

# DESIGN IMPACT CASE STUDY

## SPORT AND LIFESTYLE

**Flite**

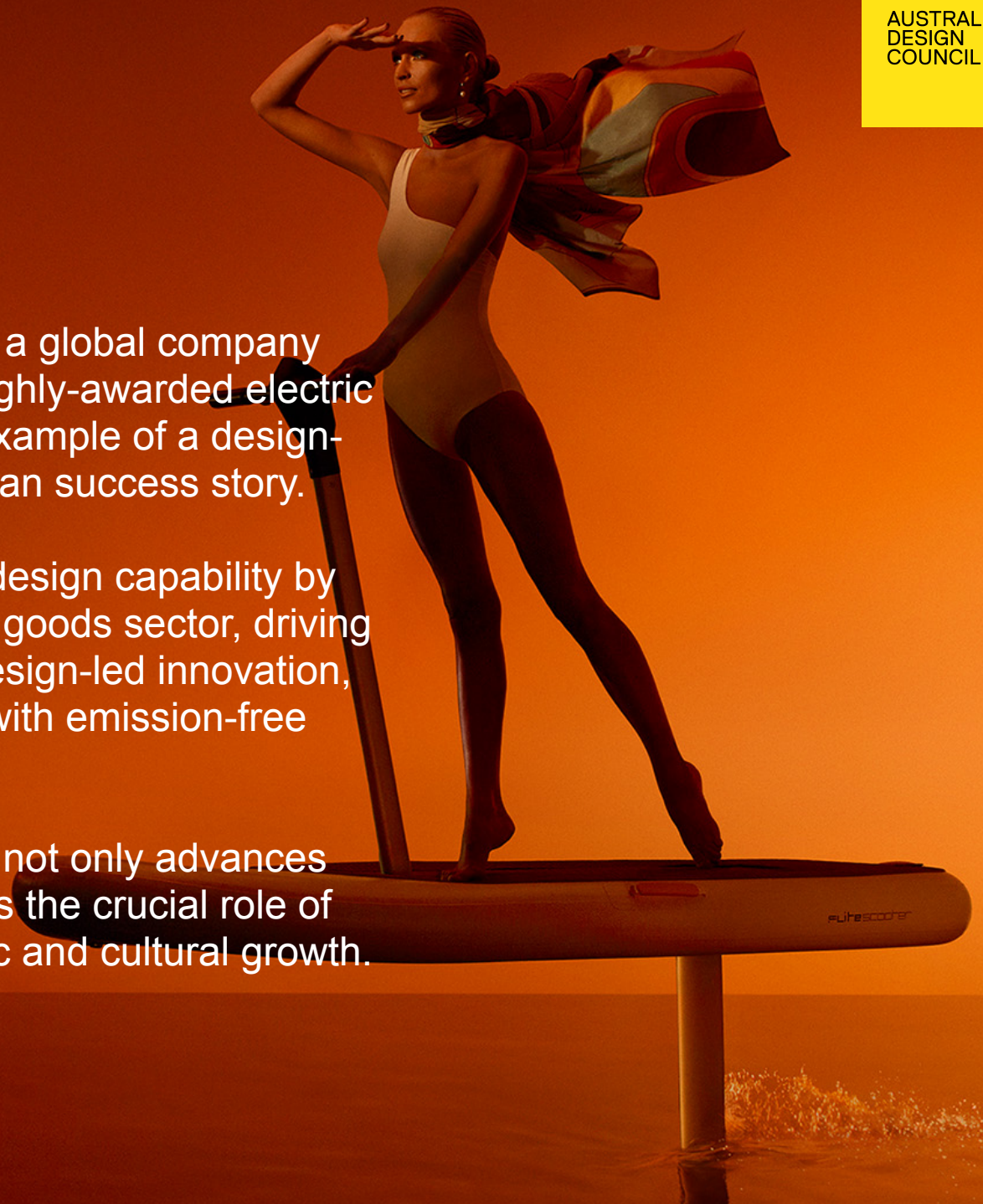
Byron Bay, New South Wales

# Flite

From a spark of inspiration to a global company producing the world's most highly-awarded electric hydrofoils, Flite is a leading example of a design-led business and true Australian success story.

Flite showcases exceptional design capability by innovating within the sporting goods sector, driving economic success through design-led innovation, and promoting sustainability with emission-free watercraft.

Its commitment to excellence not only advances the industry but also highlights the crucial role of design in Australia's economic and cultural growth.



