

# STANDARDS WORK FOR SMEs

SME Newsletter – November 2016

## ➤ **European SME Week - Standards to help Europe's entrepreneurs reach new heights**

This week we are celebrating the European SME Week!

European Standards help micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) to reach new heights. They offer a vital competitive edge to SMEs, create a level playing field on which to compete, allow access to state-of-the-art technology and strengthen SME's innovation capacity,

But there is more to it than just being a standard-user: SMEs should contribute to the development of the standard(s) for their business.

"Helping Europe's entrepreneurs reach new heights" is the theme of the SME Assembly in Bratislava which is organized in cooperation with the Slovakian Presidency of the Council of the European Union. European SME Week is a pan-European campaign coordinated by the European Commission, which aims to promote entrepreneurship in Europe and to encourage more people to set up their own business.

Would you like more information on what standards can do for your SME? Please have a look at the [CEN-CENELEC SME Toolbox of solutions](#) or contact [your national standardization organization](#).

## **The following SMEs explained why they got involved in standardization**

### **Funeral services**

George Melas, Director at G & P MELAS, Funeral Directors (Cyprus) says:

*"Inevitably, the use of standards pushes an SME to the direction of improving the quality of the products / services it offers. And it is exactly that quality that makes all the difference in today's dynamic and ever changing market. Quality is imperative towards the long lasting success of an SME. Our involvement in EN 15017 "Funeral Services – Requirements" is offering us an unparalleled opportunity to network with likeminded individuals and has provided us with a unique chance to contribute towards the improvement of our field"*



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### **Tattooing services**



Although performed mainly by small and even micro enterprises, the tattoo market is very large in Europe, and tattoo services are in high demand. Tattoo artists care about their client's health and safety. That is why they have taken action and engaged with standardization. CEN/TC 435 "Tattooing services" is developing a European Standard for "Tattooing services - Safe practice and hygiene requirements".

Andreas Schmidt, entrepreneur of an SME "Body Electric Tattoo" and Chairman of CEN/TC 435 highlights:

*"We, as tattoo artists, believe that even businesses of this [small] size have to have a reference document. We believed from the beginning that there needs to be a standard covering hygiene aspects to exclude any possible risk to damage our client's health. To this purpose, a standard was developed in my country (Germany) 10 years ago.*

*As part of the European Union however, working together across borders has become much easier and tattoo artists are invited to work in other countries (e.g. as guest spots in dedicated events). Therefore we believe it is necessary to have standards that fit all European countries. It is very difficult to work across borders if you do not know what the (legal) requirements in the other countries are. It would be much better and easier if we would have the same standards and rules all over Europe. This is why we believe it is necessary that every national standard and every relevant national document, is considered for the work at European level. This will also ensure fair competition, as having one reference European document will certainly ensure a level playing field and ensure minimum safety requirements for our clients.*

*This is why we started to develop the CEN standard for all over Europe."*

Andreas Schmidt, Chairman of CEN/TC 435 "Tattooing services" and entrepreneur of "Body Electric Tattoo"

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## Solar Thermal Systems

*At Johnsun Heaters (12 employees) exists a strong belief in standardization and the benefits it can offer to create added value for their products. Even before the creation of Johnsun Heaters Ltd in 1982, Mr Marios Ioannides, founder and CEO, had been active in standardization of Solar Thermal systems in Cyprus and contributed to the creation of the first standards CYS 100:1984 regarding Solar Thermal Collectors.*

*At present, the company continues the tradition with certified production control under ISO 9001:2008 (Quality Management Standard) and product certifications under EN 12975 (Thermal Solar Systems and Components) and ISO 9806 (Solar Energy). Moreover, as Technical Manager at Johnsun Heaters, I am currently participating in CEN TC 312 for Solar Thermal Systems as a representative of the Cyprus national mirror committee CYS TC 13.*

Says Andreas Ioannides - Johnsun Heaters Ltd - Cyprus



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## Electrical Installations

With 34 employees, Stagobel Electro (Belgium) is the exclusive importer of electrical material/products for the electrical installer and the industry. The extensive portfolio of high quality products includes cost-saving cable support systems for industrial and office buildings, industrial plugs and sockets', contact material, lightning and surge protection, charging systems for electric vehicles and innovative solutions for the building management and domotics.

