

## Forum delegates advised to accept artificial intelligence

Digitalisation Forum delegates told that artificial intelligence has the potential to free wholesalers from the drudgery of repetitive work



▲ Craig Butler, CEF Ltd; Mike Weeks, Infor; David Williams, Schneider Electric Ltd and Edgar Aponte, Rexel UK Ltd, discuss AI after Paul Bratcher's keynote

Delegates at the EDA's 2023 Digitalisation Forum heard that artificial intelligence systems have the potential to relieve wholesalers of mundane tasks, freeing staff to focus on more productive activities.

Keynote speaker Paul Bratcher, Co-Founder of Unfold AI (inset, above), spoke about applications for AI in distribution, but started by putting delegates' minds at rest by assuring them that 'we're not all going to die'.

He stressed that we are at an early stage in the development of AI, typified by machine intelligences that can perform single tasks, predominantly manipulating data. Such systems, he said, could be applied to tedious administrative tasks.

As an example, he suggested that AI systems could help a wholesaler keep up with requests for quotes by generating documents containing product information based on the customer's description of the

project. The wholesaler could even choose the 'tone of voice' of the quote email.

Bratcher reiterated that AI technology is not necessarily a threat, and will free staff from unproductive jobs. He advised wholesalers: 'Pick an activity for AI that no one cares about, and once you've got that success people start to see it as a force for good, not just a threat.'

Other speakers at the forum included the EDA's Head of Digitalisation Richard Appleton, who updated delegates on the EDATA journey so far, and set out a roadmap for the future. (Turn to page 2 for more information.)

Speakers from a series of companies – including B2BE Limited, In-tact Software, Proplanet and Agathos Systems Ltd – demonstrated how they had integrated EDATA into their systems. Nigel Clemett, Business Development Dir-

ector at Kerridge Commercial Systems Ltd, shared his company's experience updating product data systems in the automotive industry and how growth in that sector had been stifled because it depended on knowledgeable, long-serving staff. Digital systems had removed those barriers. Clemett said wholesalers could learn from that experience.

Anne Vessey, Head of Marketing and Communications at the EDA, spoke about the data skills shortage in the industry. She said the sector could 'grow its own' data experts by taking advantage of the EDA's new upskilling training programme, run in partnership with Multiverse.

The training programme is worth £12,000 but is fully-funded by the Government.

Download the presentations at [www.eda.org.uk](http://www.eda.org.uk)



### FROM THE BOARDROOM

In our fast-paced industry, cultivating the skills of young professionals is essential for sustained growth. As technology evolves and market dynamics shift, targeted training programmes are instrumental in shaping a workforce capable of navigating both traditional and emerging trends. These initiatives should offer technical proficiency, customer service acumen and an understanding of evolving product landscapes.

Hands-on experience and exposure to real-world scenarios are vital for effective training. Mentorship programmes further enrich the learning journey, providing valuable insights, networking opportunities and career guidance from experienced professionals.

Embracing a culture of continuous learning through workshops, seminars and online courses ensures that young people are at the forefront of industry developments. It not only secures a skilled workforce but also enhances the industry's adaptability.

The EDA offers a plethora of material for learning and development and there is no better time to make a commitment for 2024 and beyond.

Andy Johnson  
LEW Electrical Distributors  
EDA Board of Management

### Four more wholesalers welcomed to the Association

A warm welcome to the new wholesaler Members that have joined the EDA in recent months:



● County Electrical Supplies Ltd joined on 1 October 2023.



● Dungannon Electrical Wholesale, an ANEW member;



● SND Electrical Wholesalers (UK) Ltd; and



● C&S Electrical Wholesale Ltd, part of the AWEBB Buying Group.

# Rewards for outstanding data quality



▲ Recipients of Data Quality Awards: Ingrid Barnes, Worcester Electrical Distributors Ltd (third from left); Richard Wheeldon, Electrium Sales Ltd (A Siemens Company); Laurie Wilson, CMP Products Limited; Nathan Evans, Atkore Unistrut & Marco; Jon Whiten, DG Controls Ltd; and Micheal Wright, Aico Ltd. They are joined by EDA board member Edgar Aponte, Rexel UK (far left) and Head of Digitalisation Richard Appleton (second from left); and EDA CEO Margaret Fitzsimons (second from right) and Javier Garcia, the EDA's Onboarding & Product Data Manager

Six businesses received an EDA Data Quality Award at the Association's Annual Digitalisation Forum. Edgar Aponte, CEO at Rexel UK, and Richard Appleton, the EDA's Head of Digitalisation, presented the awards.

