1. BRANI BELT

CLIENT The OrangTiga Company, Antwerp, Belgium: Alexander Koene and Jan De Lancker, principals

DESIGN Clemtone Design Studio, Ronse, Belgium: Clemens van Himbeeck, founder/creative director; Robin Delaere, industrial designer; Geraldien Haelvoet, co-founder / graphic designer; Isabelle Desmet, assistant

MATERIALS|FABRICATION injection-molded Dupont Hytrel (belt) and Dupont Rynite (closing mechanism)

HARDWARE|SOFTWARE Ashlar-Vellum Pro, ProEngineer, Adobe Illustrator
Athletes, fashion police and indulgent gourmands alike will find it hard to resist the Brani Belt, an utterly overdue concept in unisex "waistwear" that blends new-age materials with urban couture. Eschewing traditional pin-and-hole belt configurations, this smart accessory, designed by Clemtone Design Studio of Ronse, Belgium, features a sleek, ratcheted closure system (à la ski boots) that's adjustable in micro increments of 2 millimeters. Its tail disappears neatly and discretely behind its head, creating symmetrical closure. And Brani is durable to boot: It sports a thermoplastic-resin handle, a pliable, waterproof body and an optional add-on utility clip.

Available in a range of snarky colors, from "yellow snow" to "black lab," the serpentine product and its womb-shaped packaging are unapologetically sexual in form, paying due credence to the human anatomy found just below the belt. Jurors lauded Brani for its succinct blend of style, functionality and wit, not to mention its cogent application of industrial-strength materials to the fashion world. "It's a perfect example of stepping outside of existing design boundaries to redefine a category," Lovelady said. Russak added, "When you put it through the paces, every detail works. The design is well-resolved: It looks great, works great and feels great."

Clemens van Himbeeck (left) received his license in product development from the Higher Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies (HAIR) in Antwerp, Belgium, and pursued subsequent design training in Germany, the United States, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands. He authored more than 25 patents for Samsonite Europe NV before founding Clemtone Design Studio in 1994. Geraldien Haelvoet (middle) studied fashion design at the Academy of Antwerp and applied graphics at the St. Lukas Institute of Antwerp and Gent in Belgium. Haelvoet designed for Tricot vem, Publishing Business Houtland, Algoet Th??e and Forms by Chris Mestdagh before joining Clemtone. Robin Delaere (right) holds a license in product development from HAIR. Delaere has designed consumer products, furniture and interiors for a wide range of clients, including Delft Sensor Systems, Vabor NV, Samsonite Europe NV, Philips Design Center, VIZO, Etap Yachting, IPSO-LSG Group and the Flemish government.

>> HOW DID YOU ARRIVE AT DUPONT HYTREL AS YOUR MANUFACTURING MATERIAL OF CHOICE?
I applied this material years ago in handles for luggage (Spark collection Samsonite '98). It's flexible but strong and, therefore, resistant to wear and tear. Also, it can be injected in products with variable thickness, and it ages nicely. Until now, its applications have been mostly relegated to the auto-motive field for protective devices such as airbags.

>> HOW DOES THE PACKAGING COMPLEMENT THE PRODUCT?
The inspiration for the packaging came from the notion of a snake charmer luring a cobra from its fakir basket. We wanted product visibility, so we made the packaging translucent. And, for continuity, the shape of the belt's quick-release button is reiterated in the shape of the case.

>> DESCRIBE THE RESEARCH THAT INFLUENCED YOUR APPROACH.
Interestingly, we found no recent background material of relevance. It was as if the belt's buckle and strap components had never been reconsidered since its basic execution in ancient times. Historically, the belt has been an emotionally loaded accessory.

In the medieval era, wearing a leather belt stood for virginity. Today, a belt expresses both power and elegance. Sometimes it has an erotic connotation. So we needed a strong expression in styling, and its semantics had to be clear. The snake shape was a logical result of "form follows function"—which, in this case, was appropriate since we were starting with new functions.

The trick was figuring out how to incorporate a "hard" mechanical system (the ratcheted closure device) in a long, narrow, flexible product using injection molding.
2. APPLE TITANIUM POWERBOOK G4

CLIENT Apple Computer Inc., Cupertino, California

DESIGN Apple Industrial Design, Cupertino, California

MATERIALS|FABRICATION Titanium and carbon fiber

HARDWARE|SOFTWARE Macintosh, Ashlar-Vellum, Alias | Wavefront Studio
Apple is back and sexier than ever. Last year, it was the devastatingly simple G4 Cube that garnered jurors' accolades for its pared-down aesthetic and intimate scale. Now, with the Titanium PowerBook G4, the Cupertino, Calif.-based Apple design team parleys that same tight vernacular and exhaustive integrity in an area where spatial economy matters even more: the nomadic landscape of wireless computing.

Lithe as a wafer and lighter than your average stack of subway reading, the 1-inch-thick, 5.3-pound Titanium PowerBook G4 distills portable hardware to its bare essence. Judges lauded the elegant, fat-free design for its "control and restraint," crowning it as the "next step overall in laptops."

With its svelte titanium "skin" stretched over a carbon-fiber frame, the Titanium PowerBook G4 combines the satiny finish of a fine accessory with the durability of an airline engine. Inside, it's all muscle. Offering supercomputer performance, the sub-notebook boasts a 15.2-inch-wide screen display, a slot-loading dvd drive, full multimedia capabilities, untethered Internet access and a five-hour lithium-ion battery.

"It's a pure vision well-executed," Lovelady said. "It's one of the few products that over-delivers on its promise. It surpasses what I thought it could do. There's great emotional fulfillment." Russak added, "It's a seamless blend of high technology, art and grace. The closer you get, the more you love it."

>> DESCRIBE YOUR DESIGN PARAMETERS.
Our overall objective was to design the lightest and thinnest full-featured portable computer. We also wanted to develop a design whose identity was founded on a thorough understanding of the materials and processes of its construction.

>> WHY TITANIUM?
Titanium tends to be used in extreme applications where material performance is of greater concern than material cost. No other material yielded the strength, stiffness and thickness requirements of our design objectives.

>> WHAT OTHER MATERIALS AND PROCESSES DID YOU CONSIDER USING?
We looked at a number of engineering polymers, cast metals and a range of sheet metals. In the end, compositing the titanium sheet with a carbon-filled frame provided a more compelling solution than anything we could have achieved with a single material. In order to achieve this combination in a manufacturing environment, however, new manufacturing and assembly lines had to be developed.

Members of the Apple industrial design team include (l to r): Eugene Wang, Matthew Rohrbach, Christopher Stringer, Duncan Kerr, Danny Coster, Daniele De Iulis, Jonathan Ive, Doug Satzger, Richard Howarth and Bart Andre. Not pictured: Cal Seid.
Russak called the MINI Cooper an “exciting transformation of a classic design icon with appropriate modern-day performance.”

Introduced in 1959 to the British market, the original MINI quickly earned a reputation as a pop-culture symbol and a motorsport success. The revamp of this cheeky British classic, designed by BMW Group of Munich, Germany, and introduced to the U.S. market in spring 2002, takes cues from its predecessor’s quirky shape and colors, but with more technological bells and whistles, including six airbags and Dynamic Stability Control. Lovelady liked the car’s nostalgic, cult appeal. “We’re seeing a variety of character overlays to the product, and each gives it its own expression,” he said. “There’s humor to the car. I like the fact that they moved the branding to a prominence that revitalizes its impact.”
This high-performance, multimedia speaker system, by M3 Design of Round Rock, Texas, comprises six interconnected components: two front satellite speakers, one center speaker, two rear surround-sound satellite speakers and one subwoofer speaker. Designed for small rooms, the satellite speakers boast a friendly, animated aesthetic. The speaker housings’ organic form provides a tuned audio chamber, while ribbon-like metal feet elevate each satellite for controlled sound delivery. Jurors lauded the speakers’ maneuverability, stability and computer-system integration, but Lovelady noted it would be better as a wireless system. Russak said, “The base is no more and no less than it needs to be; it doesn’t add unnecessary weight or increase the footprint, and it’s an elegant design.”
5. MOEN REVOLUTION SHOWERHEAD

Moen's consumer research showed that people wanted greater water flow and force from their showerheads, as well as spray options. So to create a unique water-delivery effect, Moen developed Revolution technology, which enhances the water's feel by spinning each water droplet while simultaneously twisting the entire shower stream. The water stream contains larger drops moving at higher velocities, lending the perception of higher pressure. Judges applauded the innovation and execution. Russak noted, "Putting the controls below the spray of water was a unique way to change an old format."

