

Bardo wins Design Excellence Awards for Butterfly range

The MES Butterfly range single switch socket has won the Design Excellence Awards. The socket was designed by SAIEE member, Robert Bardo, who pointed out that all the intellectual property for the range are covered by ten registered designs that he owns. He says that its particularly important for young designers to protect their work and ensure that the respective licence agreements are in place.

Referring to the different designs, Bardo said that the aesthetic designs are granted exclusive for the features of an article that are solely judged by eye such as a piece of jewellery, the shape or a drinking glass or the pattern applied to a fabric. The aesthetic design is protected in terms of the Design Act.

He says this type of design excludes articles that have a shape that is dictated by the function of the article. So to qualify as an aesthetic design, it must have a particular shape, configuration, pattern or ornamentation.

"To protect functional designs, the articles do not necessarily need to have an aesthetic component, but its function can be protected. This applies, for instance to integrated circuit topographies which are specifically mentioned in the Design Act as being protected as a functional design. Many functional designs also have an aesthetic quality," says Bardo.

The Design Awards are run by the South African Design Institute and for the past 39 years have been known as the SABS Design Excellence Awards. According to Professor Ian Jandrell, the chairman of the adjudication panel for these awards, the objectives of the SABS excellence awards are to make South African designs a national imperative and to honour excellent South African designs.

"The Awards also set out to promote the capability of South African product designers and to showcase South Africa as an innovative industrialised country," says Jandrell. "Moreover, the awards are a yardstick for local customers who can choose and invest in outstanding products and excellent designs," he adds.

Jandrell says that the products recognised by the Design Excellence Awards can, without question, proudly take their place on the international market and still stand out as being excellent.

According to Bardo, MES Products owns the mould for the range of products and it distributes DIN circuit breakers, distribution boards, times, dimmers and the Butterfly range of socket switches to electrical wholesalers. The Butterfly range of products is used in a domestic environment and are manufactured through a plastic injection moulding process.

The range is apparently significantly cheaper than any other similar products on the market.

Professor Ian Jandrell, chairman of the adjudication panel for the SABS Design Excellence Awards, (left), this year's winner, Robert Bardo, (centre) and SABS chief executive, Martin Kuskus (right) after the awards ceremony held in Sandton.



Why are good engineers so often bad managers?

By Terry Lawrenson – SAIEE member and managing director of Reid & Mitchell

I have spent my career in the engineering industry, most of that time in and around mining and while I have had the privilege of working for a few great managers, in the main they have been a shocking lot. In my 20-plus years as an industry insider I have worked with managers who have been raving lunatics, ineffective whimps or deadly loners as bosses. Overwhelmingly, my own experience of engineers as managers has been bad.

Is there something about engineers, or the engineering environment, that seems to perpetuate bad management? Are there commonalities that can be brought together to describe an engineering management style and can engineers break out of this paradigm?

I thought it would be interesting to see if one could initiate some thinking, by engineers, about their management style. I believe that one of the problems is that engineers never really make the transi-