino or macchiato over lunch, and finishing the day with a milder preparation, perhaps as part of an evening ritual with friends."

MORE VARIETY, LESS MAINTENANCE, COMPACT DESIGN

Using these insights, plus ones gathered from focus groups and data on the market, the team knew what their target consumers wanted. As well as more variety, the research showed that they were mostly busy professionals with a strong interest in design and technology.

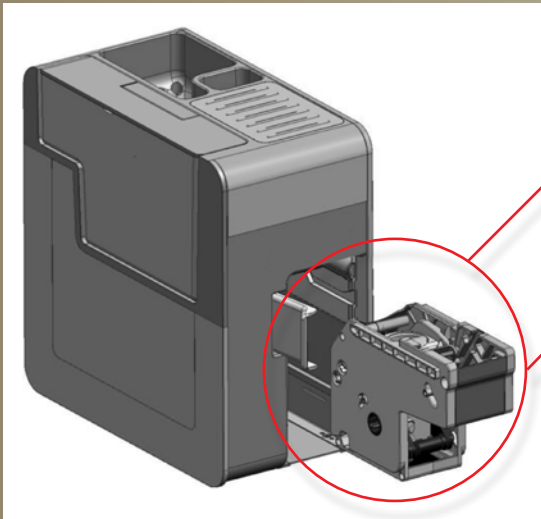
But most fully automatic machines on the market had a classic, robust look and needed frequent cleaning to keep them working properly. Consequently, "less maintenance" came high on the consumer's list, alongside "stylish and compact."

In other words, they wanted it all. And to give it to them, Saeco had to start almost from scratch. "If this were a car, it's as if we redesigned not only the exterior, but the chassis and the entire engine," says Edward. "It's like we went from a petrol to an electric car, and then some."

What coffee lovers want in a machine - insights from the 'consumer safari'



More variety
Less maintenance
Design



VariPresso chamber

Featuring a unique hydraulic circuit. Gives two different coffee extractions for more coffee variety

One-finger removable brewing group

The world's first, for even easier maintenance

MORE COFFEE VARIETY

At the heart of the team's innovations is the **removable brewing group**, the GranBaristo's equivalent of the engine. Saeco invented its first removable brewing group in 1985 as a neat, self-contained device that combined ground beans with pressure and water to make coffee. Unlike competitor machines, it could be easily removed and cleaned under running water.

For the new engine, the team kept the same concept and took it to the next level. "Everything inside the brewing group is totally new, including the capacity, the new pressure chamber and the way it handles," explains Cristiano Castelli, lead engineer for the project at Saeco. "The result is a new breed of machine that's more efficient, gives more coffee varieties and is super-easy to maintain."

INNOVATIVE HYDRAULICS

One of the most innovative aspects of the new brewing group is the **VariPresso chamber**, which unlike those in most other fully automatic machines, is capable of extracting coffee at two different pressures. This means that the GranBaristo can produce a whole range of different coffee styles (16 in total) from a high pressure espresso strength to a lower pressure lighter, more drip-filter like coffee.

The key to the new chamber is its **innovative hydraulic circuit**. Other machines use mechanical circuits to change the position of the pistons inside the coffee chamber to adapt to different amounts of coffee. But Cristiano believed that there could be a more efficient way to design the technology.

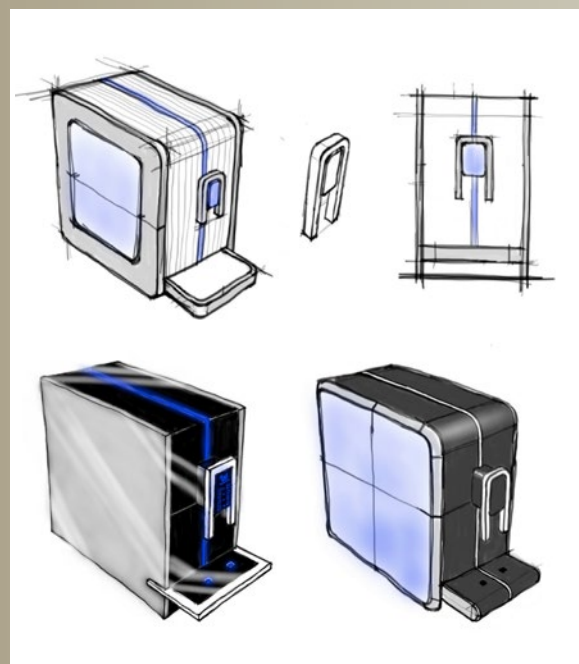
"I knew that hydraulic circuits were used in cars to provide power steering, which is much more efficient than purely mechanical steering. So I started looking into ways to adapt the technology for a coffee machine," he explains. By using the new circuits in the upper part of the chamber, he cut down on components which ensured that the new VariPresso chamber was faster and more compact, as well as more reliable.

