

## Biennial international user contest reaches 7th edition

The Nemetschek Engineering Group, European structural engineering software developer and vendor, has given the green light for the 7th edition of its international competition – 'Nemetschek Engineering User Contest 2011'. Participants can send in their projects up to 30 November 2010.

It is open to all customers from the larger Nemetschek Engineering Group companies and all projects designed and constructed with software from the Engineering Group are accepted: Allplan Engineering, Allplan Precast, PP Manager, Scia Engineer, Scia Steel, Frilo Statics and Glaser -isb cad-.

This event is intended to be more international than ever, and the contest categories are:

Category 1: Buildings

Category 2: Civil Structures

Category 3: Design of Industrial Buildings and Plants

Category 4: Industrialized Planning

Category 5: Special Projects

Each winning project in each of the five categories and a 'Special Jury Prize' will be awarded €1500.

A professional international jury will assess submissions on originality, level of difficulty, technical level, prestige and the application of the used software. New accents have been added to the categories such as sustainability, ecological footprint and green structures. The 2009 competition attracted 120 participating projects from 14 different countries. The architects of one of the winning projects in 2009 (the Rolex Learning Centre of Lausanne, Switzerland) went on to win the 2010 Pritzker Prize for Architecture.

Participants will have the chance to show their peers their technical knowledge and professional skills. The results will be published on the Nemetschek Engineering websites.

Further information: Nemetschek Engineering (web: <http://www.scia-online.com/contest>).

## Steel bridge design course from SCI

*The design of steel bridges* is a 2-day SCI course (17-18 November 2010) aimed at graduate engineers with a basic knowledge of bridge design who are employed in consulting practices and public/local authorities.

Speakers include many designers and steelwork fabricators actively involved in highway bridge design and thus the course provides access to the latest 'best practice' design guidance.

For structural design, reference is made to the Eurocodes. These standards have replaced BS 5400 and their use is required by client authorities for all new bridge design projects.

The course programme is available in PDF format and its objectives are to:

- Give an overview of common forms of steel bridge used in the highway infrastructure
- Explain the design basis set out in the Structural Eurocodes and the evaluation of bridge loading
- Examine the modelling techniques for bridges, to

determine internal forces and moments

- Explain the basis for determining the resistance of structural members, bracing systems and connections
- Examine requirements for fatigue design
- Give practical guidance on material selection, connection detailing, bridge articulation and support
- Give guidance on design for economical and durable construction

The course fee is £250 + VAT (SCI Members) and £300 + VAT (SCI Non Members) which includes lunch and refreshments on both days, course notes and 10 free Steel Bridges guidance publications, supplied as PDFs (two as hard copies) as well as new Preliminary Steel Bridge design software to the Eurocodes.

Further information and registration: SCI (tel: +44 (0)1344 636 525; email: [education@steel-sci.com](mailto:education@steel-sci.com) web: [www.steel-sci.org/courses](http://www.steel-sci.org/courses)).

## Late payments hit 74% of SMEs

An independently commissioned survey by [positivecollections.co.uk](http://positivecollections.co.uk), the online debt recovery service, has found that UK SMEs are now more likely to accept excuses from late paying customers than before the recession hit, meaning that many could be suffering from poor cash flow.

More than 260 business professionals across a number of industry sectors took part, which found:

- Small to medium sized businesses are the most prone to suffer from late payers (with 74% stating that they are likely to accept late payment excuses).
- 10% of organisations avoid chasing debts in the first place as they are worried about losing future business or simply feel too uncomfortable about broaching the subject.
- Micro businesses (businesses with one to nine employees) are the least likely to worry about debt

recovery as 45% claim they are always paid on time.

- 17% of businesses would try to chase debts but avoid legal action as they believe it will be too expensive.

### Tall Buildings Lectures

The next round of Tall Buildings lectures will be entitled 'The story behind the Burj Khalifa. Building an idea: Materials and Codes of Practice Challenges'.

The evening lectures take place in the Renold Building, the University of Manchester on Nov. 10, and at the Institute of Education within the University of London, on Nov. 11. Among the speakers will be Dr Andy Davids a high structures expert and seismic design engineer Angus McFarlane.

Further information: Jackie Bowles (tel: 01276 607 156; email: [j.bowles@concrete.org.uk](mailto:j.bowles@concrete.org.uk)).

## In brief...

### Bison gets 'best plant' award

Bison Manufacturing Ltd has won the 'Best Process Plant' category at the 2010 Best Factory Awards as judged by Cranfield University. The business was the only construction products manufacturer to feature in the shortlist and collects the award following industry-leading change and improvement at its Hollowcore and structural precast concrete manufacturing site in Swadlincote.

Key to Bison's success has been the introduction of LEAN manufacturing principles and Six Sigma techniques at the Swadlincote site. Using rigorous data and statistical analysis, Bison has been able to improve efficiencies and reduce costs whilst significantly improving the quality of its products.

### CIPS awarded International Carbon Footprint Certification

The Chartered Institute of Purchasing & Supply (CIPS) has become the first professional body in the UK to be awarded the Certified Emissions Measurement And Reduction Scheme (CEMARS) certification. The certificate was presented to David Noble, Chief Executive of CIPS, by Achilles' CEO, Colin Maund, at the Institute's offices in Stamford, Lincolnshire on 16 September.

### European expansion in software

Bluebeam Software, developer of PDF solutions for architecture, engineering and construction (AEC) and manufacturing professionals, is expanding its European presence. Bluebeam has partnered with Bluebeam AB, a Swedish firm based in Stockholm that will support the growing number of European CAD users, manufacturing and AEC firms deploying Bluebeam's PDF solutions for digital project workflows.

Bluebeam AB is led by Björn Wulff and Christian Gren, who together have over 5 years of experience selling and supporting Bluebeam products through channel partners in the Nordic manufacturing and construction markets. Further information: (web: [www.bluebeam.se](http://www.bluebeam.se)).

### Errata:

#### CPD – Changing requirements

John Veares' feature on CPD in the 5 October issue inadvertently contained the wrong 'key facts' box which may have confused readers regarding the new practices being introduced regarding CPD reporting. The box contained the old procedures.

Darren Byrne, Director of Membership and Education, explains:

'A CPD leaflet explaining changes to the CPD reporting process and future requirements will be sent to all members eligible to make a Return with their 2010 CPD Annual Return Form in December 2010. A copy of the leaflet will be available on the website: [http://www.istructe.org/membership/already\\_a\\_member/cpd/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.istructe.org/membership/already_a_member/cpd/Pages/default.aspx).'

### Branch Diary – October

Please note that the Diary was omitted from the last issue due to page constraints. The November Diary should return as normal in issue 21.