

EDA Board Member Simon Barkes elected ETIM International President

UK takes presidential role as pandemic throws renewed focus on digitalising our sector.

Simon Barkes has been elected as the fourth President of ETIM International and, following a formal handover in November 2020, will lead the organisation for the next three years. A long-time champion of digitalisation for the UK's electrotechnical sector, it was in 2017, during the second of his two EDA Presidencies, that Simon led the introduction of the ETIM global data standard to this country.

ETIM is the international data model for the standardisation and classification of technical product data and is managed by ETIM International from its Belgium HQ. As ETIM International President Simon succeeds Jan Janse, formerly of Sonepar, to lead an Executive Board of five representatives drawn from ETIM Member countries: North America, Norway, Finland, the Netherlands and Germany. There are currently 22 country members of ETIM International, including the UK.

Simon, MD at EDA Member BEMCO (British Electrical and Manufacturing Company), said, "It is an honour to be part of the team leading the strategic direction of ETIM. Since the EDA launched its



SIMON BARKES
EDA Board Member and incoming ETIM International President

digitalisation drive in 2017 the UK has made huge progress: the standard has been Anglicised for our market; the EDA has established a data team led by Margaret Fitzsimons, EDA CEO and Richard Appleton, General Manager at EDA Data Services; we've launched the EDATA data pool which contains ETIM-ready data; and the BMF has seen the benefit of ETIM for their members and has come on board as champion for the HVAC & Plumbing and Building Materials sectors. ■

Further information can be found at www.etim-uk.co.uk and on LinkedIn under ETIM UK.

Aico represents manufacturers on the EDA Data Services Board



MICHAEL WRIGHT
Product Development Manager, Aico Ltd

Michael Wright, Aico Ltd's Product Development Manager, has been voted in by representatives from the 25 Founder Members of EDATA, the 'by the industry' data pool.

Michael will serve for two years alongside:

- Chair: **Edgar Aponte**, CEO, Rexel UK Ltd
- **Richard Sherin**, Group Commercial Director, R & M Electrical Group Ltd
- **George Brickwood**, eCommerce Director UK & Ireland, Schneider Electric Ltd
- **Margaret Fitzsimons**, EDA CEO
- **Richard Appleton**, General Manager, EDA Data Services.

For more visit www.eda.org.uk/etim-edata



RICHARD APPLETON
General Manager, EDA Data Services

Welcome to the first edition of **Click & Connect**, the EDA's new quarterly newsletter covering all matters relating to ecommerce and digitalisation.

2020 has been one of those pivotal moments, a tipping point, after which things will never be the same again. A Google search for "Covid effect on ecommerce growth" reveals a multitude of statistics. Taking just one example, data from IBM's US Retail Index indicates that the pandemic has accelerated the shift away from physical stores to ecommerce by five years.

In this newsletter you will find a range of topics discussed, from a fascinating in-depth interview with Jeremy Saunders who is leading CEF's digital transformation, to the advances in the UK's ETIM journey over the last year and from the launch & momentum of the EDATA Industry Data Pool, to the EDA's latest Affiliate Solution Provider Members

We hope you find the newsletter useful and please remember, the team is here to help: **020 3141 7350** or info@eda.org.uk

Richard Appleton
General Manager, EDA Data Services.



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It's all about data...

Jeremy Saunders takes us behind the scenes at CEF's digital hub



Over the last nine years CEF's data team has grown from just two people to 38 people, with a further 200 people in their new Biggleswade customer service and logistics centre. Those figures tell you something about the increasing importance of ecommerce for CEF.



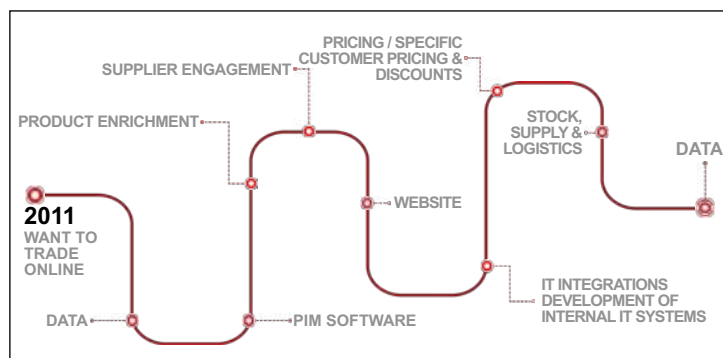
The brains and energy behind the drive to create a multi-channel digital operation that is fully integrated into their wholesale business, is Jeremy Saunders, Director of Operations.

"I've worked in electrical wholesaling for 29 years and when I was asked by CEF to set up its ecommerce operation about nine years ago I can safely say that I knew very little about the subject," explains Jeremy. "It has been a massive learning curve for me, personally and for the business. Reflecting on the journey we're on, the biggest challenge has not been the website, creating new

departments or the logistics operation – because you can hire in experts or outsource services – it has been "product data". Data is the engine you need to power your business.