The winners were drawn from among the 70+ manufacturer brands that subscribe to the EDATA data pool to share product information

with multiple wholesalers.

Every EDA Member Wholesaler has free access to EDATA, and this year an extra award was given to Worcester Electrical Distributors Ltd for its early integration of the data pool into its business.

The winners are:

- **Aico Ltd** – Overall Data Quality Award <1,000 SKUs
- **DG Controls Ltd** – Overall Data

Quality Award 1,000-2,000 SKUs

- **CMP Products Ltd** – Overall Data Quality Award >2,000 SKUs
- **Atkore Unistrut & Marco** – Most Complete ETIM data
- **Electrium Sales Ltd (A Siemens Company)** – Data Maintenance Award
- **Worcester Electrical Distributors Ltd** – EDATA Early Adopter

Ten more businesses received a certificate of commendation for achieving Gold Standard product data in the EDATA data pool (see picture below).

The EDA Digitalisation Forum and the Data Quality Awards were sponsored by EDA Solution Providers Agathos, B2BE, Infor, Intact, Kerridge Commercial Systems and Proplanet.



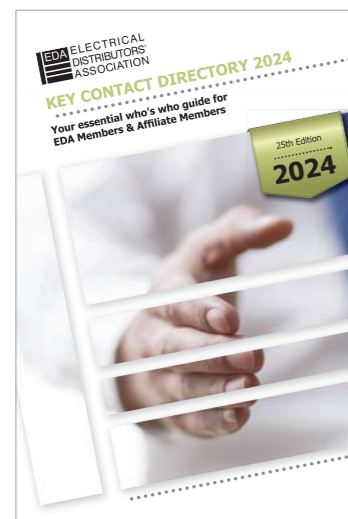
◀ Companies commended for achieving Gold Standard product data (l-r): Andrew Pegrum, Deta Electrical Company Ltd; Tom Bell, Elta Trade; Matt Burton, Aurora Lighting UK Ltd; Richard Wheeldon, Electrium Sales Ltd (A Siemens Company); Jill Richmond, Green-Brook; Jade Appleby, CMP Products Limited; Mike Casey, Atkore Unistrut & Marco; Julian Connelly, Olympic Fixing Products Ltd

## Key Contact Directory 2024: 25 years of the EDA's industry who's who

2024 marks the 25th edition of the Association's Key Contact Directory. This much-anticipated publication connects you with senior decision makers in every EDA Member and Affiliated Member business.

Each copy has a unique reference number on the back cover. Circulation is exclusive and closely controlled, and includes only those 900+ people listed inside – the unique number makes it easier to track.

The front and back covers open out to give you a sector round-up of events, including EDA events that were confirmed at the time of going to print.



## UNICRIMP IS LATEST AFFILIATE

The Association welcomes cable management accessory company **Unicrimp Ltd**, part of the Scolmore Group, which joined the EDA on 1 November 2023.

Unicrimp was launched under the Qcrimp brand name, and man-

**UNICRIMP**  
●●●●● ScolmoreGROUP

ufactures a range of cable ties, crimp terminals, PVC tape, copper tube terminals, cable clips, and brass and nylon glands.

## Avenell and Barton join the EDA Board of Management

**Keith Avenell** of 3 Line Electrical Wholesale has taken over from LEW Electrical Distributors' Andy Johnson to represent the AWEBB buying group.

Edmundson Electrical Ltd's **Tom Barton** joins the Board in place of Richard McCartney.



▲ Avenell ▲ Barton

# 'Fantastic' – wholesalers sing the praises of EDATA

Using the EDATA data pool is free for EDA wholesalers – if you don't sign up, you're missing out



'The EDATA data pool is fantastic and any wholesaler that is not using it is missing out,' says Josh Powlett, Purchasing Manager, Hatton Electrical Wholesale Ltd – part of the AWEBB buying group.

'It used to take me hours to source product data sheets from each of our suppliers separately,' he adds, 'but in EDATA they are all there in one hub.'

### What is EDATA?

EDATA is a cloud-based data pool that's free to every EDA wholesaler. It contains high-quality product information and images for 232,550 SKUs from more than 70 leading brands (and counting).

