

Brose Innovation Awards 2008 go to Wuppertal, Coburg and Detroit

The development of the trend-setting latch concept for side doors recognized with the "Best Product" innovation award. Executive Vice-President Closure Systems Torsten Greiner (right) presents the award in Wuppertal; clockwise from left: Stefan Dörl (Production Technology), Gerhard Leidig (Director Production Technology), Simon Brose (Director Design/Components). Not shown in the photo: Roman Joschko (Design), David Rosales (Design) and Ihsan Alisan (Design/Team GM, Fiat, DC).

Wuppertal/Coburg/Detroit (15. December 2008).

The Brose Group has presented the award for innovation in the "Best Product" category to six employees from the closure system business division at the Wuppertal location for realizing a trend-setting idea for a product: the latch concept for side doors developed by the Wuppertal engineers has raised the bar in vehicle construction in terms of size, weight and performance.

In contrast to commercially available locks, the new latch system is approx. 40% lighter and takes up 60% less installation space. This helps keep the environment cleaner by contributing 60% fewer CO2 emissions. Moreover, the latch can be unlocked extremely fast, it is robust and its high common-part usage provides a proliferation of options, which in turn enables cross-segment use by any manufacturer.

Earlier this month in Wuppertal, Executive Vice-President Torsten Greiner, head of the closure system business worldwide for the Brose Group, presented the award to the recipients—the development team headed up by project manager Simon Brose (Design/Components Closures Systems) also includes Roman Joschko, David Rosales and Ihsan Alisan (all part of Design Closure Systems), Gerhard Leidig and Stefan Dörl (both from Production Technology, Closure Systems).

The "Best Process" Innovation Award goes to Coburg and Detroit

In the "Best Process" category, the award went to Holger Fischer (Welding Technology), Dr. Markus Hirschmann and Ralph Kalthoff (both from New Technologies). These three engineers have developed a method for non-destructive laser weld seams testing that has significantly contributed to reducing costs related to waste and scrap - in view of the increasing costs in raw materials, no mean feat.

Jörg Abele und Ralph Kalthoff accepted a special award on behalf of five other project members from the Brose headquarters in Detroit in the category of "Best Process" in recognition of their special efforts. Together with their North American colleagues Gerald Ernst, Sascha Wagner, Mazen Chehab, Christian Ketterl und Eric Silva, both engineers have integrated the "Bead-Lock" technology, which replaces a welding process with a metal-forming joining process in the manufacture of seat adjusters.

This technology is to be used for the first time in seat adjusters for the US vehicle platform and will result in a substantial reduction in costs over the lifetime of the product - given the tough competition in the USA, this is an imperative necessity.

Forty-one employees from the Brose plants, business divisions and central functions in Coburg, Würzburg, Wuppertal and Detroit responded to the call for entries for the thirteenth

Brose Innovation Award. They submitted a total of sixteen proposals for product and process improvements.

The Brose Innovation Award, which is presented annually and includes a monetary award, seeks to recognize those employees who have demonstrated particular creativity designed to improve the productivity of the Brose Group and to achieve sustainable cost savings - prerequisites that are vitally important for competing successfully in today's and tomorrow's demanding automotive supplier market.