

MEDIA RELEASE

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DUNKERLEY CHAIRS PRODUCT OF THE YEAR JURY PANEL

Product of the Year will again have a high-powered panel assessing and shortlisting the entries for its 2012 Awards, with Woolworths Director of Marketing Luke Dunkerley named to chair an eleven-strong group of industry experts.

The jury, which includes Product of the Year ambassador Lisa Wilkinson, media representatives and National Merchandisers from the retailer sector, will meet in September to vet the products and ensure each entry demonstrates an innovation in function, design or packaging. Only the most innovative products will then move into the consumer research stage, being judged by 5500 consumers in Australia's biggest independent consumer survey.

Product of the Year is heading into its third year in Australia and Director Sarah Connelly said the program itself is striving to innovate and be relevant. The Awards' latest initiative was to work with leading marketing information group TNS to provide direct consumer feedback to all shortlisted products.

It is a value-add for all entries that make the final cut, Connelly said. They will now be able to hear exactly what the consumers say about their offering and the other products in that category, providing relevant market insights.

Product of the Year is the only consumer research exercise which specifically asks the consumer about the appeal and interest of new products currently available to them. More than 5,000 households take part in the self-completion survey conducted by TNS.

To qualify for entry, products must have launched between 1 January 2010 and 30 August 2011 and be a completely new type of product or a useful innovation, addition or modification to an existing product or brand. For 12 months, manufacturers of the winning products can use the Product of the Year logo on their packaging, promotions and advertising.

Product of the Year was founded in 1987 in France by former L'OREAL executive Christian LeBret and has been exported to 28 countries worldwide. Winners enjoy average sales increases of around 10-15% and many using the awards as a platform in their marketing and commercial activities.

The Australian entry deadline is 2 August 2011 and the winners will be announced at an awards ceremony in Sydney early in 2012.

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