



TAKING STOCK

AN UPDATE FROM THE ELECTRICAL DISTRIBUTORS' ASSOCIATION

Est. 1914

Issue 9 April 2017

EDA launches ETIM campaign to improve technical product data

Better technical product data – using a global classification standard – will help distributors compete more effectively with new online channels

The EDA wants to improve the quality of product data in the electrical installation supply chain, and has launched a campaign to encourage UK manufacturers and distributors to adopt the ETIM global standard for classifying technical products.

'ETIM is a protocol for setting out data relating to products,' said David Bate, the EDA's Project Manager for ETIM-UK. He was speaking at an EDA meeting in London that was attended by 55 representatives from manufacturers and distributors (pictured). ETIM was developed 25 years ago in the Netherlands and it structures product data in a straightforward, simple manner that is logical and unambiguous. The UK signed up to ETIM in 2016.

At present, many manufacturers and distributors in the UK use their own standards and structures to capture and publish technical product data, whether it is for use in e-commerce, printed catalogues or on websites.

For simplicity, one can identify three forms of data: trading data, catalogue or rich product data, and BIM data. The market for trading data is well established and Luckins is the standard.

Rich data is typically used for websites, catalogues and e-commerce.



There is no standard format for the data and no central repository.

BIM data is used by designers, specifiers and facilities managers.

The result is that wholesalers have to deal with data in multiple formats, and that data has to be reworked to use in existing databases. Manufacturers, meanwhile, have to deal with multiple rich data requests and translate rich data into different languages. Inconsistent data can lead to incorrect orders.

If wholesalers are to compete effectively with new online entrants to the market – and 80 per cent of respondents to the EDA's 2016 survey said they represent a threat – they must work with manufacturers to improve product data in the supply chain.

EDA President Simon Barks said: 'If the electrical industry is to move B2B business online, we need a common standard.'

EDA Director Margaret Fitzsimons said: 'The EDA believes there should be one standard for products in the supply chain, and that ETIM should be the standard on which this is built.'

The Association will carry out free ETIM audits of manufacturers and wholesalers and advise them on how best to implement the standard. It will also set up standardisation committees for each product group in the ETIM Model, populated by invited representatives from manufacturers, distributors and other bodies.

● To find out more about ETIM, contact David Bate on 020 3141 7350 or email david.bate@eda.org.uk.



FROM THE BOARDROOM

We compete in the same market, but our trade organisation, the EDA, serves our mutual interests.

Who knows how the future will develop? If the past is anything to go by, information technology (IT) will figure prominently in the onward march of productivity and progress.

Just as digital data transmission has revolutionised TV and radio, it will affect our business. The EDA is channelling its resources into helping make its members fit for the future, as follows:

Education and training This will include refreshing the subject matter; widening the scope and updating the portfolio. There will soon be an online option.

ETIM Preparing for the digital future.

Networking Personal relationships still matter and the EDA will continue to invest in attractive and effective social engagement opportunities.

The EDA works because of the energy and commitment of board members. They give their time for our collective interests.

We have a first class team to implement the board's programme and I am sure their hard work will make a significant contribution to ensuring the long-term success of our route to market; serving the interests of suppliers and professional installers.

Simon Barks

EDA President March 2017-March 2019

Special awards centre section!

Twenty-four EDA awards – recognising outstanding achievement in education and training across the UK's electrical wholesale sector – were presented at two glittering ceremonies recently.

Twelve managers received EDA Investor in Training Awards at the Association's Annual Dinner in front of more than 570 guests at the Inter-Continental Hotel on London's Park Lane on 9 March. The next day, family, friends and colleagues gathered for a congratulatory lunch on the 34th floor of the Shard to see a dozen high-performing apprentices and employees collect EDA Learner Achievement Awards, as part of the EDA's National Apprenticeship Week 2017 celebrations.



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Training Talk – why you should make training top of your agenda for 2017

How do you follow a year like 2016 when it comes to training? EDA Education and Training Manager, Simone Fonseca sets out what you should be doing if you would like to collect a training trophy next year



2016 was a great year for Education and Training at the EDA, as you will see if you turn to our Awards Special. We have celebrated the success of some outstanding branch managers, affiliated manufacturers and learners across both our Apprenticeship and Specialist Product Knowledge Programmes.

Who do we want in 2017?

We are looking for the best of the best. Managers who go the extra mile to bring new people into our industry, develop talent and support career progression. Managers who promote the EDA Education and Training Programme by enrolling new learners, celebrating success, sharing photos and stories and joining us to help spread the word.

For learners, the calibre gets higher every year, and we look for those who invest significant time and effort in their studies to ensure they have the right knowledge for their roles. They share the benefits of the EDA Education and Training Programme with their colleagues, friends and family, and also encourage new learners to achieve similar success.

Are you in the running?

The first two categories of award are for our Specialist Product Know-

ledge Programme, delivered in partnership with MOL. They include:

- **Specialist Product Knowledge Programme Manager of the Year.**
- **Specialist Product Knowledge Programme Learner of the Year.**

There is an award in each category for each of our eight member groups; ANEV, AWEBB, City Electrical Factors, Edmundson Electrical, Fegime (UK), IBA, Rexel (UK), and other independents.

Our manager shortlist is made up of branch managers who have supported learners to successfully complete a number of modules in 2017 at Distinction level. We review the shortlist with member groups to choose winners who have positively affected learners' personal and professional development.

