



The young company Nlisis Chromatography had all aspects of its brand and design strategy developed in one go, because it contributes in a positive way to the image of an enterprise if the visual identity, the product design, and the spatial design form a coherent picture. And as a starting company, you obviously have to present yourself convincingly right from the start.

Text: Marc Vlemmings



Brand and design developed in one hand

THE MELFIT ONE BY NLISIS

A few million chemical analysts throughout the world are busy every day researching substances with the help of gas chromatography. In this technology, a substance is heated and fed under pressure through a glass tube, a so-called capillary column. This is how the components of the substance are separated. The food industry, the petrochemical industry, and pharmaceutical companies cannot do without gas chromatography for the analysis of raw materials. Environmental pollution is also analysed this way. The glass columns, which can be six to ten metres long with a diameter of about one millimetre, must frequently be fitted with a new front part, because this part may become contaminated. And sometimes a column has to be split up in order to catch a certain sub-

stance. In both cases, the analyst must connect a small glass tube to the column. This is precision work that takes up a lot of time and often goes wrong.

In 2008, Nlisis Chromatography in Veldhoven launched the Melfit One, a device that can connect two tubes almost fully automatically within a couple of minutes, seamless and leakproof. This is done by sliding a glass socket over the two parts to be connected. Through a heating process, the socket and the two parts of the column melt together. The company has arisen from a task force created by the Dutch government that was to investigate the possibilities of gas chromatography. A successful investigation resulting in so many ideas for new products, that in 2006 it was decided to start up a business enterprise.

BREAKTHROUGH TECHNOLOGY

The Melfit One solves problems in gas chromatography, but there are more problems for which Nlisis wants to develop solutions. 'More new products are already in the pipeline', says Paul Heere, Nlisis' marketing man. That was one of the reasons why the company invested a relatively large amount in their brand and design strategy. A form language has already been created for the products to come. Heere mentions yet another reason: "The Melfit One is breakthrough technology in an established market where large parties supply the equipment and large parties use the equipment. As a small company, you must try to gain acceptance for yourself in the market. To do this, you need a strong brand that on the one hand communicates that this company works differently from the other brands, and on the

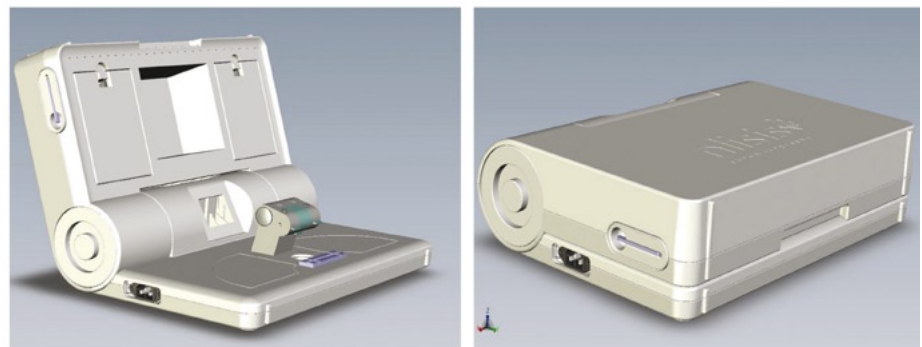
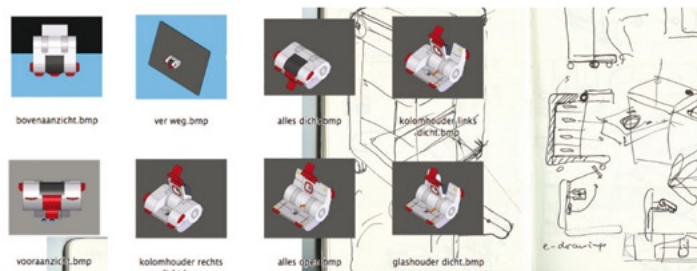


Winners DME Award 2008

The young company Nlisis has set up its initial design management strategy so well that in June this year, it convinced the international jury of experts with great vigour. The company won a Design Management Europe Award 2008 in the category First time design projects, as did Senz Umbrellas (micro) and Vacuvin (small). The city of Amsterdam (NGO/NPO) and TNT Post (large) had to make do with honourable mentions. Quite an achievement for the Dutch business sector, which had no winners last year and now successfully competed against candidates such as Kärcher (D), Virgin Atlantic (UK), RATP (F), Eva (DK), and KTM Powersports (AU). A total of 14 Dutch companies participated in the European competition for organisations in which good design management has led to extremely successful business results. On October 13, the (nominated) winners stepped onto the stage during the presentation of the DMA Award in the Wales Millennium Centre in Cardiff; on October 21 they are expected back in Eindhoven to attend the forum Hooked on Design on Strijp 5 to reveal the secret of their success. Other Dutch participants were Philips*, Robeco* and Hema* (Large), Marlies Dekkers* and Vescom (Medium), Grapedistrict* and Studio Schrofer (Micro), de Socialistische Partij* (NGO) and Powerbrands (First time design projects). Next year, the DME Award presentation will take place in Eindhoven.

*) A jury of Dutch DM experts has recommended these companies as the Dutch DME participants.

DME AWARD DESIGN MANAGEMENT EUROPE



other hand, works in confirmation of the market." Buyers need this confirmation because the gas chromatography sector is so heavily regulated that buyers do not easily take their chances with a party that deviates too much from what is customary. This is why a group of experts from this sector has continuously been involved in the development of the brand and design strategy.

FORM LANGUAGE

The brand identity and form language for the products have partly been designed by Zilver Brand Driven Innovation, Erik Roscam Abbing's bureau. This adviser, who was trained as an industrial designer at the Delft University of Technology, has developed a method in which the brand is at the centre of the design strategy. That was exactly what

Nlisis needed, says Heere. "Erik has set up the entire brand identity and brand materialisation process. The brand has all kinds of manifestations. It starts with the name and the logo, and then there is the product design, the website, the adverts, and the presentation at trade fairs, all of which contact moments that you as a brand share with your customers. We have constantly asked ourselves where we want to show ourselves and how we want to show ourselves."

The concrete design of all Nlisis brand manifestations has been carried out by the agencies Designest and Nandooh, both Zilver affiliates. The Melfit One has been designed by Total Support, Simac, and Faes. According to Heere, Nlisis distinguishes itself from other brands in analytical chemistry through both its multicolour brand identity and the form

language of the Melfit One. "You will not find the curves and circles of the Melfit One in any of the products of other providers. Their products are often cream-coloured, whereas we have opted for a taut white combined with brushed aluminium. This gives the product a high-quality, tactile image. The simplicity of the design clearly shows the beauty of the technology."

Paul Heere will not say how many Melfit One's Nlisis expects to sell. It is, however, clear that this is a worldwide market with a turnover of millions. The first reactions to the new product have raised high expectations, because even before its market introduction, the Melfit One has already received a number of important, international awards. Now, the organisation itself has received an award for the consistent application of design. <<