

Designer shortlisted for inventive windscreen design

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A Northumbria student's design for a car windscreen that displays driver information, directions and road conditions has been shortlisted in a national transportation competition.

Oliver Brunt, a Design for Industry student, is competing in London against five fellow finalists hoping to win the Autocar-Courland Next Generation Award 2011 – an annual competition that aims to identify, support and develop automotive talent of the future.

The 21-year-old has designed the Social Heads Up Display (SHUD) System. The concept uses the 3G phone network and Bluetooth to enable cars to share information about speed, direction and location in order to give other road users prior knowledge of incoming traffic and accident hotspots. The information is displayed on the windscreen, rather than as a potentially distracting dashboard alert, using Organic Light Emitting Diode (OLED) technology sandwiched between the windscreen glass to display the information on the screen.

Satnav instructions would appear directly on the [windscreen](#) with speed zone information highlighted. Music players or mobile phone calling

facilitators would be activated via voice command. The aim is to ensure that the driver does not have to take their eyes away from the road at any point in their journey, thus improving safety.

Oliver, originally from Scunthorpe, is currently in contact with various car manufacturers and a German independent OLED screen specialist in the hope of developing the idea into a working prototype. He said: "Combining the SHUD system with the OLED technology could save lives, reduce traffic and decrease in-car driver distractions by eradicating the need to look anywhere else in the car apart from the windows and mirrors.

"The whole idea is built upon existing technology and infrastructure but merges key elements to create a whole new concept that could save lives, time and our environment."

The Next Generation Award offers entrants a unique chance to launch a coveted industry career and is run in partnership with Courland Automotive and the Society of Motor Manufacturers & Traders. The 2011 award is backed by McLaren Automotive, Mercedes-Benz, Toyota, Peugeot and Skoda.

Open to transportation design students across the country, the competition asked entrants to submit a proposal suggesting some improvement that would be a worthwhile benefit to the automotive business on a small or large scale. Entries were narrowed down to 12 candidates who were selected to attend an assessment day to present their idea to a panel of senior industry executives. Oliver and five other candidates impressed the judges following a series of interviews, professional personality profiling and psychometric tests. A final presentation to a panel of industry insiders will determine the award winner, who will win a placement with a car manufacturer as well as a cash prize.

Kevin Gaskell, Chairman of Courland Automotive Practice, is leading the assessment panel in the

competition. He said: “The high calibre of the students we interviewed at the assessment days were very impressive. It was great to see such enthusiastic raw talent and I have no doubt that they all have great careers ahead of them.”

The overall winner will be announced on November 22.

Provided by Northumbria University

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