Wholesalers can download individual product data sheets to share

with contractors as part of the sales process or download product information in bulk (in a variety of formats) to use on websites, e-shops, click and collect, ordering and invoicing, and ERP systems.

### Login

For a login, call Billy at the EDA – 020 3141 7352 – and we'll organise free access for you and your team.

### Manufacturers new to EDATA

- **Hamilton Litestat**
- **Pemsa UK**
- **Varilight** – 5,686 SKUs already live
- **PowerLED**
- **Unicrimp Ltd**



In November manufacturers gathered at Electra-Centre Distribution Ltd, Ilkeston, Derbyshire, to learn how to create Gold Standard product data from the EDA's experts Richard Appleton (far left) and Javier Garcia (far right).

At the last workshop for 2023 were: Richard; Carol Roche, Schneider Electric; Jack Crowch, Iluma Lighting; Mark Philpott, Armorduct Systems Ltd; Louise McHugh, Vent-Axia; Zoe Quimby and Ebony Shuttleworth, Kingfisher Lighting Ltd; Steve Anderson and

Paul Onyett of Elkay, Elmex and Brookvent; and Javier.

These training workshops, which are free to EDA businesses, will continue in 2024 and booking is open at [www.eda.org.uk/event](http://www.eda.org.uk/event). The dates are:

- Wednesday 21 February, Rexel UK Ltd, Birmingham
  - Thursday 16 May, EU Fire & Security, Rochdale
  - Wednesday 19 June, Hedley & Ellis Ltd, Peterborough
  - Wednesday 16 October, EDA Offices, London
- More details at [www.eda.org.uk/event](http://www.eda.org.uk/event)

## Out and about introducing wholesalers to the EDATA data pool



▲ Billy, centre, at Allen Bros (Electrical Factors) Ltd...

This autumn Billy Overall, the EDA's Digitalisation Marketing Manager, has been visiting EDA wholesalers in and around the Essex area.

His visits are primarily to demo the EDATA data pool – which is free to every EDA wholesaler – but of course he's happy to help with any aspect of the EDA's work.

The pictures show Billy at Allen Bros. (Electrical Factors) Ltd and CH Electrical Wholesalers Ltd.

The EDA will be visiting more wholesalers in 2024 to show the industry the value of EDATA. With nine visits completed, there's more to come, so watch this space.



▲ ...and at CH Electrical Wholesalers Ltd

## DIGITALISATION & PRODUCT DATA NEWS IN BRIEF



For help with digitalisation, call Richard Appleton, EDA Data Services, on 020 3141 7350.

### ETIM Requests for Change 2024 for ETIM 10 release

The next full release of ETIM, ETIM 10.0, is due 1 November 2024. If any business has a suggestion for change that they would like to see reflected in the upgrade, the deadline is 28 June 2024. Use the ETIM Change Proposal Form on the ETIM UK website.

<https://tinyurl.com/ETIM-R4C>

### Product sustainability data coming to EDATA in 2024

Work has started to add information about a product's sustainability credentials to the EDATA data pool. Increasingly, wholesalers are asked for this information by contractor/installer customers as part of the sales process, and the EDATA data pool will be the go-to hub to view and download this type of information.

### Change is good, ETIM xChange is even better

There's a new data exchange format in development – ETIM xChange. Beta testing is due to start at the end of January 2024. ETIM xChange can transfer product information to and from the EDATA data pool, or between systems/organisations. It is managed by ETIM International, but it transfers more than ETIM data and accommodates every data set in EDATA. ETIM xChange will grow and adapt to reflect the product information that needs to be shared along the supply chain.

## Got half an hour?

Wholesalers, turn your teams into product experts with our programme of 30 Minute Masterclasses.



Wed 10 January 2024, 2pm  
**An introduction to lighting design**  
John Ford, Robus

Wed 7 February 2024, 2pm  
**Breaking down common myths about LED lighting**  
Graham Lewis, Red Arrow Electrical Ltd

Wed 6 March 2024, 2pm  
**The future of underfloor heating; the heat beneath your feet!**  
Andrew Hill, Heat Mat Ltd

Wed 3 April 2024, 2pm  
**More than hot air: Why hand dryers are the leading sustainable choice for electrical wholesalers**  
Mark Sheridan, ATC Ltd

Wed 8 May 2024, 2pm  
**PV systems**  
Colin McAhren, Luceco PLC (BG Electrical)

Wed 5 June 2024, 2pm  
**Battery storage**  
Colin McAhren, Luceco PLC (BG Electrical)

Register at [www.eda.org.uk](http://www.eda.org.uk) in the Training & Apprenticeships menu for these virtual sessions.

