

LG Electronics

'Whisen' Air Conditioner Cools Sultriness

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For several years, LG Electronics (LGE) has enjoyed pleasant conditions all through the summer due to its leading air-conditioner brand 'Whisen.' In the global market, Whisen has solidified its top brand position over the past 3~4 years as a world-class product.

Until the first half of the 1990s, Japanese firms, in fact, dominated the global air conditioner market.

As a result of Whisen's strenuous sales expansion centering on the U.S. and Europe, however, this brand has emerged to take first place.

In 2002, LGE sold a total of 6.7 million units (US\$2.2 billion) in the 47 million-unit global air conditioner market, placing at the top in sales. Whisen's success was not just achieved in the quantitative sector alone. Whisen also received quality recognition in the U.S. to the extent that the product was designated a 'Best Buy' for two consecutive years by Consumer Report.

Then, what are the secrets to success of LG's Whisen that have cooled the heat in the global village for the past several years? Cited first are the company's steady technology development and quality enhancement. Experts' analyse show that Whisen's success was realized through a 'design-centered product development process and establishment of design identity feeling.'

LGE's design process utilizes a wide variety of feedbacks and investigation techniques, including examination of ideas after suggestion of certain projects, study of product viability, preparation of models and conduct of product appraisal sessions, as well as a survey of potential buyers, experiments in various installation environments, interviews with experts, etc. Also after the sale, LGE investigates the degree of customer satisfaction continuously, evaluates marketing/product strategies and utilizes the results for development of new products. This process leads to a steady debut of new products in the market every year.

The products that have reaped the fruit of LGE's technological prowess are Korea's first 'Internet Air Conditioner' controllable via the Internet, 'LG Frame-Type Air Conditioner Series' manufactured with introduction of 3D refrigeration and interior concepts, 'TPS (Twin Power Cooling System)-mounted Ultra Power-Saving Air Conditioner' reducing monthly electricity use by up to 65% and '2 In 1 Air Conditioner' that connects two units with one outdoor cooling station.

LGE's 'Six Sigma Campaign,' implemented since 1996 in all fields including product development and manufacturing, has also contributed significantly to quality enhancement. Each LG Whisen employee works on more than one project every year for achievement of Six Sigma targets. This system also is implemented at LG Whisen's cooperative firms.