*"As an advising distributor of equipment for lightning and surge protection, the range of standards NBN EN 62305 (Protection against lightning) has to be considered as the point of reference. Nearly every day, these standards are consulted to give well-founded advice. We assist the installers and engineering offices in applying in practice what the standards outline in theory.*

*By participating actively in the Belgian national mirror committee TC 81 on lightning protection, we are promptly informed about any new developments. Moreover, it offers a platform to consult with congenial co-experts about certain topics, concerning the interested parties and to formulate technical notes, in which certain topics are thoroughly explored or clarified. Information that is, in our turn, subsequently used to inform the parties concerned. As a distributor, we occupy the role as translator of these standards to the professional parties concerned. We see it as our duty that lightning and surge protection installations are set up in accordance with the current standardization and that exclusively, standard-compliant products are used.*

*As an SME, we only dispose of limited resources. Our presence in the national committee offers to us a vote in the decision process on a Belgian level. On an international level, our European manufacturer Dehn+Söhne, Neumarkt (Germany) plays a significant role in the development of the new standards."*

Says Karel Dewulf, entrepreneur, Stagobel Electro (Belgium)



**StagobelElectro**  
support matters 

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## Additive manufacturing

Jotne EPM Technology, a SME company located in Norway that focuses on data exchange, sharing and long term archiving of engineering, simulation and integrated logistics support data, contributes to ISO 10303 standards. They have recently participated in the workshop on 'Standardization for Additive Manufacturing' organized by CEN/TC 438 'Additive Manufacturing' in collaboration with the Horizon2020 project FoFAM.



*"As our business model is about supporting the manufacturing industry with standardized information models, it is a great opportunity to be connected to CEN, allowing us to exploit new opportunities both in technology and market oriented activities. It also provides an important playground for new research efforts together with the leading European organizations"*

says Kjell A. Bengtsson, VP of Jotne EPM Technology.

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## Solar heaters

**THRIAMVOS**  
ENERGY FOR LIFE

Thriamvos Solar Heaters Ltd is specialized in solar heaters manufacturing since 1995, with an innovative factory in Cyprus. The company employs 12 people including technicians specialized in hydraulic installations and welding as in design of the products.

Thriamvos Solar Heaters Ltd uses ISO 9001 (Quality Management Standard) in order to improve their products and services according to relevant legislation, to attract more customers, and increase their competitive advantage in Cyprus.

To be in line with ISO9001, the company has spent a lot of time and resources to review their systems, policies and procedures in order to be able to apply the standard.

At Thriamvos Solar Heaters they are convinced that every company should use standards because standards provide the knowledge that organizations need to succeed, and deliver it in a concentrated form. Standards can offer a set of powerful tools to make an organization more innovative and productive.

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## Pest management

The pest management industry comprises thousands of small family companies across Europe.



Rob Fryatt, Director of Xenex Associates (United Kingdom) and Chairman of CEN/TC 404 and says: *"For an industry that is comprised of numerous small and medium-sized companies, the new European Standard provides a benchmark of professional service that we hope will be recognized by everyone who needs to use professional pest management services. Having a set of clear requirements and competences should also contribute towards improving the image of the industry."*

*Through this Standard, the pest management industry feels for the first time they can compete on a level playing field with the few large multinational service companies within the industry. The standard is achieving what the industry wanted more than anything: higher quality service and greater business opportunities for SME."*

CEN/TC 404 "Pest management" developed a European Standard (EN 16636:2015) which contains clear requirements and guidance for service providers on how to ensure that they are delivering high-quality professional pest management services while minimizing risks to human health and any potential negative impacts on the environment.

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## Cable support systems

*"Standardization is essential to get a transparent market where our products can be compared between all other players. As an SME it is not always easy to have a large impact in this process, but being present in the process keeps us up to date.*

*Vergokan is a medium player in Europe in the market of cable support systems, with a turnover of more than 30M€. We are big enough to handle large projects and small enough to stay agile in this market."*

says, Gino Declercq - Operations Director – Vergokan (Belgium)



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## Test laboratory - Explosive Atmospheres



ISSEP (Institut Scientifique de Service Public – Belgium) has its specific reasons for using standards and participating in standardization.

ISSEP is a test laboratory for ATEX (Explosive Atmospheres) and for electro domestic equipment. Their main activity is the measurement of pollution of air, water and soil as well as industrial safety. ISSEP does not develop equipment themselves, but tests existing equipment for their conformity to the relevant standards. ISSEP uses all standards developed for the ATEX Directive, mainly the IEC/EN 60079 and EN 13463 series related to equipment for potentially explosive atmospheres as well as EN 1127-1 on explosion prevention and protection,

ISSEP ensure that they remain informed on standardization activities within their field of expertise, such as when a new standard is under development, or made available but they do not actively participate in their development. [www.issep.be](http://www.issep.be)

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## Fire suppression systems



*"FirePro is dedicated to researching, designing, manufacturing and distributing effective Fire Suppression Systems committed to people and the environment. The company, established in 1993, has built credibility by utilizing European and international standards and protocols, which ensures the quality and safety of their products.*