# Regional Forums bring EDA to you



It's always a boost to get out and about to meet our Members and Affiliates. So thanks to the 440 representatives who joined us in 2023 at our four Regional Business Forums in Peterborough, Glasgow, Cardiff and Bradford.

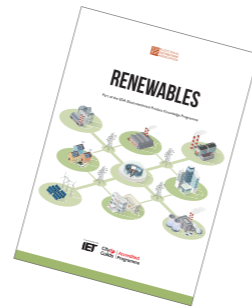
In 2024 we are bringing a Forum to Belfast on Wednesday 17 April, to Reading on Thursday 13 June and

to Coventry on Wednesday 12 September. Put the dates in your diary and be ready to join us.

You do not need to wait for an invitation to come along to the Forums, simply visit [www.eda.org.uk](http://www.eda.org.uk) and head to the Events section to book.

## Working group takes a fresh look at renewables

The EDA has set up a working group of specialists to evaluate the need to update the Renewables Product Knowledge Module.



At its first meeting, it concluded that although the current module is a good introduction to the topic, there is a need to update it or add another module to cover the latest legislation, and changes such as the growth in the market for photovoltaic panels, electric vehicle infrastructure and heat pumps.

# Thousands of CPD points for you and your team

Continuing Professional Development – or CPD – describes the learning activities that professionals engage in to develop and enhance their abilities.

Some businesses give employees an annual CPD target. In response, the EDA subscribes to The CPD Certification Service to offer CPD Certificates for formal training, such as the Product Knowledge Modules and other bespoke courses, and for those who attend its Regional Business Forums.

'Most of the training that we offer now comes with CPD approval,' says Tracy Hewett, Head of Education and Training at the Association. 'For

example, the Product Knowledge Modules are CPD-certified and each represents 40 hours – or 40 points – of training.



'Also, anybody that goes to an EDA Forum gets a CPD certificate, which typically reflects five hours of CPD-certified training.'

'We meet The CPD Certification

Service quality criteria,' says Tracy, 'this means that a third party is saying the training is good enough to be approved as continuing professional development.'

Individuals can use CPD certificates to show how many hours they have committed to development.

'Training should be seen as something that helps us to improve,' says Tracy, 'but there is a cost element, so it also shows that your employer is valuing you and investing in you.'

For businesses, she adds, 'the more training you can offer that's proven to be high quality, the more return on investment is likely.'

## EDA promotes its ETIM progress at international forum



Margaret Fitzsimons, CEO at the EDA, and Richard Appleton, Head of Digitalisation, delivered a session at the annual ETIM International Forum at Mallorca in Spain, raising the profile of the UK's progress with the ETIM

classification standard, and sharing news on the EDATA data pool, which has ETIM at its heart.

ETIM UK is a partnership between the EDA and the Builders Merchants Federation Ltd. The UK delegation (pictured)

included (l-r) Billy Overall, Javier Garcia, Richard Appleton, Margaret Fitzsimons, Richard Hill, Oz Bham and David Bate.

The forum was attended by ETIM representatives from more than 15 countries.

## EDA business sharpen up their credit control



On Tuesday 5 December 2023, the EDA held its first Credit Control Bootcamp at Lutron's European Experience Centre in London. The training was created for EDA businesses in partnership with the experts at

the Chartered Institute of Credit Management. You can book for the next bootcamp now. It is on Wednesday 15 May 2024 in Sutton Coldfield. Go to [www.eda.org.uk](http://www.eda.org.uk) to book or call 020 3141 7350.

## APPRENTICESHIPS: 2023 IN NUMBERS

2023 was a successful year for EDA apprentices.

Ninety apprentices successfully completed their apprenticeships, and 80% of those who did so were hired by their branches full time. Of that 80%, a quarter were under 18 when they started their apprenticeship.

Over 80% of trade supplier apprentices achieved a merit or a distinction.

In 2023 females made up 10% of the new apprenticeship intake. Sixty-five per cent of them are Trade Supplier or Warehouse apprentices.

90

apprenticeships completed

These numbers show how, with the right mentoring and leadership, the future of your businesses is in safe hands.