Learners need to show development of their product knowledge; successfully completing a number of modules at Distinction level, at least one of which must have been completed in 2017. We review the shortlist with member groups to choose winners who show true potential.

Our last two categories are for our Apprenticeship Programme,

delivered in partnership with EDA Apprenticeships Plus and include:

- **Apprentice Manager of the Year.**
- **Apprentice of the Year.**

There are four awards in each category to celebrate the success of our Apprenticeship Programme nationwide.

For managers, we look for true advocates of the Apprenticeship Programme; number of apprentices taken on, different types of apprenticeships offered, successful learners and permanent positions offered.

For apprentices, we look for those who have recognised the opportunity that they have been given and have grabbed it with both hands; developing the right personal behaviours, product knowledge and workplace skills that will see them secure permanent roles in their businesses. Their training providers and managers will wholeheartedly agree that they add value to the team and are worth the investment.

● Read about 2016's award winners in our Awards Special and remember to get in touch with our Education and Training team on 020 3141 7350 or email training@eda.org.uk so we can help your teams succeed too.

24
Number of Learner and Manager awards up for grabs

We are looking for the best of the best. Managers who go the extra mile to bring new people into our industry, develop talent and support career progression

EDA 63 YEARS AGO



David Nixon, king of the TV magicians – remember *David Nixon's Magic Box?* – and a whole generation before Paul Daniels, topped the bill at the 1954 Electrical Wholesalers' Federation Annual Dinner on 18 March 1954 at the Dorchester Hotel.

Guests ate saddle of mutton which was, apparently, 'delightful' although there was some concern that the meat had not been purchased in sufficient time to allow it to hang for the customary three weeks...

At the end of the evening, guests "adjourned to those pernicious little parties that redden the whites of the eyes and discourage speedy movement the following morning". Not much change there then.

Changes to Key Contacts Directory



Your essential who's who guide to the sector – our annual Key Contacts Directory – has been circulated to all those listed inside.

Some of you have let us know if your contact details have changed, or if we made an error in your listing, for which we sincerely apologise. We draw your attention to the new listing for Copper Cable Company Ltd.

You will find the latest updates at www.eda.org.uk, just follow the links to the news section.

● If you have not yet received your copy of the Directory, please let us know on 020 3141 7350.

Guide to CPR and cables from BCA

The British Cables Association (BCA) has launched its 2017 guide to the Construction Products Regulation & Cables.

There are two versions, one that is aimed at wholesalers/distributors and the other written for specifiers.

The CPR regulation comes into effect on 1 July 2017. <https://tinyurl.com/BCA-CPR>

Hit your power jive to staying alive at powerBall 2017

The biggest and the most unforgettable event in the UK electrical industry's calendar – powerBall 2017 – will be back in November. And it's all for a deserving cause – the Electrical Industries Charity.

This year's powerBall promises to be the most electrifying disco event of the year, bringing the industry together for a night of glitter ball spinning action. The disco extravaganza aims to bring New York City to life and will recapture the spirit of those boogie days with its blistering seventies soundtrack.



So, it's time to dust off those flares and prepare to dance the night away to those iconic disco hits – including If I Can't Have You, Stayin' Alive, More Than a Woman and Night Fever. Witness some classic moves as 12 talented young dancers recreate the phenomenon of Saturday Night Fever.

Could you be a Power Player?

Were you 39 or under on 31 December 2016, and carving out a great career? Then you could be a Power Player.



Designed to showcase successful young leaders and innovators in engineering services, including the electrical supply chain, Power Players launches in spring 2017 and the winners will be announced in September.

The EDA is backing the Electrical Contractors' Association initiative. There will be prizes and opportunities worth thousands of pounds.

Power Players is supported by a range of industry bodies including Scottish trade body SELECT, Joint Industry Board, Building Services and Environmental Engineer, and industry portal Voltimum.

www.eca.co.uk/business-industry-support/awards/power-players



Also, powerBall 2017 is a unique opportunity to become a Disco Divo or a Fever Diva in your very own Strictly powerBall experience. Do you have what it takes? If so, visit the powerBall website as soon as possible and enter the Strictly powerBall auction for a chance to win a place.

And get this – one male and one female entrant will have a chance to rehearse with X Factor and Britain's Got Talent choreographer Nikki Trow. They will perform live on stage with a professional dancer.

powerBall 2017 is on Friday 10 November at the Grosvenor House Hotel, London, so unleash your seventies disco fever and get jive talking at this most extravagant party in the industry's calendar. Book your table today.

● For more information, and to book a place, contact Vicky Gray at vicky.gray@electricalcharity.org, or go to www.eictradingco.org

DIARY DATES FOR EDA MEMBERS

Thursday 11 May 2017
Regional Business Forum
This half-day Regional Business Forum will combine the EDA's priorities – networking and education. From lunchtime at the Glynhill Hotel, Glasgow. Call the EDA office on 020 3141 7350

Thursday 11 May 2017
Sportsman's Dinner 2017
The EDA's Sportsman's Dinner, organised by the Scottish section, in the evening after the Forum (above). Also at the Glynhill Hotel. Call Maeve O'Dea on 0117 909 9550

Thursday 1 - Saturday 3 June 2017
EUEW General Convention, Krakow
Members committed to growing their businesses in Europe should not miss this event, hosted this year by Polish members of the European Union of Electrical Wholesalers (EUEW). Call Margaret Fitzsimons on 020 3141 7350

Wednesday 14 June 2017
Regional Business Forum – Bristol area

Thursday 6 July 2017
Summer Event
The hugely popular invitation-only event is a Thames trip on the paddle steamer *Dixie Queen*. Call Margaret Fitzsimons on 020 3141 7350

Wednesday 6 September 2017
Regional Business Forum
Senior level networking, industry presentations, and developments in education and training at the Electrical Design & Install Expo (ED&I), NEC, Birmingham. Call the EDA's office on 020 3141 7350

Tuesday 3 - Friday 6 October 2017
Scottish Function
This event brings together senior figures from the industry for a programme of networking opportunities at the Trump Turnberry Resort on the west coast of Scotland. Call Maeve O'Dea on 0117 909 9550

Transformation of the Association 'will continue under Barkes'



New President pledges to build on the work of Tom Jones, who has stepped down after eight years on the EDA board

The EDA has announced that its new President is Simon Barkes, Managing Director of BEMCO – the third member of his family to lead the Association's Board. Simon, who will serve as President until March 2019, takes over the leadership of the Board from Tom Jones, Divisional Director at Lockwell Electrical.

Tom's time as President – from 2015-17 – was a period of significant growth for the EDA. One hundred and twenty new members joined from AWEBB and IBA, as well as 13 manufacturer affiliate members, and there was a major strategic review timed to coincide with the EDA's centenary in 2014.

Simon, whose company BEMCO is the oldest independent EDA member and due to mark its membership centenary in 2019, said: 'The EDA has made significant strides under Tom's leadership. The Association works because of the energy and commitment of Board members. They give their time in order to assist in the development of our collective interests.'

'The EDA has a first class team to implement the Board's programme and I am sure that their hard work will make a significant contribution to ensuring the long-term success of our route to market; serving the interests of both suppliers and professional installers.'

'I believe that our members must work together as an industry to face the technological changes that the future will bring to our supply chain. Improved processes and the transfer of digital data will be key to the efficiency and suc-

cess of the sector.'

'The EDA is channelling its resources into helping make its members fit for the digital future and it has recently appointed a new Project Manager to promote use of the ETIM global product classification standard in the UK.'

Outgoing President Tom Jones said: 'When the EDA celebrated its centenary in 2014, the Board undertook a strategy review and followed this up with a comprehensive piece of research – 'What keeps you awake at night?' (see *Taking Stock*, issue 7) – into the needs of its members. Armed with this intelligence, it has embarked upon a series of changes to ensure the EDA has a pivotal position in the electrical installation supply chain for the foreseeable future.'

Tom, who was instrumental in evolving the EDA's education and training offer, including championing the new Trailblazer apprenticeship standard for the sector, added: 'I am passionate about upskilling the industry. Over the past two years we've seen a 183 per cent uplift in the number of apprentices starting work in EDA member branches compared with the previous two years, and a 15 per cent increase in take-up of the City & Guilds-accredited Specialist Product Knowledge Programme modules.'

'I hope too that my legacy will be improved communication,' he concluded, 'because it is vital for organisations up and down the supply chain to listen to one another's concerns and to take the opportunity of working together to win projects and increase sales and margins.'

120
new members have joined the EDA under Tom Jones' tenure

Huggin joins the Board

The EDA has also confirmed the appointment of new Board member Dave Huggin, Managing Director at EDS Electrical. He represents the IBA buying group, which joined the EDA on 1 January 2017.

Dave is a time-served electrician who spent his early career at Edmundson Electrical and Linolite before launching Newcastle upon Tyne-based EDS Electrical in 1983. EDS, which has branches in Ashington and Consett, joined the IBA in 1998. Dave has been Group Chair of the IBA since 2008.



Who's on the Board?

Simon Barkes, BEMCO, President, March 2017-19. This is the second time Simon has served as EDA President – he held the role in 2013/14

Andy Johnson, Lincs Electrical Wholesale Ltd, Vice-President

Chris Ashworth, City Electrical Factors (CEF) – joined 2016

Alan Dunnet, Holland House Electrical Co

Margaret Fitzsimons, EDA Director

Chris Gibson, Rexel UK

Dave Huggin, EDS Electrical – joined 2017 (see above)

Dan Poole, Phase Electrical Distributors – joined 2016

Glyn Prestwood, Edmundson Electrical – joined 2016

Bob Robertson, R&B Star

David Schofield, Stearn Electric Co

Trophies for the trainers



Twelve branch managers of EDA Member firms who had gone the 'extra mile' to help their staff progress through EDA training schemes were rewarded at the EDA's Annual Dinner, which took place at the Hotel Intercontinental in Park Lane, London.

The 578 guests at the event – who represent annual purchases worth over £3 billion by the EDA's members in the UK electrical sector – watched branch manager winners receive their imposing trophies. John Henry, Director of EDA Apprenticeships Plus, presented the Apprenticeship awards and MOL's Joanna Moonan presented the Product Knowledge awards.

The EDA Investor in Training Awards acknowledge the support, commitment, and leadership of managers in one of two categories: Apprenticeships, helping to attract new talent to the electrical wholesale sector; and the Specialist Product Knowledge Programme, the distance-learning initiative designed to improve employee skills and performance.

EDA Director Margaret Fitzsimons said: 'Our celebrations help us raise the profile of career opportunities in the electrical wholesale sector and underline the investment that the sector is making in employee learning and development. Building talented teams is not easy, but our winners are a real credit to the sector and their businesses.'

Find out who the winners are and what they had to say about the event – and the industry – on the next page.