"We decided early on that we would take responsibility for generating product data ourselves, because back then we couldn't get it from anywhere else. We bought a PIM system and set about building our own product library, enriching that data, and doing all the product photography inhouse.

"Every order placed on www.cef.co.uk comes into our Biggleswade hub to be fulfilled,



and we have 200 people, and growing, dedicated to customer services, picking and packing and making sure that 2,500 orders are despatched every day."

Over the next 12 months the Bedfordshire facility will double in size "This was always the plan" explains Jeremy, "we have ambitious growth targets and, when the expanded site is up and running, our aim is to fulfil up to 15,000 orders a day. That's a respectable target and, with some increased automation, it is achievable. It's more than

that, though, it's about having a vision, developing a strategy and executing it"

What's the message for the UK's wholesale sector? "Whether you are a big or small business, we all have a responsibility to protect our business sector for the future. What we've done here at CEF is by no means the finished article. There's so much more to achieve and you never get to the end of the challenge, but one thing is for sure it doesn't matter whether it is product data or transactional data, it is all about the data." ■

International new faces

Simon Barkes is one of three newcomers to the six-person ETIM International Board. He is joined by Albert Dunnink of ETIM Netherlands and Thorsten Ludewig of ETIM Germany. Board members are drawn from across the 22 global member organisations and elected by the General Assembly.

The Board is supported by Marc Habets, Technical Director, ETIM International and each member serves a three-year term and can be nominated for re-election. ■

From November 2020 the full Board looks like this:

Simon Barkes, President, ETIM UK

Mary Shaw, Vice President, ETIM North America

Frank Jaegtnes, Treasurer, ETIM Norway

Magnus Siren, ETIM Finland

Albert Dunnink, ETIM Netherlands (pictured)

Thorsten Ludewig, ETIM Germany (pictured)



Albert Dunnink



Thorsten Ludewig

Latest EDATA manufacturers

A further cohort of leading manufacturers have signed up to syndicate their product data to wholesalers through EDATA, the industry-owned data pool. Added to the original 15 Founder Member manufacturers*, this brings the total number of manufacturers committed to using EDATA to provide a single source of ecommerce-friendly data to 30, with more in the pipeline.

Richard Appleton, General Manager of EDA Data Services said, "Each manufacturer that signs up for EDATA is in a different place on their data journey. As part of the EDATA service they have access to our data experts and a bespoke programme of onboarding and support. ■

The first downloads of product data are eagerly awaited and will soon be made available for viewing and testing by wholesaler members of EDATA.

For more on EDATA, contact Kiera Greenwood on **020 3141 7342** or email Kiera.greenwood@eda.org.uk

* ABB Ltd, Aico Ltd, Ansell Lighting, Deta Electrical Company Ltd, Eaton Electric Ltd, Electrium Sales Ltd (A Siemens Company), Glen Dimplex Heating & Ventilation, Hager Ltd, Ledvance Ltd, Luceco Plc, Prysmian Cables & Systems Ltd, Signify, Schneider Electric Ltd, Scolemore Group, Vent-Axia.

The latest electrotechnical manufacturers to join EDATA are:

AIRFLOW



envirovent

GEWISS

JCC a LEVITON company

Kosnic
a touch of brilliance



MEGAMAN

metpro

ROBUS



TIMEGUARD
A thoben Group Company



VIEW POINT



EDATA: onboarding through lockdown

Insight into unique data journeys from Javier Garcia, Data & Onboarding Manager at EDA Data Services

The EDATA data pool project was launched in February 2020 and I joined the EDA's Data Services team as Data & Onboarding Manager in March, a couple of weeks before the whole country went into lockdown. Even though we had to adapt to the new ways of working, the work has continued, and a lot of progress has been achieved in the last 6 months.

It all started with 15 manufacturers, the founders, but now there are 30 companies that I work with. Every manufacturer is at a different stage in their product data journey, and part of my role is to assist them on this journey, providing feedback and guidance based on our EDATA data requirements and standards.

The onboarding process has changed significantly since March. We used to start the onboarding process by having a half-day workshop in the manufacturers' offices, but we have moved to online meetings since, with an initial onboarding session and regular follow-ups after that.

During this onboarding process, we provide feedback on any data the manufacturers may want to use in EDATA and assist on how to improve it, as the aim of EDATA is not to just be a data pool, but to be the best source of data for wholesalers. At this point in time, we are still doing all imports on behalf of manufacturers, but the last step of the onboarding process will be the delivery of tailored training and support to each manufacturer's in-house team

so they can be self-sufficient in uploading and maintaining their data in EDATA.

The lockdown has had a significant effect on the onboarding process; with some manufacturers it has helped, as they have more resources available to work on the data. With other manufacturers, it has been the opposite and getting data has been a challenge at times, either due to employees being on furlough, or simply a change in priorities and lack of resources.

We have recently reached the 30,000 products milestone and we are aiming to hit 50,000 before the end of the year. A number of new features have also just been added to the EDATA platform to improve the navigation and filtering of products on the website, as well as improvements to the export routines, so wholesalers can be more precise when exporting data from the website.