All of the EDA's buying groups are well represented in these figures, and a number of companies took on an apprentice

80%

of successful apprentices were hired

for the first time during the year.

The most popular apprenticeships are the Trade Supplier Standard, L2 (which represented 62% of the apprenticeships taken); and, in England, the Supply Chain Warehouse Operative Standard, L2 or, in Scotland, the MA in Warehousing, Storage and Distribution SVQF.

For more information on these apprenticeships and others that are available, look on the EDA website – [www.eda.org.uk](http://www.eda.org.uk) – under Training & Apprenticeships.

“These numbers should convince you that an apprentice would be good for your business”

## DAY IN THE LIFE: SABINA SHAI, EDUCATION & TRAINING ADMINISTRATOR

Sabina Shaid works at the EDA's London headquarters where most of her day is spent taking orders for the Association's Product Knowledge Modules – both the workbooks and the increasing popular online versions – and fulfilling those orders.

### Managing modules

'I send them out to learners and managers,' she says. 'and I claim and process certificates as they come through.'

'We're in touch with CPD directly and they require us to fill in the sheets that have the learners' details, how many hours they've claimed and then submit it to them.'

'I also answer a lot of the email queries that come through. People ask when the next book is coming, when their certificate is arriving,

what grades they got, what percentage they got... those kinds of things.'

She also advises Members about the modules that are available. 'Certain Members have specific requirements when it comes to ordering modules. So I've talked to them about what their options are.'

### Lending advice

As an extension of this, she often advises on follow-up modules. She cites the example of a lighting company. Staff may have completed the Lighting (Introduction) module, so what's next? 'Obviously there is Lighting (Systems and Controls),' she says, but they may want to consider other options.

For instance, she says: 'I would always suggest that new staff do Introduction to the Principles of

Electricity because there are a lot of people who haven't been in education for a while when they join the sector.'

Another popular approach is to target growing markets such as Renewables – which covers emerging technologies such as photovoltaic panels, electric vehicle support infrastructure and heat pumps – or to take the perennially popular Customer Services module.

### On course

Sabina is also involved in other EDA education and training initiatives, such as the recent merchandising and credit control courses. She helps prepare materials for the courses and, once they are complete, she claims the CPD certificates for the attendees.

## TRAINING & APPRENTICESHIPS NEWS IN BRIEF



To discuss these opportunities, call Tracy Hewett, Head of Education and Training at the EDA, on 020 3141 7358.

### National Living Wage increases

Chancellor Jeremy Hunt has confirmed increases to the National Living Wage in his Autumn Statement. From 1 April 2024, the National Living Wage will increase by 9.8% to £11.44 an hour, an increase of £1.02.

The 18-20 year-old rate rises by £1.11 to £8.60, and the 16-17 and Apprenticeship rates both rise by £1.12 to £6.40 an hour.

### 'Professional status' proposals for apprenticeship could be on the cards

The Association of Apprentices (AoA) and the Chartered Institution for Further Education (CIFE) are working on a scheme that would allow apprentices that successfully complete their training to apply for letters after their name – similar to degree graduates – in a drive for 'professional recognition'.

They say the scheme will 'elevate the societal and industrial cachet' of apprenticeships.

CIFE said both organisations have had 'positive and encouraging' discussions with the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education, and the Department for Education.



▲ Sabina Shaid: Education & Training Administrator at the EDA

## JCC achieves carbon neutrality ahead of its target

**JCC Lighting** has become a carbon-neutral organisation, seven years ahead of its target.

JCC is a Leviton company. In 2022, Leviton announced its goal to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030 and net zero by 2050. JCC achieved carbon neutrality by:

**Adopting renewable energy** Since moving to its new facility, Lux Park, JCC has transitioned its electrical sources to solar: the roof has 1,300 solar panels, significantly reducing emissions.

**Product development** JCC has continued to drive improvements across products with a focus

on energy efficiency and simple installation. By designing environmentally responsible products, it helps customers make sustainable choices.

**Carbon offsetting** Some emissions are unavoidable, so JCC invested in a carbon-offset project. The first is solar electricity production in India. Both the lighting and solar industries lead the way in reducing global carbon emissions.