Every year, at its Annual Dinner, the EDA holds a raffle in support of the Electrical Industries Charity. This year the prize was an Apple Watch, won by John Henry of EDA Apprenticeships Plus. The raffle raised a total of £5,880. EDA President Simon Barkes is pictured here presenting the cheque to EIC president Paul Loke.

“The EDA is channelling its resources into helping make its members fit for the digital future”

Simon Barkes
President



There were 578 guests at the Annual Dinner, representing annual sales of over £3 billion.



IN THEIR OWN WORDS... APPRENTICESHIP MANAGERS



Lee Muskett
Edmundson
Electrical,
Rochdale

'Our apprentices are young people, still in their teens. As a manager you have to be prepared to invest time and effort in their development – but it's well worth it. They bring so much life and unbridled enthusiasm to the team, it's quite infectious.'



Lee Huddart
Electric
Center,
Bolton

'At 16 I got a break, landing my first electrical wholesaling job. I thank my lucky stars that someone gave me a chance when I was young, and now I can do the same for others.'



Darrell Howells
CEF,
Carmarthen

'Many have come on leaps and bounds, and are now in permanent roles. It's good to bring in fresh talent and to promote from within - that's what makes apprenticeships work for us.'



Howard Smith
Newey & Eyre,
Spalding

'We can get to know the person and work with their strengths. We've had four apprentices and two are now permanent members of the team.'



Award-winning leaders: championing apprenticeships to attract new talent to the sector, or the Specialist Product Knowledge Programme to improve employee skills and knowledge.

The apprenticeship winners are (above, left to right): **Lee Muskett**, Profit Centre Manager, Edmundson Electrical, Rochdale; **Kristian Van Rensburg**, Manager, Stearn Electric Company, Glasgow; **Howard Smith**, Business Manager, Newey & Eyre, Spalding (Rexel UK); **Darrell Howells**, Branch Manager, City Electrical Factors, Carmarthen; and **Lee Huddart**, Profit Centre Manager, Electric Center, Bolton.

The Knowledge Module winners are (below, left to right): **John Bristow**, Branch Manager, Eyre & Elliston, West Wickham (ANEW), collected by Will Cannon, MD, Eyre & Elliston Group; **Bradley Raphael**, Profit Centre Manager, Edmundson Electrical, Rugby; **Rob Sheppard**, Group Manager Torquay Group, City Electrical Factors; **Ruth Thornell**, Facilities Manager, Templegate Electrical Supplies Ltd, Bristol (a member of the Fegime buying group); **Mark Lambert**, CEO, AWEBB buying group; **Andrew Allen**, Business Manager, Newey & Eyre, Cambridge – part of Rexel UK; and **James Burke**, Profit Centre Manager, ETS/Western Automation (UK Electric), Birmingham.

John Henry, Director of EDA Apprenticeships Plus, presented the EDA Apprenticeships awards, and MOL's Joanna Moonan presented the Product Knowledge awards.



IN THEIR OWN WORDS... PRODUCT KNOWLEDGE MANAGERS



Ruth Thornell
Templegate
Electrical
Supplies,
Bristol

'When I first joined, I interviewed every member of staff and noticed that whilst they were happy in their jobs, there wasn't a clear development path to help them acquire new skills to progress up the career ladder. The EDA's Specialist Product Knowledge Programme was the answer.'



Rob Sheppard
Torquay
Group,
CEF

'In early 2016 we made the decision to give all members of the team the opportunity to do the product knowledge modules. When you employ intelligent people you need to keep them interested and motivated. It's an investment, but it's one that's certainly paid off for us.'



Rewarding the high-flyers

The Apprentice winners are: **Jean-Luc Daley** (middle row, right), CRS Electrical Supplies, Clapham, London (AWEBB); **Joshua Hayes** (middle row, second from left), Electric Center, Warrington, Cheshire; **Ben Dougal** (front row, second from right) WF Senate, Deeside (Rexel UK); **Jack Jones** (back row, left), Newey & Eyre, Chesterfield, Derbyshire (Rexel UK); and **Alex Jaundrill** (front row, second from left), Electrium Sales (Siemens), Cannon, Staffs.

The Specialist Product Knowledge Programme winners are: **Jonathan Acott** (back row, right), Eyre & Elliston, West Wickham, Greater London (ANEW); **Mark Carter** (back row, second from right), Electracentre, Ilkeston, Derbyshire (AWEBB); **Bob Sayer** (front row, left), Internal Sales, Wilson Electrical Distributors, Didcot (Fegime); **Ryan Fagan** (back row, centre), Management Designate, Edmundson Electrical, Rugby, Warwickshire; **Steven Hawkins** (front row, right), Stores Assistant, City Electrical Factors, Abingdon, Oxfordshire; **Beth Thomas** (front row, centre), Assistant Manager, Denmans Electrical Wholesalers, Bath (Rexel UK); and **Craig Smith** (middle row, left), Commercial Trainee, Stearn Electric Company, Bristol.

The EDA presented its Learner Achievement Awards to high-performing apprentices and employees at the Shard in London.

The day after the EDA Awards dinner, family, friends and colleagues gathered for a congratulatory lunch on the 34th floor of the iconic skyscraper to see 12 apprentices and employees collect their EDA Learner Achievement Awards.

The event was an important part of the Association's National Apprenticeship Week 2017 celebrations.

EDA Learner Achievement Awards are presented to highly thought of apprentices, and to employees who have excelled in their studies on the EDA's Specialist Product Knowledge programme.

The learners received their trophies from EDA President Simon Barks, who said: 'Business success depends on inspirational managers who can create the right environment for talent to flourish. Equally, their apprentices and employees need to recognise the opportunities on offer and work hard to achieve outstanding results.'

'Education and training is a key pillar of the EDA's work and it is a privilege to celebrate the positive difference that we can create for individuals, teams and businesses.'

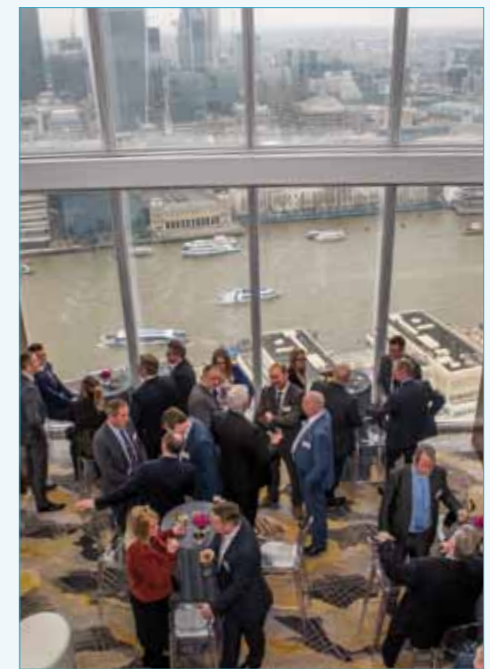
'Attracting new talent throughout the supply chain is essential and, for the first time since our EDA Learner Awards were launched three years ago, one of the apprentice winners comes from a manufacturer – Electrium Sales, a Siemens company.'

The EDA Investor in Training Awards acknowledge the support, commitment, and leadership of managers in one of two categories. These are apprenticeships, which attract new talent to the electrical wholesale sector; and the Specialist Product Knowledge Programme, a distance-learning initiative designed to improve employee skills and performance.

The EDA Learner Achievement Awards were

presented to five apprentices whose hard work and dedication to their training marked them out as rising stars in the sector; and to seven employees who have shown exemplary performance and dedication to their professional studies as part of the Specialist Product Knowledge Programme.

Explained EDA Director, Margaret Fitzsimons: 'The EDA is committed to developing a clear career pathway for the sector through a framework of life-long education and training.'



Managers, learners and proud mums, dads and friends gather in the foyer of the Shangri-La Hotel on the 34th floor of the Shard in London. They enjoyed spectacular views over the city before sitting down to a dinner, followed by the awards presentation. Read what they had to say overleaf.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS... APPRENTICES



Ben Dougal
WF Senate,
Deeside

'You need good customer service wherever you go. I've been on telesales, which helps when talking to customers. But the EDA training helps a lot'



Jean-Luc Daley
CRS Electrical
Supplies,
Clapham,
London

'I was looking for work, and I could see that the apprenticeship scheme was probably the best way to go into employment for somebody of my age.'



Alex Jaundrill
Electrium
Sales,
Cannock

'This training has been very educational and a very positive experience. It's also made me much more alert to the industry. I'm ever so driven and I've found that this apprenticeship training allows me to now make much more of a contribution.'

IN THEIR OWN WORDS... MUMS AND DADS



Louise Dougal
Ben's mum,
pictured
with Ben
and dad Paul

'I'm just so proud! When Ben left school he thought about a full-time course, but decided that he wanted to get into work and an apprenticeship has been perfect because it's earning and learning.'

'As well as a qualification in Customer Service, Ben's apprenticeship has helped him develop those transferrable skills that every employer looks for. We are delighted.'



David Jones
Jack's dad,
pictured
with Jack

'I'm very proud. Jack has worked hard and he is clever, and working around a very good team has brought out the best in him.'

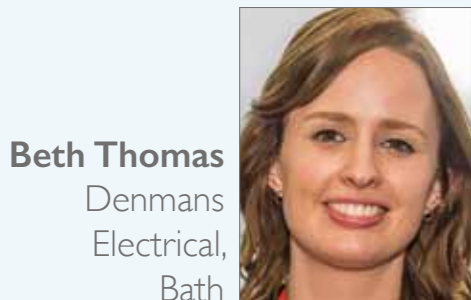
Jack adds: 'It's the best feeling in the world. I thought it was a joke at first, I thought my manager was winding me up.'

Steve Hayes
Joshua's dad

'Super proud! His apprenticeship has opened up a very bright future for him. I believe it's important to start at the bottom and work your way up.'

'Once you've got a foot in the door, the rest is up to you.'

IN THEIR OWN WORDS... PRODUCT KNOWLEDGE WINNERS



Beth Thomas
Denmans
Electrical,
Bath

'Fundamentals of Electricity was really important for me in helping to understand both products and customers' projects.'



Steven Hawkins
CEF,
Abingdon

'I like the progression through each book, from initially easy stuff through more and more difficult until the project at the end.'



Craig Smith
Stearn Electric,
Bristol

'The modules have been really useful with customers as I now have much greater knowledge, especially with the products.'

Trailblazer Apprentice Standard on target for launch later in 2017

Successor to Level 2 Trade Business Services Apprenticeships Framework 'will meet needs of employers and apprentices'

The Electrical Distributors' Association has championed a new Level 2 Trade Supplier Apprenticeship Standard as part of the government's Trailblazer apprenticeship initiative.

It has been developed by a host of industry experts from employers in the electrical and related trade supply chains. Due for launch in late 2017, the apprenticeship has already secured two crucial rubber stamps from the Department for Education, with a third due in April 2017.

The Standard, which will eventually succeed the Level 2 Trade Business Services Apprenticeship Framework, was approved by the Department for Education in August 2016. It covers a comprehensive range of knowledge, skills and behaviours required by a trade supplier to be successful in their role and to add value to their business; including sales, customer service, warehousing, legislation and specialist product knowledge.

The initial Trade Supplier Trailblazer Group, which included eight EDA member organisations from the electrical wholesale industry supported by the EDA and EDA Apprenticeships Plus, began scoping the new Standard in April 2015.

The group has met regularly at the EDA's head

office in London to develop a standard that they are confident will meet the needs of employers and apprentices across all areas of trade supply.

Crawford Flint, Head of Learning & Development at Rexel UK, says: 'This is the first apprenticeship actively shaped by and for the electrical trade and related supply chain and its launch is eagerly awaited by employers. The bar has been set high for this new apprenticeship standard: these apprentices will be the workforce for our future, an exceptional pool of talent with the potential to add value and go far within our business.'



The Trailblazer Group

The following employers are members of the Trailblazers group:

Electrical Distributors' Association Margaret Fitzsimons, Director and Simone Fonseca, Education & Training Manager
Rexel UK Crawford Flint, Head of Learning & Development and Vicky Ordish, Learning & Development Business Partner
R&B Star Glenn Robertson, Director
Key Electrical Nik Mulcahy, Operations Director

Stearn Electric Andrew Smith, National Account Manager

Lincs Electrical Wholesale Andy Johnson, Managing Director

City Electrical Factors Chris Ashworth, General Manager, Hinckley Region

Edmundson Electrical Matt Ward, Commercial Manager

Lockwell Electrical Tom Jones, Divisional Director

There are also representatives of the kitchens and joinery sector, builders' merchants and education – including EDA Apprenticeships Plus, in the form of directors John Henry and Duncan Naylor.

APPRENTICESHIP AWARD FOR WHOLESALERS IN SCOTLAND

Talented newcomers to Scotland's electrical wholesale sector can compete for a cash award of £500 thanks to a tie-up between SELECT and the Electrical Distributors' Association (EDA).

In October 2017, the SELECT awards, which showcase talent in the Scottish electrotechnical sector, will present the EDA Scottish Section Apprentice of the Year prize to an outstanding apprentice who is working and training in a wholesale branch in Scotland.

This new award reflects increased demand for

apprentices among EDA members across Scotland. In 2015-16 there has been a 90 per cent increase in the number of apprentices recruited by electrical wholesalers, distributors and manufacturers compared with 2012-14.

The award is sponsored by EDA Apprenticeships Plus, which works with the EDA to deliver apprenticeship training for members.

Stearn's Kristian Van Rensburg, Chair of the EDA Scottish Section, says: 'The employers that I speak to across Scotland are very positive about

the contribution that apprentices are making to business performance.'

EDA Director Margaret Fitzsimons adds: 'This new award will not only recognise exceptional performance, but will also help to raise the profile of the excellent career opportunities available in the wider electrical sector.'

Newell McGuinness, MD at SELECT adds: 'EDA members have an important role in the electrical supply chain and it will be great to recognise their members' commitment to apprentice training.'

How a passion for Apprenticeships pays off

'I'm passionate about apprenticeships,' says Kristian Van Rensburg, Manager at Stearn Glasgow. 'Quite reasonably, young people ask: "How am I supposed to get experience if no-one will give me a chance?" Fortunately, I'm in a position to create opportunities, and it's working really well for this branch of Stearn.'

Kristian's approach is so successful that he's been awarded an EDA Investor in Training Award 2017 (see awards centre section).

One young person who has benefited from Kristian's approach is Nicole Hall, 22, from Glasgow (bottom row, right). A high-flyer at school, with eight Scottish Highers (4 As and 4 Bs) on her CV, Nicole tried university but decided it wasn't for her.

'I'm interested in business and I was looking for an admin job and came across the apprenticeship opportunity at Stearn. I completed my Level 3 business admin apprenticeship in about seven months, and then I was offered a permanent role. That was four years ago.'

'Kristian has an open-door policy, which means if you have an idea for a business improvement, he wants to hear it.'

'As a young woman in a male-dominated sector, it is important to win customers over with my acquired knowledge and understanding of the electrical industry. This ensures they come back to you with repeat business.'

Kristian (top row, centre) explains his open-house approach to interviews: 'Candidates



come in for a trial day so they can really understand how the business works. It's worked because a number of our former apprentices, like Nicole, are now in permanent roles.'

Save time and energy with ABB's Protecta Plus



ABB's Protecta Plus modular distribution board saves electrical contractors from extra engineering and installation work, while letting them integrate the company's latest LV components.

Protecta Plus provides the flexibility to cover all applications from standard installations to complex sites. Available in kit form for over the counter supply, this latest generation sub-distribution solution has been tailored to meet the needs of all building industry segments.

Functionality, flexibility and safety are central – the range can incorporate ABB's latest LV technology, including high performance MCBs to 25kA and 100A in a standard 18mm format, MID-approved metering, total board current monitoring, the latest RCBOs with contact position indication, earth trip indication window and 15kA ratings, surge suppression and protection devices, plus the latest DIN-rail products.

The boards also meet the latest market requirements for vertical/horizontal power, lighting and services monitoring.

www.abb.com

Thorn helps to modernise lighting

Thorn Lighting's new LIMO (Light-Modernisation) Set provides a fast and efficient way of replacing inefficient luminaires with the latest LED technology, using the ready2mains (r2m) gateway.