*For FirePro, the relevant standards include ISO 15779 (Condensed aerosol fire extinguishing systems), CEN/TR 15276 (fixed firefighting systems)*



*FirePro became involved in European standardization as there were no existing standards that related to their technologies. Certain standards thus had to be established and harmonized across the industry, which in turn helped FirePro to optimize their technology and safety requirements.*

*One of the significant challenges FirePro faced during this process was lobbying from other technologies within the industry, and very high initial costs, as there were no other direct competitors to help to sponsor the effort. Standardization organizations however help aid the process, offering guidelines and protocols that make the procedure that much more efficient and effective. And in turn, standards help us win trust with our Consultants, Distributors, Partners, and Clients as well as the Government and Authorities."*



Says Rachel Chrysostomou - PR & Comm. Officer - FirePro Systems (Cyprus)

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## Respiratory Protective Devices

[video testimony](#) by Dr Alberto Spasciani

Spasciani S.p.a. SME breathing protection (Italy)



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## Testing laboratories

EKO-LAB D.O.O. (Serbia) performs chemical and microbiological testing of food and food products, feedstuff, soil and wastewater. Established in 1957 and employs 54 employees. Since October 2002 EKO-LAB D.O.O. is accredited according to ISO/IEC 17025:2005 (General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories).

*"We use standards to provide quality and traceability of our testing procedures. EKO-LAB is involved in the standardization process because of the possibility of timely accession to new test methods. Limited resources (especially time) are the main challenge for participating to standardization. Also the translations of standards are very much needed, for which we count on our national standards body (ISS) for support"*

says Mrs. Snježana Pupavac, director, EKO-LAB D.O.O.



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## Electric motors

Elnor Motors (45 employees) is a leading Belgian manufacturer of electric motors. Their core business is developing and manufacturing customized electrical motors for global customers. Elnor Motors uses a wide range of standards from the more general ISO/IECEX management system standards to the more technical and specialized standards i.e. rotating electrical machines standards ([EN 60034-1:2010](#)).

*"We strongly feel that small companies should get more actively involved in the standardisation process since this is the place where all the elements regarding the context and content of a standard are addressed, explained and adapted accordingly. It is also the place where a small business can propose a new standard if they should feel that one which will benefit their field is missing.*

*As in almost most small companies, finding the time to do tasks that at first sight are not directly relevant to the core business was challenging. However the benefits are, to our view, extremely important. Actively following the latest standards enables us to offer our customers always market conform products, it gives us more time to develop new strategies to meet the requirement of the new or updated standards and it allows us to be aware of the state of the art in our field. In fact each minute that we invest in the standardization process in gained back in time and early knowledge."*

Says Esmeralda Forausbergher, Quality/CAD/Design Engineer



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## Sanitary fittings

*"As a small entrepreneur, active in sanitary fittings sector in many EU and EFTA countries, I understand and am confronted to this the importance of standards on a daily basis. To ensure a level playing field for all companies operating on the European market, standards need to be SME-friendly. By SME-friendly I mean that standards must be drafted/formulated in a way that is easily understandable and implementable for the entrepreneur, they must take into account the specific needs of SMEs in terms of, compared to larger players, different business models, the costs of implementing the standards, etc. Only SME-friendly standards will offer/provide a competitive edge for all standards users, including SMEs and in the long-run benefit the European economy as a whole.*



*In my role as President of Small Business Standards, I commit to continue working to raise awareness amongst SMEs and other stakeholders about the potential benefits, but also, the possible limits of standards. My role is also to ensure that SMEs are represented in the standardisation process and, for 2017, I commit to ensuring that an increasing number of TCs/WGs benefit from the input of an SME representative."*

Says Gunilla Almgren - REGAB Reglerarmatur AB – Sweden

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## Small Business Standards

The European non-profit association Small Business Standards (SBS) represents Small and Medium sized Enterprises in the standardization process at European and international level. Their main activity is to enhance SMEs' active participation and involvement in the European standardization process. A CEN and CENELEC Partner, SBS also provides valuable information, advice and support for SMEs. [www.sbs-sme.eu/](http://www.sbs-sme.eu/)

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### ➤ New publications

- Recently published European Standards, CEN Workshop Agreements and other CEN and CENELEC publications as well as future publications: [CEN](#) and [CENELEC](#)
- Scope statements of all European Standards (ENs): [CEN](#) and [CENELEC](#)

### ➤ National SME Helpdesks

To facilitate direct contact at national level between SMEs and the CEN and CENELEC members, a network of 42 SME Helpdesks is in place. Contact your [national SME Helpdesk](#).

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