JCC's carbon-neutral achievement is a testament to the company's dedication to make a positive impact. As a market leader in the lighting industry, JCC Lighting sets an example for other



businesses to follow and embrace sustainability as an integral part of their corporate ethos. [www.jcc.co.uk](http://www.jcc.co.uk)

## Simplify your business processes and efficiency

**Proplanet** has updated its Product Experience Platform (PXP), redefining the way in which businesses interact with their product data. PXP pairs a Product Information Management (PIM) system with a bespoke interaction platform.

Inside PXP lies a powerful PIM with ETIM functionality at its core, ensuring data accuracy, consistency and accessibility. It is an indispensable tool for e-commerce, marketing and sales teams, allowing them to dispense with time-consuming spreadsheets and information discrepancies.

PXP can be designed to your specifications. Remodel the way your product data is presented and used with internal teams, partners or customers. It incorporates product logistics, pricing and packaging details, Global Lighting Data Format information, or tailored workflows that align with your company's specific processes. PXP empowers businesses to create a product data environment that suits their exact needs.

Moreover, PXP can generate PowerBI reports, and offers advanced analytics and data visualisation. You can gain valuable insights from your product data, supporting informed decision-making and enhancing your competitive edge. When paired with Proplanet's API, data transfer can be automated to any destination, in any format required.

With PXP, businesses can unlock the potential of their product data, driving success in the competitive market landscape.

[www.proplanet.uk](http://www.proplanet.uk)

## Make active safety your new standard

Electrical system health is critical to the continuity of businesses and services. A malfunction can cause huge financial losses or, in some cases, even threaten human life. **Schneider Electric Ltd** is taking a proactive approach to maintaining electrical safety and reliability by protecting against threats rather than waiting for them to occur.

An Active Safety System combines the safety features of miniature circuit breakers, residual current devices and arc-fault detection devices with monitoring, pre-alarming, alarming and diagnostic capabilities. At the core of the system, Acti9 Active enables detection and alarming with its integrated earth leakage protection, overload, overvoltage and arc-fault protection capabilities, as well as built-in connectivity. All in a 36mm breaker. Acti9 Active incorporates advanced communication technologies and is compatible with various protocols, enabling seamless integration into existing building management systems.

[www.se.com](http://www.se.com)



## Lutron lighting control – it just works

Wholesalers want to grow their businesses while responding to customer needs. **Lutron EA Ltd** can help them meet and exceed these goals.

RA2 Select from Lutron is easy to install with minimum disruption and is programmable using an app. The connected home lighting control solution is simple, reliable, affordable and scalable, providing flexibility and comfort in residential applications, for multi-room or whole home.

Demand for smart home systems is increasing. For any electrical wholesaler or contractor looking to broaden their expertise and business, Lutron is a reliable lighting control solution when

## Zehnder streamlines air distribution installation

**Zehnder Group UK Ltd** has launched an innovative connection clip for quicker and easier installs of its air distribution systems.



The new connector for Zehnder's semi-rigid ducting – aptly named RapidLock® – ensures a secure, airtight connection across the air distribution system, from manifolds to MVHR units. Installers no longer have to grapple with metal clips, greasing gaskets or depend on bayonet sockets, even when ducting is rotated 90 degrees.

A tight seal is made in seconds and installers can confidently move on to the next task. The easy-to-use connectors also prevent problematic unclipping, which often damages ducting.

RapidLock streamlines the ventilation installation process from numerous complicated and laborious steps to two simple ones.

In an industry facing training and skills gaps, this innovation can help prevent issues during installation, which can lead to significant problems as well as additional time and costs.

[www.zehnder.co.uk](http://www.zehnder.co.uk)

## Supply a quality lighting scheme with Koto

**Astro Lighting Ltd** has launched a lighting collection including Koto, a family of modern spotlights, track and wall lights.

One of the standout features of the collection is its quality casting detail. There is a subtle taper to the aluminium shade that encloses a recessed lamp to reduce glare. This makes Koto an excellent choice for kitchen or dining schemes, delivering functional illumination wherever needed.

The collection includes bars in configurations of three, four or five; single ceiling spots; switched



wall lights or the Class I track system, which is effortlessly fitted in any space.

Koto uses quick-connection terminal blocks,

## More choice, less stock

**NVC Lighting Ltd** is adding to its range of multi-wattage and multicolour light fittings.

Most light fittings are available in multiple wattages. Many are also available in multiple colours (CCTs, or warm white, cool white and more). This poses a challenge to the distributor – which wattages and colours to stock? Multi-wattage and multicolour fittings remove this dilemma because one SKU can deliver several wattages and colour temperatures.

