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## **TEXON SPONSORS THE SIXTH FOOTWEAR DESIGN COMPETITION, HONG KONG**

Sponsored by Texon International, the Award for Corporate Creativity in the sixth Footwear Design Competition in Hong Kong went to Chun Fung Shoes Company. The overall competition attracted over 500 participants who competed for prizes in six categories, namely Men's, Children's, Sports, Ladies' Boots, Ladies' Sandals and Ladies' Shoes. Short-listed entries selected by the judging panel in the preliminary assessment were subsequently made into prototypes by Hong Kong shoe manufacturers.

Started in 2000, the Footwear Design Competition aims to encourage more young talent and designers to devote themselves to the footwear design industry and join force with manufacturers in order to add value to Hong Kong's footwear industry and boost its competitiveness. The event was jointly organised by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, the Hong Kong Leather Shoe and Shoe Material Merchants Association, the Hong Kong Footwear Association and other co-organisers.

Rosanne Yau, marketing manager, Texon International, says: "We recognise the growing potential for strong design from Asian manufacturers and are keen to contribute to its promotion. Our sponsorship of the awards aims to encourage creativity among young designers while keeping them abreast of the innovative footwear materials provided by Texon International."

This year, the short-listed entries boasted unique creative designs incorporating both Eastern and Western cultures. Some of their ideas originated from Cantonese opera, traditional Chinese paper cutting, computer keyboards, violins, climbing vines and window frames, etc.; while animals such as peacocks, foxes, goldfish and bees were used by other contestants as their theme.

According to Mr Y. Tang, Chairman of the Hong Kong Leather Shoe and Shoe Material Merchants Association, Hong Kong saw substantial growth in footwear exports last year. Through the competition, they hoped to continue to attract talent for the design and development of new footwear products for Hong Kong in order to enhance competitiveness in the international market.

Last year, Hong Kong's total footwear exports reached HK\$ 47.789 billion, increasing by 8% from 2004. Significant growth was seen in major export markets such as the UK (+45%), Germany (+84%), Italy (+69%) and France (+52%).

According to Legislator (Wholesale & Retail) The Hon. Vincent Fang Kang, JP, footwear designed and made in Hong Kong has already entered the dominant shoe-making markets, including Italy, Germany and the UK. "The consequence of this success is that China's footwear manufacturers are being accused of dumping by the European Union. However, the fact is that China's footwear products, including those of Hong Kong manufacturers, have been improving continuously, whether in terms of design, materials

or quality, helping to place them in the international markets.”

Prizes awarded in the ceremony included, Joy & Peace Award for Creativity; le saunda Award for Modern Chic; Millie’s Award for the Most Promising New Talent 2006; Fiorucci Award for the Most Eye-catching Design; Walker Shop Award for the Best Style Presentation; China Shoes the Best Fashion Sense Award; Y-NOT KiDS Award for the Most Smart Kids’ Shoes; APLF Global Market Award; Texon Award for Corporate Creativity; Shoemaster Award for the Best Corporate Design; and Staccato Award for Grand Champion, etc. (see attached page for details)

Over the last five years, the Footwear Design Competition has given rise to many young and talented professional product designers with a strong fashion sense. Their work has been presented in major trade exhibitions all over the world, showcasing Hong Kong’s creativity to overseas buyers. The winning entries this year will be displayed in a number of international footwear expos, including “Style Hong Kong · Beijing”, “Fashion Access” and “GDS - International Shoe Fair - Autumn, Dusseldorf”, as well as being featured in the TDC magazine, Hong Kong Footwear.

Texon International is the market leader in delivering high quality, high performance structural component solutions for the global footwear industry, apparel and accessories market and for specialised products in the filtration, automotive, hygiene, medical, construction, agrotextile and geotextile industries.

The company is the largest organisation of its kind and the only one to manufacture cellulose, non-woven and metallic solutions, with production facilities on three continents and selling to more than 90 countries

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