This latest offering is based on a combination of efficient LED luminaires and smart lighting management. It is suitable for applications from individual and open-plan offices through to conference halls and meeting areas previously unequipped with independent lighting management.



Everything you need comes in a single pack, from the lighting control components, communication gateway and presence detection, daylight control and dimming, through to the luminaires.

Lighting can be modified or upgraded quickly as installation is achieved by simply inserting the r2m gateway and combi-sensor into the existing installation. This will efficiently control up to 15 luminaires without any additional wiring. The result is reduced operating costs, optimum lighting and up to 80% less energy consumption.

www.thornlighting.co.uk

Gain better business intelligence



In the electrical industry, the pace of business and strength of competition demands more emphasis on data and analytics to effectively run day-to-day operations says Phocas Software. Electrical distributors need a way to examine and explore the volumes of information created everyday, and identify trends and actionable insights quickly and easily. Which is why business intelligence (BI) software is important.

Data generated from on-going sales, marketing, logistics and financial activities contains valuable information that, when analysed, can help companies better understand their customers and partners.

BI can also improve on-time-in-full (OTIF) metrics, revenues and cost controls, allow management, logistics and buying teams to drill into data for their own needs, and to analyse current and historical data to identify sales and demand trends to strengthen forecasts and estimations.

BI is a single source giving better information that allows businesses to make more accurate decisions so as to influence performance and profits. This often makes the difference between losing customers and closing branches – and meeting or surpassing business goals and objectives.

www.phocassoftware.com/industry/business-intelligence-for-electrical

Ultimate conduit fitting for critical connections



Cabling can face water and dust ingress, corrosion, exposure to oils, greases and chemicals, impact, vibration and many more hazards, so getting its protection right is vital. This is why Flexicon has launched what it claims is 'the world's best conduit fitting for electrical and data installations that demand 24/7 continuous operation'.

Flexicon Ultra has been developed to protect cabling where loss of power or data would have serious consequences.

This patented one-piece fitting combines various class leading performance criteria. Featuring all round teeth providing 360 degree strength, it offers the strongest tensile strength available of up to 70kg. The integrated sealing delivers IP66, 67, 68 and 69, combined with the highest anti-vibration and shock protection to EN 61373 Cat 2. The company says that this device will help secure the cabling's connection for the lifetime of the installation.

Flexicon Ultra, which is tamper proof, is simply installed using a push and twist connection to the conduit. It is available as a straight, elbow, UNEF or flange with both male and female thread options for use with fine and coarse pitch corrugated nylon conduits.

www.flexicon.uk.com/ultra/

Gland for Amendment 3

WISKA has developed a cable gland for 2017 – the TKS 32. This is, says the firm, an innovative solution for Amendment 3, being a membrane gland with four entries giving IP66 protection and cable retention for quick and easy installation.

Push the TKS into the consumer unit, insert tails through the membrane and finish installation. It is suitable for 2x25mm tails and 1x16mm earth wire and is said to be ideal for both internal and external applications. Glow wire tested to 750°C, this device's flush fitting saves space, and with no extra locknut, time and money can also be saved.

www.wiska.co.uk



Guiding distributors to cables CPR

As of July 1st 2017, the Construction Products Regulation (CPR) of cables in the UK will become a legal requirement. This ruling makes the whole supply chain accountable for the stated performance of the cable stocked and sold by them, from the manufacturer to the distributor, or wholesaler.

What does the ruling mean for you? In short, you must ensure that the cable's CE mark is correct and valid, that the cable complies with all relevant CPR requirements, that no product is supplied that you are concerned may not conform to its declared performance, and that any product you believe is not in conformity is withdrawn or recalled.

All of Prysmian's cable is prepared and ready for CPR. The company wants its distributors and wholesalers to be safe in the knowledge that Prysmian cable is safe for purpose, which will also minimise risk to building occupants and users.

www.whyprysmian.co.uk

Nexans joins CPD Certification Service

Cable manufacturer Nexans is always aiming to attract new talent to the UK electrical industry, so provides a strong backbone in education and training. For this reason, the company has become a member of the UK CPD Certification Service.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) describes the learning activities professionals engage in to develop and enhance their abilities. CPD is essential in helping individuals, organisations or entire industries to keep skills and knowledge up to date.

Pierre-Emmanuel Buret, Country CEO at Nexans UK, said: 'CPD membership represents an important step forward for Nexans in the UK. It is part of the marketing initiatives we recently launched to better promote our brand and bring new services to our customers. We are very excited to release early 2017 what we believe will be a very useful series of training programmes.'

www.nexans.com



Robus launches its 2017 catalogue

The new 2017 ROBUS catalogue, which includes over 1,000 products, is the largest catalogue produced by the company, containing 67 new product stock keeping units.

Among other things, the company advanced LED solutions for commercial projects and residential applications around the globe. Included in the new ranges are the Sultan yellow base LED 110V site lighting, Disk LED high bay, Casey LED low bay and Remy outdoor floodlights.

This catalogue also provides information on five new CCT selectable LED lighting fittings – Taylor, Triplex, Cavan and Morph dimmable downlights, plus the Lustre LED surface fitting. These allow the colour temperature to be selected on-site at the time of installation – or changed retrospectively after installation to a preferred warmer or cooler light colour appropriate for the task or to complement the décor.

www.ledgrouprobus.com



Never be out of step with energy use again

Monitoring and managing the energy usage of commercial buildings has never been so important, which is why Hager has a range of metered power and lighting boards with metering capabilities as standard. These provide the energy monitoring requirements buildings need.