NVC has extended the number of product ranges with these features. Multi-wattage and multicolour fittings are available across the range, including LED panels, linear fittings, decorative, IP44 and IP65 bulkheads and fire-rated downlights.

A switch inside the fitting lets the installer adjust



the wattage and/or the colour to suit the project. This gives customers the freedom to change their minds and saves the contractor the trouble of returning to the branch to exchange the fitting.

The biggest benefit is for the stockist. Now a distributor can offer more choice and greater flexibility while stocking less.

[www.nvcuk.com](http://www.nvcuk.com)

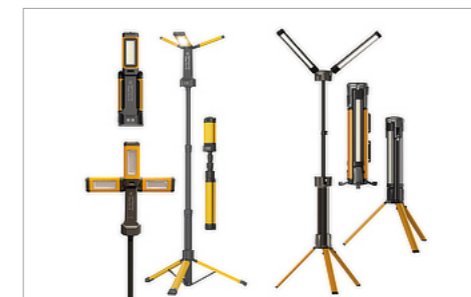
## Light vast areas with LED tower lights

**NightSearcher Ltd**, the manufacturer of innovative portable LED lighting products, has launched the TowerPro 7 and 10K tower lights to meet the needs of professionals and outdoor enthusiasts alike in a variety of applications.

The TowerPro 7K has an output of 7,000 lumens, powered by its battery or AC mains. Its detachable light head, with a hanging hook and magnetic base, provides unparalleled flexibility.

The product has three multidirectional light heads, so users can switch between warm white and cool white light modes. Also, the 7K has up to five hours of runtime. Its compact collapsible tripod design ensures easy transport and storage.

For those that need more luminosity, the TowerPro 10K delivers 10,000 lumens. It also has



a five-hour runtime. The inclusion of reversible ground spikes enhances stability, and two multidirectional light heads offer customisable lighting. It too has warm and cool white light modes.

[www.nightsearcher.co.uk](http://www.nightsearcher.co.uk)

## Small batteries for big responsibilities

The YU-Lite range from **GS Yuasa Battery Sales UK Ltd** has been engineered for applications in which long life and dependability are critical, such as emergency lighting, wireless security, fire and other industrial applications.

The label designs use colour to differentiate between chemistries. The YU-Lite NiCd range has red packaging, NiMH green and lithium blue.

Both the NiCd and NiMH ranges are rechargeable with excellent cyclic performance. They're also maintenance free and have a service

life of up to four years in emergency lighting.

Primary and secondary cell types and single and multiple pack options are available for both the NiCd and NiMH batteries, allowing greater design flexibility. Customisable solutions are available.

The YU-Lite lithium range consists of primary cells of professional specification for industrial and consumer applications including the popular CR2 and CR132A sizes. Other types are expected to be added to the range in the near future.

[www.yuasa.com/YU-Lite](http://www.yuasa.com/YU-Lite)

with the bar variants adopting male/female terminals that allow wiring to one side of the connector while the light is not attached for ease of installation. Every design is finished in matt white or black and accommodates replaceable GU10s to ensure it will easily integrate into new or existing schemes.

Explore Astro's collection of interior and exterior lighting for residential, hospitality and commercial spaces on its website.

[www.astrolighting.com](http://www.astrolighting.com)

## Thorn opens London Light Centre



At the end of last year, **Thorn Lighting** and its sister brand **Zumtobel**, both lighting brands of the Zumtobel Group, celebrated the opening of their state-of-the-art Light Centre at the Business Design Centre in Islington, London.

Alfred Felder, Chairman of the Executive Board and CEO at Zumtobel Group, said: 'The Zumtobel Group has always been synonymous with high-quality, innovative, unique and sustainable lighting products and solutions. The new Light Centre will give us a fantastic opportunity and base to showcase our lighting solutions and expertise.'

Paul Kilburn, MD for the UK and Ireland at Zumtobel Group, added: 'This will help bring us closer to our valued customers and partners.'

The London Light Centre showcases a curated selection of Thorn's outdoor architectural range and Zumtobel's luminaires. It allows seamless product demonstrations and configurations to meet various customer needs.

[www.thornlighting.co.uk](http://www.thornlighting.co.uk)



## DIARY DATES FOR EDA MEMBERS AND AFFILIATES

Events are subject to change, so visit [www.eda.org.uk](http://www.eda.org.uk) for the latest details, or call the EDA on 020 3141 7350.

