



# Forward thinking

UK electronics needs a champion to show it the way forward.

In its heyday, Nepcon was the leading electronics show in the UK. The event – more social than business – attracted large numbers of exhibitors and visitors to Brighton. Times change and so too did Nepcon's fortunes. But it still takes place, smaller than before and now in Birmingham's NEC. The event provided the ideal opportunity for some industry leaders to meet last week to discuss the next five years of UK electronics.

The discussion, organised by distribution trade body afdec, was to some extent predictable, as were some of the conclusions. Panellists, for example, urged UK companies to go after such opportunities as plastic electronics, flexible displays, nanotechnology and alternative energy sources.

Yet the UK is already exploiting these opportunities. Plastic Logic captured £100million worth of investment recently, CDT remains a leader in flexible display technology, Icera is exploiting HSDPA and so on.

What is missing is inspiration for what may be termed the 'foot soldiers'. It's fine talking about the leading edge, but where are the opportunities for the small companies that comprise the majority of UK electronics? What should they concentrate on and, importantly, how can they protect and



**Graham Pitcher**, Editor [gpitcher@findlay.co.uk](mailto:gpitcher@findlay.co.uk)

grow their businesses in the face of growing globalisation?

The Electronics Innovation and Growth Team concluded in 2004 that the UK electronics industry was fragmented and needed a single voice. That issue was raised again during the discussion. What is needed is one body – even one person – to provide the lead. Until we get that champion – along with a grasp at the highest level of the importance of electronics to the UK – discussions like those at Birmingham last week will continue.

Editor **Graham Pitcher** Associate Editor **Mike Richardson** US Correspondent **Paul Dempsey** ([newelectronics.usa@cox.net](mailto:newelectronics.usa@cox.net))  
 Contributing Editors **David Boothroyd**, **Louise Joselyn**, **Vanessa Knivett**, **Roy Rubenstein** Art Editor **David Walters** Illustrator **Phil Holmes**  
 Sales Director **Tricia Bodsworth** Business Development Director **Lee Nye** Circulation Manager **Chris Jones** ([circulation@findlay.co.uk](mailto:circulation@findlay.co.uk))  
 Production Controller **Derek Gill** Publisher **Peter Ring**  
 Represented in North America by **Huson International Media** ([www.husonusa.com](http://www.husonusa.com))  
**West Coast:** Matt Lane ([matt@husonusa.com](mailto:matt@husonusa.com)), 1999 South Bascom Ave, Suite 1000, Campbell CA 95008 Tel: 408 879 6666  
**East Coast:** Michael Andrews ([michael@husonusa.com](mailto:michael@husonusa.com)), 350 5th Avenue, Suite 2719, New York NY 10018 Tel: 212 268 3344  
 Represented in Japan by **Shinano International:** Kazuhiko Tanaka, Akasaka Kyowa Bldg, 1-6-14 Akasaka, Minato-Ku, Tokyo 107-0052  
 Tel: +81(0)3 3584 6420

**New Electronics** Tel: 01322 221144 Fax: 01322 221188 [www.newelectronics.co.uk](http://www.newelectronics.co.uk) email: [ne@findlay.co.uk](mailto:ne@findlay.co.uk)

#### ISSN 0047-9624

New Electronics, incorporating Electronic Equipment News and Electronics News, is published twice monthly by Findlay Publications Ltd, Hawley Mill, Hawley Road, Dartford, Kent, DA2 7TJ  
 Copyright 2007 Findlay Publications. Annual subscription (22 issues) for readers in the UK is £105, overseas is £160, and airmail is £196.  
 Composition by Jays, Unit 4, Baron Ct, Chandlers Way, Temple Farm Ind. Est., Southend on Sea, SS2 5SE. Printed in England by Wyndeham Heron Ltd, Heybridge, CM9 4NW.



**Moving on?** If you change jobs or your company moves, please contact [circulation@findlay.co.uk](mailto:circulation@findlay.co.uk) to continue receiving your free copy of New Electronics.