ULTRA COMPACT DESIGN

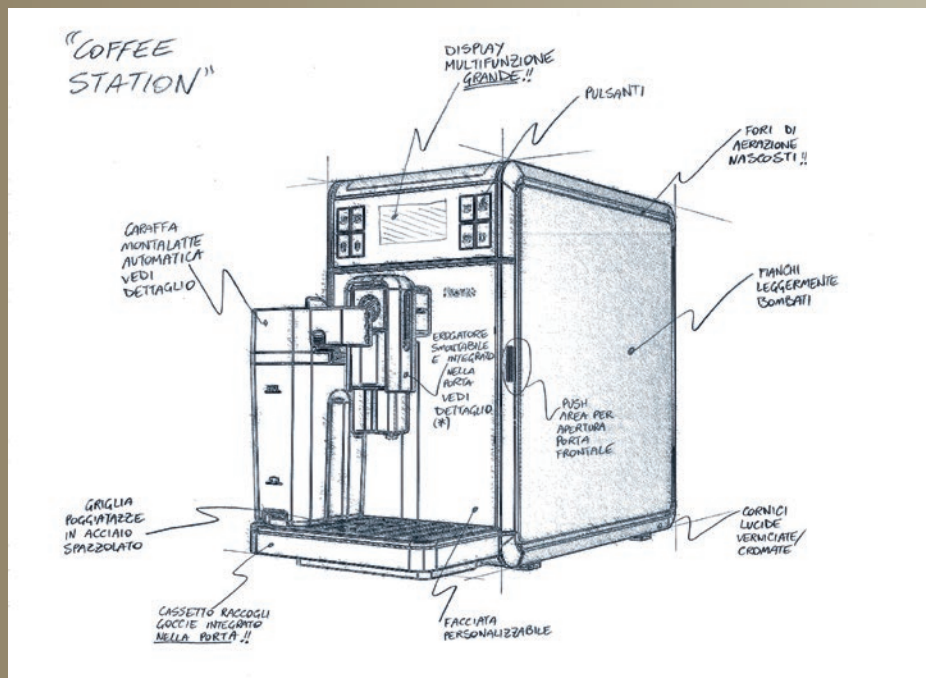
Alongside variety, the innovative team discovered that to their customers, small is beautiful. "People's living spaces are getting smaller, so kitchen space is at a premium," says Mariarosaria Schettini, Consumer Marketing Manager for Saeco. "We found that every time we tested a concept, the compact version always won."

Thanks to improvements in internal space efficiency, Castelli's team had already reduced the exterior of the GranBaristo to a super-slim 20.5cm (8 inches) wide. Going one step further, Edward's designers found another way to make it space saving.

"Most other machines are accessed from the side, which means they need lots of free space around them in a kitchen. Instead, we designed the GranBaristo to be used entirely from the front. That means it can be slotted in between other things on the counter top," he explains.



Early design sketches



ULTRA SIMPLE TO CLEAN

The new design also makes it simple to clean, which was another overwhelming request that came in from the consumer safari. Without regular maintenance, a machine can get clogged with old coffee grains that affect the taste of subsequent drinks. “We found that easy cleaning was particularly important to German consumers, who liked being able to remove the brewing group and wash it quickly under the tap,” says Mariarosaria.

With busy people in mind, Cristiano’s team designed a handle on the front of the brewing group that allows users to remove it with just one finger. They also improved the GranBaristo’s automatic cleaning technology by using shorter pipes from the boiler to the brewing group strongly reducing the water used for the rinsing cycle.

INTUITIVE USER INTERFACE

Faced with a target user who has a keen interest in design and technology, the team reasoned that they needed a crisp and intuitive user interface. “It seemed particularly important given how many varieties of coffee are on offer – so that each step is clear and appealing,” says interactive designer at Philips, John Jansen.

“We explored how lighting effects and on-screen graphics could take users from their initial choice of coffee type through to the brewing process and the finishing touches.”



Offering 16 different coffee specialties, the GranBaristo uses back-lit touch-screen buttons to intuitively guide the user’s choices. The panel indicates the start of the brewing process with an animation that indicates how long it will take. A circle of dots around an image of their chosen drink disappear one by one until the drink is ready.

CHOICE OF FINISHES

The design team were inspired by in-depth trend research to create a stylish machine that would meet the consumers’ expectations for design. “The final versions come in black and stainless steel, each with some lovely mixes of gloss and matt finishes,” says Edward. “They reflect the latest trends for floating lines and high-tech moods, while retaining a timeless feel.”

For further information contact:

Ange Dunselman

Philips Design & Innovation Communications

Tel: +31 (0)62032 4488

E-mail: ange.dunselman@philips.com