With the current pandemic forcing wholesalers to go online, the need for good data is greater than ever, and EDATA can assist both wholesalers and manufacturers in this process. Manufacturers can syndicate their data, through this data pool, while retaining full control of how their products are presented. Wholesalers on the other hand can use EDATA as a single source of rich, eCommerce friendly data, facilitating the addition of products to trading platforms. ■

For more on EDATA onboarding, contact Javier Garcia on **020 3141 7353** or email Javier.Garcia@eda.org.uk



Save the Date

Digitalisation Forum - Virtual Event
13.00 -16.00 on 1st December 2020

ETIM 8.0 released for UK market

ETIM 8.0 was originally scheduled for release in September but, due to the large number of change requests was delayed until November. While regrettable, this is indicative of the growing use of ETIM in over 20 countries.

For the first time, ETIM 8.0 contains a number of significant additions and changes originally requested by the UK:

Class Code	Description	Details
EC004538	Accessories/spare parts for steel trunking	New class added
EC004518	Fused connection unit	New class added
EC004490	Instantaneous electric shower	New class added
EC003248	Power cable < 1 kV, for fixed installations	New features added to cover UK fire performance standards
EC003251	Power cable >= 1 kV, for fixed installations	New features added to include UK fire performance standards
EC002288	Small distribution board equipped	New features added to include requirements for consumer units
EC004496	Steel trunking bell mouth fitting	New class added
EC004372	Steel trunking bend	New class added
EC004494	Steel trunking change face unit	New class added
EC004498	Steel trunking connector	New class added
EC004493	Steel trunking crossover	New class added
EC004497	Steel trunking end cap	New class added
EC004371	Steel trunking length	New class added
EC004373	Steel trunking reducer	New class added
EC004491	Steel trunking tee	New class added

Tools for transitioning from 7.0 to 8.0

Email: info@etim-uk.co.uk for more details on:

- Full download of ETIM 8.0 in Excel or .IXF (xml) format, complete or by sector;
- Class mapping file with overview of all classes in ETIM 8.0 per sector and group. Also identifies new classes and deleted classes with their possible successor;
- Detailed mapping files showing what's changed from 7.0 to 8.0, includes colours to make file more 'human readable'

Get involved

Thanks to all who helped bring the 8.0 developments to fruition, especially Legrand's Donna Fellows for her work on steel trunking classes. The next priority is setting up product-specific working groups to cover:

- Ongoing reviews, identifying areas for development / improvement, draft Requests For Change (RFC), review RFC's originating elsewhere;
- Adding UK-specific product standards via the new local standards feature;
- Creating guidelines for consistent application of ETIM, including addition of UK reference products where appropriate to the Classification Management Tool (CMT).

To join a working group contact richard.appleton@eda.org.uk

MAKING A CONNECTION
SIX GETTING-TO-KNOW YOU QUESTIONS



In this issue we meet Kiera Greenwood, Business Systems' Coordinator for EDA, EDATA and ETIM UK.

How long have you been at the EDA?

I have been with the EDA for just over a year now and what a unique first year - the last 7 months have been during lockdown.

What's been your most memorable day and why?

This Year's Annual Awards Dinner was definitely the most memorable day; it was amazing to see so many months of work come together with only a few 'last-minute' hiccups. It was also the last in-person event in 2020 for most of the industry.

What do you like most about your job?

It is so difficult to choose I really enjoy working with so many people; although we are a small team at the EDA we have the privilege of working with the whole industry and I love speaking with so many different people. The EDA also have such a large range of activities that my role is extremely varied - no two days are ever the same at the EDA!

Who's your hero?

My heroes are two powerful women that have built two very different reputations and careers.

I find Michelle Obama so inspiring; she worked her way up from the South Side of Chicago, attended Princeton University before going on to Harvard Law School and becoming a Lawyer. Her priorities centre around helping others and empowering those are not able to do so themselves.

My second icon is Ella Mills, founder and Creative Director of Deliciously Ella. She built her health and lifestyle business after falling extremely ill at university and now uses her influence to promote health, consulting with scientists and experts rather than general fads and conjecture.

What's your motto in life?

"Happiness can be found, even in the darkest of times, if one only remembers to turn on the light." - JK Rowling

What would people be surprised to know about you?

I am a self confessed foodie! I love cooking, experimenting with new cuisines and have designed & made wedding and celebration cakes - my creative outlet I suppose! ■

Software businesses join us as Affiliated Solution Providers

Digitalisation of the UK's electrotechnical sector means a new EDA Affiliated Membership category has opened up - that of Solutions Provider. These specialists offer software (and related services) supporting the creation, enhancement, exchange or display of product data. NG15 Ltd were the first EDA Affiliated Solutions Provider, joining us on 1 May 2020, and now we're announcing four more joining us from 1 November 2020.

Watch this space for further announcements. ■

Welcome to:

