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For the business and trade press

Siemens Prize for Innovation Winner means Aussie ingenuity could show James Galway how to play the flute better

Sydney, May 2, 2002

Siemens today announced the winner of its annual Prize for Innovation. University of NSW student, Andrew Botros took out the Prize for his project, which could change the way the modern flute is played forever. Andrew's project has predicted hundreds of thousands of alternate fingerings and multiphonics for the flute and developed many new or improved ways of playing the flute. To date, 150 years of flute playing worldwide has resulted in only several hundred fingerings.

With Siemens offering prizes totalling \$50,000, hundreds of final year students in the fields of electronic, electrical, communication and computer engineering contested the much sought after National Prize.

The flute can be played in almost 40,000 acoustically unique key configurations (fingerings), and each fingering plays a small number of different musical notes and possibly multiphonics (more than one note at the same time, or chords). In developing this system hundreds of thousands of alternate fingerings and multiphonics are predicted, and many unknown or improved ways of playing the flute have been found and verified.

"Every year we are astounded by the innovation and enthusiasm of the finalists, but this year the commercial potential of some of these projects has been staggering", said Mr Helmut Pekarek, Chairman and Managing Director of, Siemens Ltd. "Our aim with the Siemens Prize for Innovation is promote these extraordinary Australian minds, and to generate more interest in their work from the public and private sector".

The national selection involved finalists from seven states and territories presenting to an independent panel of judges. This year the winner was announced at the NSW Parliament House in front of more than 220 guests at the Institution of Engineers Australia, Fellows Lunch.

"I am delighted to be aligned with Siemens who is a global leader in engineering" a delighted Andrew Botros said. " Winning this Prize may enable me to design the "ideal" flute in the near future".

Other projects from State finalists included new visualisation software for the Australian Defence Force, a suburban area network solution, better management for a power plant using ripple control, a digital signal processing radio, an electronic tag system for hospices and prisons and an automated broadcast monitoring system.

"When you have a company like Siemens which was founded by one of the great inventors and entrepreneurs of the 19th century, developing and promoting Australian innovators comes as second nature. Fostering young Australians with such enormous potential is what Siemens is all about," Mr. Pekarek said.

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