

EBV Supports Young Engineers in the UK

by Johannes Liel, contributing writer

Because the future of distribution relies not only on the innovations made by today's experienced engineers, but also in encouraging the next generations to develop an interest in pursuing a career in engineering, EBV has been a constant supporter of Young Engineers since 2003.

Young Engineers, which introduces school children to engineering from an early age, is a U.K.-based charitable organisation that manages a national network of extra-curricular engineering clubs for young people under 18, offering a number of challenges and competitions. The organisation aims to inspire young people to develop an interest in engineering, and to recognise the importance and excitement of engineering as a future career.

In 2003 EBV was invited to become one of the sponsors of the Young Electronic Designer Awards (YEDA), an annual distinction awarded to young people who had used their imagination to create, design and develop an electronic prototype – whether as an electronics expert or simply an interested beginner. In 2005 YEDA merged with Young Engineers and EBV became even more involved.

Not only does EBV pay a €16,000 annual sponsorship, but John Langford, EBV's senior vice president of sales and marketing for Northern Europe, also became a director and trustee of Young Engineers. "As a distributor, I believe we have an obligation and responsibility to raise school children's interest in engineering and encourage them to consider it as a career option," he says. "This is not only a 'crusade' by existing engineers 'to spread the gospel about the rewards of engineering, but also strikes more close to home as it is in our own interest to look five to 10 years in advance to ensure there are enough graduates to avoid a skills shortage so both our customers and ourselves have the right candidates for our expansion."

Stuart Ellins, chief executive of Young Engineers, explains the importance of EBV's support, saying, "Like every charitable organisation, Young Engineers is dependent on the continued generosity of businesses and industry; therefore we are delighted to have EBV's long-term support. It really does show the company cares about our aims and has a real desire to raise interest in engineering".

For the students, participating in Young Engineers not only nurtures their interest in the engineering disciplines, it also helps to develop the young club members' personal skills in communication, presentation and teamwork, as well as numeracy and literacy, thereby better preparing them for entry into the workforce. Above all, the programme is sufficiently flexible to meet the needs of all levels and abilities, making clubs suitable for children with learning difficulties and for the gifted and talented. It is designed to encourage girls as well as boys, with 37 percent of current club members being female.