

## Changing the Design of Tomorrow's Workspace

### CN IN SEARCH OF HOT YOUNG DESIGN TALENT

Many a prospector has said that if you go out looking for one thing, that's all you'll ever find, while Albert Einstein is known to have said that imagination is more important than knowledge. Embracing both these ideas, CN set out to identify and uncover South Africa's freshest young creative talent, through a competition that has designs on the changing workspace of tomorrow.

In its first year, the "Changing the Design of Tomorrow's Workspace" competition saw a pool of students from the University of Johannesburg and the Cape Peninsula University of Technology competing for first, second and third prize in this student design competition. The brief called for the students to conceptualise a workstation that would encapsulate the ever-changing office of the future. The essence of tomorrow's business environment was a major contributor to their inspiration as the students designed furniture to suit the office of the future. It was the Cape students that walked away with the lion's share of the awards.

Off the back of the success of the first year, CN is again inviting hot home-grown designers to enter the 2008 competition. The blueprints have been called for and should by definition be: contemporary storage/shelving units, which can also be used as multifunctional room dividers. The old fashioned term would be a bookcase!

CN Group Managing Director Robbie Bergh says: "We are looking for a design interpretation of this object in a modern sense. We have encouraged the students to recognise that there is a fine line between industrial design and architecture." He adds that the design of the product may take the place of an interior wall whereby it separates two spaces allowing for access from both sides.

"Important design considerations include modularity and multi-functionality. A complex structure can be achieved through the manipulation of a single unit or units. We have encouraged the students to investigate the possibilities of what this divider can do for the user. What it can house and why, as well as how can it enhance a working environment? Personalisation of the units must also be considered," says Bergh.

Entries closed at the end of August and, according to CN, the winners of the 2008 competition will be announced at a gala event towards the end of the year. The prizes include a trip to an international furniture fair in 2009 for the winner, with cash prizes to the value of R10 000 and R5 000 respectively for the second and third runners up.

A company that believes future success lies in the hands of tomorrow's talent, CN has adopted an approach to grooming that will ensure it not only survives, but thrives in the ever evolving business climate. The practicality and training methodology synonymous with the design competition embodies the CN school of thinking – a model that clearly considers investing in potential central to sustainable success.

"It's no secret that the creative "act" is a process not a moment and if there is an idea and imagery, technique will follow. The students entering the competition are therefore encouraged to seek solutions that are engaging and demanding visually, while remaining conscious of the fact that form follows function," says Bergh.

For further information on CN Business Furniture or the student design competition, contact Sabrina Lind on 27 11 345 1500.

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Benjamin Disraeli