

New Finnish Boat Fender Innovation A Highlight of Metstrade in Amsterdam



*X-Fender is the world's first space-saving, multi-functional, and puncture-proof fender.
Image: X-Fender Oy*

August 15, 2024, 9:00 AM | X-Fender Oy

The World's first foldable and puncture-proof fender developed by X-Fender Oy has been selected as a highlight startup of the world's largest boating equipment fair in Amsterdam. This selection provides X-Fender Oy with significant international visibility and the opportunity to present its invention to leading investors and manufacturers in the industry.

X-Fender is both the name of the newly founded company and the trade name of the new fender product. The product is believed to be the world's first airless and foldable fender, with its main advantages over current products being space-saving, versatility, and puncture-proof design. X-Fender's patented structure, which unfolds into a flat shape, allows for storage in tight spaces and can even be used as a seat cushion on long sailing trips.

"Contrary to what one might think, the name X-Fender is not a tribute to an American innovator but originates from early prototypes that resembled the letter X. The product has been developed for over a year, initially in a garage and later with design studio Aivan Oy. The result is truly revolutionary and exceeds the initial goals that were set to the product," explains inventor and X-Fender Oy chairman Petro Lahtinen.

X-Fender Oy has been invited to be one of the startup highlights at the Metstrade fair held in Amsterdam in November 2024. Metstrade is the world's largest marine equipment fair, showcasing both traditional brands and new innovations from around the world.



X-Fender is the world's first space-saving, multi-functional, and puncture-proof fender. On left x-fenders in rolled up to protect hull, on right opened up and stowed in slim holder leaving passage way free. Image: X-Fender Oy

"We have already received a lot of positive feedback and significant interest in our new product. However, Metstrade is the first major international recognition for us. This is an exceptional opportunity to introduce the product to the entire global marine equipment industry and the €500 million fender market at once," enthuses the company's CEO, Kalle Kare.

X-Fender is currently in the final stages of user testing, with production set to begin in the fall. The boating business is international, and thus X-Fender aims directly at the global distribution. The fender market has not seen new innovations for decades, making this novelty particularly interesting to retailers, with the first distribution agreements already signed domestically.

"We believe our innovation is an excellent door opener product worldwide, enabling us to build a comprehensive international distribution network. It's easy to introduce new products later into an established distribution network. We see significant value not only in our product but also in the distribution channel. Our goal is to grow into an internationally significant marine equipment brand with our innovative products," says Kare.

X-Fender Oy's mission is to bring modern design to marine equipment, turning them into design and lifestyle products rather than mere functional items. In recent years, several Finnish boat brands focusing on design have gained market share exceptionally fast, indicating a growing appreciation to aesthetics and design among boat owners. Products need to be credible and reliable, but according to the company, this doesn't mean that design and brand marketing needs to be dull or overly technical. Hence, the company is planning intriguing collaborations with unexpected brands. Through design, new versatile functionalities, and interesting brand collaborations, the goal is to turn fendera from a necessary evil into a desirable lifestyle product that completes any boat.



*The X-fender can be stored rolled around the railing, leaving the walkway clear.
Image: X-Fender Oy*

"Building a strong brand for an innovation is crucial. A brand naturally serves as the foundation for marketing, but it also protects the business from copies and provides a competitive edge once the patent expires. Additionally, the marine equipment business is a perfect field for a lifestyle type brand because competitors focus mainly on specifications and the product," explains brand manager Jenna Tikkanen.

For more information and image requests:

Petro Lahtinen, Chairman and Founder, petro.lahtinen@x-fender.com, +358 50 5811 033

Kalle Kare, CEO and Founder, kalle.kare@x-fender.com, +358 40 9000 196

Jenna Tikkanen, CMO and Founder, jenna.tikkanen@x-fender.com, +358 50 336 7357

Website: www.x-fender.com **Instagram:** [@x-fenderofficial](https://www.instagram.com/x-fenderofficial)

More about the company:

X-Fender Oy is a Finnish startup founded in May 2024. It is commercializing a fender innovation for the boating equipment market. The company was founded by Kalle Kare, Jenna Tikkanen, and Petro Lahtinen. Kare previously served as Sales Director at Secto Automotive Oy, while Lahtinen and Tikkanen have led the award-winning material technology company Woodio Oy. X-Fender Oy is based in Helsinki, Finland.