Wednesday 24 January 2024

### Talking Shop Teams Dialogue

Virtual event for EDA businesses.

Held quarterly in 2024:

- Wed 24 April
- Wed 24 July
- Wed 23 October

Register at [www.eda.org.uk](http://www.eda.org.uk)

Thursday 7 March 2024

### EDA Annual Awards Dinner

At the InterContinental Hotel, Park Lane, London

Wednesday 17 April 2024

### EDA Regional Business Forum, Belfast

Free for EDA wholesalers, manufacturers, solution providers and service providers.

Register at [www.eda.org.uk](http://www.eda.org.uk)

Thursday 9 May 2024

### EDA Scottish Section Sportsman's Dinner

Call Maeve O'Dea on 0117 909 9550

Thursday 13 June 2024

### EDA Regional Business Forum, Reading

Thursday 4 July 2024

### EDA Manufacturers' and Wholesalers' Summer Event

An invitation-only event.

For more information, visit [www.eda.org.uk](http://www.eda.org.uk)

Thursday 12 September 2024

### EDA Regional Business Forum, Coventry

Tuesday 1 October - Friday 4 October 2024

### EDA Scottish Function

A senior networking event at the five-star Cameron House Hotel in Loch Lomond

Wednesday 13 November 2024

### Power It Up EDA Industry Insight Conference 2024, Crewe

Register at [www.eda.org.uk](http://www.eda.org.uk)

# SECTOR NEWS

## Shake-up of emergency lighting rules imminent

Get ready for changes in the way competence is checked at every stage of the built environment supply chain

The Building Safety Act has introduced major regulatory changes to the rules concerning validation of the competence of individuals involved in the built environment supply chain – and there will be further secondary legislation in 2024.

The changes encompass the entire spectrum from product design to maintenance – including sourcing and supply.

### Competence scheme

The Lighting Industry Association's Industry Committee for Emergency Lighting (ICEL), is developing a competence scheme known as the ICEL Competence Standard and Scheme.

This initiative gives wholesalers an opportunity to validate their competence by participating in emergency lighting training, undertaking client and workplace assessments, and submitting employee declarations.



The forthcoming 'Sales and Distribution' activities will be launched in February 2024.

To get ahead of the game, wholesalers can attend the ICEL-endorsed emergency lighting training. For more details visit [www.thelia.org.uk/EmergencyLightingICEL](http://www.thelia.org.uk/EmergencyLightingICEL).

ICEL has also developed a range of resources that wholesalers may find useful to read and share with their contractor customers. Among these is the *Emergency Lighting and Controls* guide, which you can download at <https://tinyurl.com/EmergencyLightingLIA>.

[www.thelia.org.uk](http://www.thelia.org.uk)

## New team takes the reins at BEAMA



BEAMA has announced the appointment of **Yselkla Farmer** as its new CEO – replacing Dr Howard Porter, who has stepped down – along with a new management team that, it says, represents both continuity in long service and new members.

The picture shows (l-r) **Erica Wilson**, MD, Wilson Power Solutions and BEAMA Vice President; **Andrew Willman**, Chief Operating Officer; **Raj Vagdia**, Technical Director; **Yselkla Farmer**, CEO; **Kelly Butler**, Strategy Director; **Nick Hayler**, Director of Member

Services & Head of Building Electrical Systems; **Keith Ritchie**, Non-Executive Chair, Titon Holdings and BEAMA President.

Farmer was previously Director of Public Affairs at BEAMA, and has over a decade of experience in the electrotechnical sector and widely regarded expertise in smart energy systems. She said: 'It is a privilege to be taking on the role of CEO at BEAMA. Dr Howard Porter leaves behind a strong legacy, and I will be working with a brilliant team and work programme.' [www.beama.org.uk](http://www.beama.org.uk)

## EIC launches online mental health learning platform

The Electrical Industries Charity has launched an online learning platform that offers a range of mental health training courses and interactive webinars.

### Mental Health for All

Training for mental health well-being



The courses will give individuals the knowledge and skills they need to navigate personal and professional mental health challenges.

The platform reflects the charity's commitment to supporting the mental well-being of individuals in the electrical industry.

Sign up at <https://eictrainingco.org/login/index.php>. Businesses looking to invest in training packages should email the EIC at [training@eictradingco.org](mailto:training@eictradingco.org).