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JULY 7, 2003

INTERNATIONAL -- ASIAN COVER STORY

Annual Design Awards: Winners 2003

The best product designs of the year

How do corporations survive in hard times? The Industrial Design Excellence Awards (IDEA) for 2003 show how. This annual contest is sponsored by *BusinessWeek* and juried by the Industrial Designers Society of America. The winners this year used design to push traditional brands into new markets, extend well-known brands into new products, and invent something totally new, cool, and useful. With money tight, companies used design research to develop not only products but also their branding, packaging, and marketing. The impact of this approach goes far beyond the objects themselves.

Indeed, the biggest winners this year used design -- and top design firms -- to create powerful, emotional consumer experiences. "We have moved from designing iconic objects to designing iconic experiences," says Sohrab Vossoughi, founder of ZIBA Design Inc., which snagged six awards this year, second only to powerhouse IDEO's eight.

The best example of what it took to win big in 2003 is Logitech ([LOGI](#)) Inc., which won six gold, silver, and bronze awards. The info-tech slowdown dented demand for Logitech's famous computer mouse. So it used both ZIBA and IDEO to move into new markets. The gold-winning Logitech Pocket Digital Camera slides open smoothly and is so thin and light that it feels just right in the hand. The product is more than functional -- it's emotional. "Experience design requires superlative design and engineering execution to deliver on the emotional promise of a new concept," says Tim Brown, CEO of IDEO, which created the camera, along with MOTO Development Group and Logitech.

The power-of-experience design is evident in the gold-winning software Zinio Reader. It combines the magazine reading experience -- the turning of pages, color images, navigation through headlines and charts, and advertising -- with interactivity. It's simply dazzling, with subscribers able to download video clips and interact directly with advertisers.

The 2003 IDEA contest showed that Asian design continues to grow. Samsung won three honors and is now second only to Apple Computer Inc. in total awards for the past five years. Motorola ([MOT](#)) Inc. designed a gemlike cell phone for the high-end Asian market and decided to sell it worldwide. Indeed, many products designed in Asia or made for Asia quickly become global. A beautiful windsurfing sail collection came from Hong Kong is an example.

There was plenty of innovation in this year's winners. Dutch Boy reinvented the paint can, for the first time in 100 years, so there's no dripping. Herbst LaZar Bell Inc. designed baby nail clippers with a magnifying glass to help moms and dads. BMW won a bronze for moving a motorcycle gas tank under the seat, opening up room for more storage up front. A Swede came up with a two-handed hacksaw, and KabaClip finally solved the problem of the lost contact-lens case -- clip it to the bottle of lens cleaner. As for style, this year's winners showed that flashy color is mostly out. White, blue, and black are in. There are more straight lines and fewer blobs to reflect leaner times.

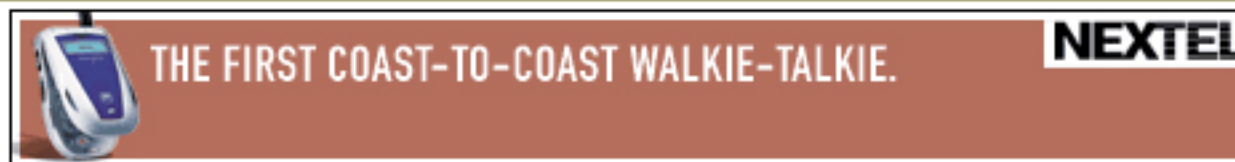
In 2003, there were 1,279 entries from 15 countries around the world. The 122 winners received 38 golds, 39 silvers, and 45 bronzes. Check out the following pages and our Web site for more great designs.

By Bruce Nussbaum in New York

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BIRKENSTOCK FOOTPRINTS

2003 DESIGN AWARDS

Consumer Products

	Watercane®	Augustin Product Development	Zeltec Engineering GmbH, Germany
	Robertshaw LP Tank Monitoring System	Herbst LaZar Bell, Inc. and Robertshaw Co.	Robertshaw Co.
	17" Wide LCD Personal TV (LT17E3)	Samsung Electronics Co., Ltd., Korea	
	Birkenstock Footprints: The Architect Collection	fuseproject, inc.	Birkenstock USA
	Duet Fabric Care System and Dreamspace	Whirlpool Corp., US and Italy	
	STX: Fuse Lacrosse Stick	Priority Designs and STX	STX
	Logitech® Pocket Digital Camera	IDEO, MOTO Development Group and Logitech, Inc.	Logitech, Inc.
	Windsurfing Sail Collection	meyerhoffer and Neil Pryde, Int., US and Hong Kong	Neil Pryde Int.
	Logitech® Mobile Cordless and FlexLoop™ Headsets	ZIBA Design	Logitech, Inc.
	Neurosmith Musini	RKS Design Team	Neurosmith
	First Years Comfort Care Baby Products	Herbst LaZar Bell, Inc.	First Years
	Motorola V.70	Motorola Consumer Experience Design, Italy	


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Watercone®: Gold, Consumer Products

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Credit: Augustin Product Development

Client: Zeltec Engineering GmbH, Germany

The Watercone® is a solar water still, making distilled water from salty/brackish water, yielding 1 to 1.4 liters of water per day. The design is a conical self-supporting, stackable unit made from transparent, thermo-formable polycarbonate material outfitted with a screw cap spout at the tip and inward circular collecting trough at the base. Based on the evaporation rate of 8.8 liters per square meter, the salty/brackish water evaporates and forms droplets on the cone's inner wall. To empty the distilled water, unscrew the cap at the tip of the cone and turn the cone upside down. This simple, utilitarian solution will improve the lives of the world's population and is a powerful example of back to basics problem solving.



"The Watercone® is a highly innovative solution to one of the most basic needs in developing countries. The design developed by Augustin is one of the most compelling examples of design I have seen. The focus on performance has created a design that is uniquely relevant to the need. It's beautifully simple, functional and intuitive. The Watercone® demonstrates how design can play a key role in improving the lives of many around the world." -Duncan Paul, I/IDSA, Global Design Leader of Fabric and Homecare, Procter and Gamble Eurocor NV.

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