## FLITE VIDEO CASE STUDY



# FLITE DESIGN PROCESS MATURITY

| DESIGN PROCESS STAGES      | KEY LEARNINGS   |
|----------------------------|---|
| <p><b>1. Define</b></p>    | <p>Identified a personal need: The founder of Flite realised there was no wind in Byron Bay for most of the year, making traditional water sports difficult.</p> <p>Recognised a market gap: The idea emerged from the need to enjoy water activities without relying on wind.</p> <p>Set a clear goal: Create a powered foil board that would allow users to experience the thrill of water sports without depending on natural conditions.</p>                    |
| <p><b>2. Empathise</b></p> | <p>Designed for personal passion: The founder's deep connection to water sports led him to create something he personally wanted.</p> <p>User-centred approach: The product was developed by putting himself in the shoes of the customer.</p> <p>Empathy in customer support: The company prioritises user experience, not just in design but also in post-purchase support.</p>   |
| <p><b>3. Ideate</b></p>    | <p>Conceptualised a technological fusion: The idea combined a battery, a motor, and a Bluetooth hand controller to create an electric-powered board.</p> <p>Designed as both functional and artistic: The board was envisioned as not only a piece of sports equipment but also a beautifully crafted object.</p> <p>Considered various user scenarios: The design evolved to anticipate how customers might interact with the product in different conditions.</p> |

# FLITE DESIGN PROCESS MATURITY

| DESIGN PROCESS STAGES     | KEY LEARNINGS  |
|---------------------------|--|
| <p><b>4. Evaluate</b></p> | <p>Started with a self-built prototype: The founder, despite never having built a product before, prototyped and refined the design.</p> <p>Tested through personal use: Since the founder was the target customer, he tested the product himself and iterated based on personal experience.</p> <p>Gathered real-world data: Through 13,500+ units sold and an app tracking 8.1 million kilometres of usage, the company continuously collects user feedback.</p> |
| <p><b>5. Launch</b></p>   | <p>Expanded to global markets: Flite has offices in the Netherlands and the US, reflecting a well-executed growth strategy.</p> <p>Commercialised successfully: The product has been sold in over 90 countries.</p> <p>Built a strong design-led culture: The company integrates technology, consumer electronics, and artistry to create a holistic product experience.</p>   |

# FLITE

## EMBEDDING DESIGN TO DELIVER IMPACT

| DESIGN IMPACT PILLARS   | KEY LEARNINGS   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>1. PEOPLE AND CULTURE</b></p> <p>Designing to improve the quality of life for society and citizens and to acknowledge and shape culture in a respectful and inclusive manner.</p> | <p>Enhancing outdoor recreation: The product enables users to enjoy water sports in new ways, fostering an active and engaging lifestyle.</p> <p>Empathy-driven customer support: The company's approach ensures customer needs are understood and met, reinforcing a positive user experience.</p> <p>Community building: With thousands of users globally, Flite has created a network of enthusiasts, strengthening the social impact of its product.</p> <p>Rooted in passion for water sports: The company is deeply connected to surf and water sport culture, ensuring authenticity in its products.</p> <p>Fusion of art and engineering: The design is not just functional but artistic, reflecting the idea that design enhances human experiences.</p> <p>Promoting Australian design excellence: Flite represents Australian innovation on a global scale, strengthening cultural identity in the design world.</p> |

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## EMBEDDING DESIGN TO DELIVER IMPACT

| DESIGN IMPACT PILLARS  | KEY LEARNINGS  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>2. PLANET</b></p> <p>Designing for Environmental Sustainability and Circularity.</p> | <p>Electric propulsion: The battery-powered design reduces reliance on fossil fuels, offering a greener alternative to traditional motorised watercraft.</p> <p>Potential for sustainability improvements: While the transcript does not explicitly mention circular economy principles, electric propulsion suggests a move towards eco-friendly alternatives.</p> <p>Efficiency in design: The focus on streamlined design and optimised energy use contributes to reduced environmental impact.</p> |
| <p><b>3. PROSPERITY</b></p> <p>Designing for Commercial and Economic Return.</p>           | <p>Job creation: The company employs 100 people in Australia and 40 globally, contributing to local and international economies.</p> <p>Global success: With 13,500 units sold in 90+ countries, Flite has demonstrated strong commercial viability.</p> <p>Data-driven growth: The Flite app, which logs usage data, enables ongoing product improvements and strategic business decisions.</p>   |

## **DESIGN FOR A BETTER AUSTRALIA**

We champion the power of design capability to deliver meaningful impact that fuels economic growth, strengthens communities, and shapes a more sustainable and prosperous Australia.

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