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## Cutting Tiles, Cutting Costs

*As trends in kitchen and bathroom design evolve, Nick Longford, Brand Manager for RotoZip in the UK, looks at how Plumbers and Heating Installers can use new advances in tile cutting technology to help maximise productivity and reduce project costs.*

The tiling market is seeing a rapid shift in the balance when it comes to popular tiling materials. Tough, high grade materials are now the preferred choice for a quality finish on walls and floors, with porcelain currently boasting around 60% of the market share, as demand for its softer counterparts starts to wane.

So what does this mean for the professional Plumber or Heating Installer? Simply put, in addition to the increased pressure to compete on price in a tough financial climate, many will find themselves having to cope with soaring costs for consumables and waste, as current tools and working practices fail to meet the challenges presented by this new generation of tile. As is the case for most industries, the plumbing and heating sector is affected to a large degree by consumer power - and Porcelain's new found popularity means that professionals within the industry cannot ignore how their everyday working methods will need to change in order to accommodate its robust composition. Porcelain tiles are manufactured using specialised techniques which make them stronger than traditional ceramics and 30% more dense than granite. Needless to say, those tradesmen who are ill equipped and cannot afford to take the hit, are declining work that they are unable to carry out cost effectively, in particular in instances where the demands of porcelain present problems with cutting and drilling.

New innovations in tile cutting however, have resulted in the availability of affordable solutions that are constantly being developed to solve recurring problems faced by professional tradesmen. RotoZip for example, has a committed programme of Research & Development, which is carried out with the help of end users who are encouraged to provide feedback on the tools with regard to performance, ease of use and suitability for purpose. They also report any issues or common problems that may be affecting their daily working processes, with a view to solutions being found. This successful collaboration has seen the recent launch of some of the diamond tool industry's most robust, revolutionary tile cutting solutions. Developed for use with the RotoZip spiral saw, accessories such as the X-Core and Diamond Floor Tile X-Bit, can result in major time and labour savings as well as notable reductions in waste and consumables.

These savings are largely thanks to advances in dry cutting techniques and the development of a vacuum brazing process, during which the bits are brazed at over 1000°C in a vacuum chamber, resulting in unrivalled strength and ability for fast accurate dry cuts with no blow outs.

Any tradesman who has struggled with wet tile cutting will more than appreciate the advantages of working dry. Not only does it avoid the mess created when tile dust and debris come into contact with water, but dry tiles can be applied to wet adhesive immediately, without the need for airing time.

Vacuum brazing also enables faster cutting speeds, offering rotation of up to 30,000rpm. Not only can cuts be made 5 times faster, but the resulting precision will provide massive reductions in tile breakage and waste. It also goes without saying that every minute saved on a project can help facilitate the successful achievement of deadlines thus avoiding unwanted contractual penalties.

# Bosch RotoZip Editorial

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Ensuring accurate, free-hand cuts is essential for the installation of many modern design features. Contemporary fixtures and fittings continue to push creative boundaries, often demanding clean lines and invisible craftsmanship. Being able to execute curves, lines, squares and perfect holes in all kinds of building materials such as hardwood, softwood, chipboard, ceramics, fibre-backer or cement board and drywall, is now so greatly improved that where traditionally engineered bits may expire after cutting only one hole, the X-Core for example boasts up to 100 holes whilst the X-Bit is proven to be 80% more cost effective when compared to traditionally engineered accessories cutting the hardest of building materials up to a thickness of 30mm.

So, as tile cutting technology continues to break through the challenges dictated by vogue, these new products present valuable opportunities for professional Plumbers and Installers to improve the productivity and profitability of each contract. Constant investment into research and development provides our best chance at finding the solutions which will play an essential part in the sustainable future of the trade.

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