This range will help clients to save energy in the new term and beyond, yet it is also suitable for education projects, and is the ideal starting point, says Hager, when renovating a school or college.

The range includes TP&N power and lighting boards, a TP&N power, lighting and services board, a TP&N dual metered incomer, and a TP&N triple metered incomer.

These products automatically detect whether the configuration needs to be Pulsed or Modbus, allowing straightforward configuration into either a data logger or a BMS, which will give installers more time to concentrate on the rest of the installation. Standard glazed doors allow customers to read the meter without needing to gain access.

www.hager.co.uk

No LED flicker in standby

Timeguard has solved a common problem for installers – avoiding the flicker that often occurs when controlling LED lighting with smart switches. This patented solution will work with any switch, not just Timeguard's own.

Most automatic switches providing PIR, timed, delay or remote switching are replacements for standard two-wire light switches, where there is normally no neutral connection at the switch. To function, they must draw a small amount of power through the switched live connection, even on standby. That was never a problem for incan-



descent or halogen lighting, but is an issue with LED and CFL because flicker and glow can occur.

Timeguard's Automatic Switch Load Controller creates an electrical environment for both automatic switches and LED lamps to operate in harmony, without having to modify the automatic switch or LED lamp or introduce a dummy load.

Consuming less than 1W of power, it is simply wired in series with the lamp and then pops neatly through a standard 50mm ceiling cut out. Only one device is needed for each switching circuit (up to 200W) lighting circuit. Inrush current protection is provided for the switch.

www.timeguard.com

Firms in engineering services sector end 2016 on a high

Quarterly survey reveals outlook is upbeat despite rising material and labour costs, as well as late payment problems from public sector bodies

Turnover at more than 78 per cent of engineering services increased or remained steady during the final quarter of 2016, according to a survey run by the **Electrical Contractors' Association** (ECA), the **Building Engineering Services Association** (BESA) and **SELECT**, the trade association for Scottish electrical contracting.

However, 61 per cent of engineering services firms say their material costs increased during the final quarter of 2016. Thirty-nine per cent said labour costs had increased over the same period. Furthermore, almost 57 per cent of businesses said they were not being paid within 30 days for public sector work, in breach of late payment legislation.

The sector-wide Building Engineering Business Survey, sponsored by Scolmore, attracted 529 responses from across the building engineering services sector in January.

- Your contractor customers may be feeling the pinch through increased material costs, labour costs and late payments.
- Contractual terms may mean the contractor has to absorb the increased costs rather than passing them on.

It also found that businesses of all sizes had a strong final quarter, with turnover at over three-quarters of micro, small, medium and large businesses all rising or remaining constant. Very large businesses (with a turnover over £20 million) had the strongest quarter, with turnover increasing at more than half (54 per cent).

The survey revealed that the business outlook for the first quarter of 2017 was positive, with 86 per cent expecting their turnover to increase or stay the same.

ECA CEO Steve Bratt said: 'These new survey findings show the engineering services sector is powering forward despite challenges from rising material and labour costs. Our sector is extremely resilient and technological advances are continually opening up new business opportunities.' BESA chief executive Paul McLaughlin agreed.

SELECT MD Newell McGuinness added: 'This is the first time that SELECT members have participated in the business survey and we are encouraged at the confidence in future workload opportunities.'

The engineering services sector – which is thought to represent some 40 per cent of UK construction and maintenance turnover – covers a broad range of work, including electrical, mechanical, renewables, heating and ventilating, datacomms, and fire and security systems.

ECA, BESA and SELECT represent more than 4,500 businesses across the UK.

www.eca.co.uk, www.thebesa.com, www.select.org.uk

How was the final quarter of 2016 for business?



78%
said turnover increased or stayed the same

Looking positive for Q1 2017:

89%
expect their turnover to increase or stay the same

2017

Strongest growth by business area:
Electrical installations

29%
Air conditioning

26%
Batteries and electric vehicle charging points

25%



6 in 10
said material costs had increased

4 in 10
said labour costs had increased



57%
were not being paid by public sector bodies within 30 days

Based on the responses of 529 building services engineering professionals.

Random lighting product testing now compulsory for LIA members

The **Lighting Industry Association** (LIA) has taken a dramatic step to differentiate its members' services and products by introducing random product testing as a mandatory requirement of membership.

The association has always been proud of the fact that its members represent the best of the lighting industry and this initiative is designed to both prove and maintain that position.

With the dramatic rise in popularity of LED lighting there has been growing confusion about how specifiers, designers

- Buy lighting products from an LIA member company.
- Check LIA member companies online at www.thelia.org.uk/members.
- The products you buy are subject to random testing.
- Check test results at www.lialabcert.org.uk

and end-users can avoid poor products. Although warranty periods have been extended and prices have fallen, the number of products that fail to meet their longevity and light quality promises has grown.

Through the LIA's code of conduct, every member is required to participate in a random product assessment scheme that is overseen by the LIA's UKAS accredited lighting laboratory, the largest of its kind in Europe. The LIA council agreed to introduce the new membership criteria after observing several market surveillance initiatives that failed to address non-conformities. It is difficult for the LIA to influence non-member companies, but it can ensure that the products and services offered by its membership are of the highest quality.

www.thelia.org.uk