CLIENT Moen Inc., North Olmsted, Ohio: Dan Buchner, vice president, design and innovation; Tim McDonough, product manager; Tom Overberg, principal engineer; Eduardo Milrud and Chris Gilbert, senior designers

DESIGN DD Studio, Carlsbad, Calif.: Charles Curbun, principal; Philips Design, Eugene, Ore.: Mark Snyker, materials and processes; Center for Creative Studies, Berkley, Mich.: Robert Rabinowitz, industrial designer; Design Continuum, Boston: Kevin Young, principal, industrial design; Gianfranco Zaccai, president and CEO

MATERIALS|FABRICATION co-injection molding, hot-plate welding; dial: non-slip material; laser-etched graphics and branding

HARDWARE|SOFTWARE Windows NT WorkStation, ProEngineer, Adobe Photoshop
OXO GOOD GRIPS SUCTION CUP BATHROOM ACCESSORIES

Designed by New York-based Smart Design for OXO Intl., Good Grips Suction Cup Bathroom Accessories were created to solve a variety of organizational problems common in smaller spaces. The products—large and small soap dishes, a corner shelf, light- and heavy-duty hooks, an adjustable, fogless mirror and accessories for holding razors, toothbrushes and toothpaste—can attach to glass, tile and other smooth surfaces. Design features include soft, round edges, fun colors and super-strength suction cups. Lovelady liked the combination of materials and system approach, while Russak admired the unique integration of structural and tactile materials with color, noting that "suction-cup products have come a long way."

CLIENT OXO Intl., New York

DESIGN Smart Design, New York: Scott Henderson, director, industrial design/lead designer; Steve Vordenberg, Allen Zadeh and Arsenio Garcia, design team; OXO Intl., New York: Lorcan Geraghty, engineer

MATERIALS|FABRICATION injection-molded rigid PVC, injection over-molded soft PVC

HARDWARE|SOFTWARE Windows NT, ProEngineer, ProDesigner, Ashlar-Vellum
According to designers at Kompan A/S of Olympia, Wash., Galaxy is a new way of creating a playground, where everything has a purpose and nothing is superfluous. Geared toward children ages 6-12, Galaxy features an open design that allows children to approach it from various angles and stimulates their creativity to plan new routes through the "constellations" every time. Mobile details are integrated throughout, allowing children to interact both with the equipment and with one another. Russak said the system’s attention to design would appeal to older children, while Lovelady commented that it’s "architecturally pleasing."

**CLIENT|DESIGN** Kompan A/S, Olympia, Wash., and Denmark: John Frank, director; Michael Laris, Karin Møler, Lani Wollwage, Claus Fink Isaksen, Hap Parker and Ulla Hansen, design team

**MATERIALS|FABRICATION**
- posts: hot-dipped, galvanized steel
- connector balls: high-strength, hot-pressed brass core with black polyurethane finish and polyamide plugs
- triangle frames, grips and post tops: powder-coated, welded-steel core with vulcanized black polyurethane exterior
- rocking tube and play shells: rotomolded, thick-walled, UV-stabilized polyethylene
- climbing nets: steel-reinforced PA rope
- net connectors: riveted, die-cast aluminum
- rotating orb: roto-molded polyethylene seat, stainless-steel sleeve with exchangeable core of low-friction plastic around a threaded, stainless-steel tube

**HARDWARE|SOFTWARE** AutoCAD, Mechanical Desktop
8. BILIBO

Designed as a children's toy, Bilibo is a simple plastic shell that can be used for a wide range of indoor and outdoor activities. It's also useful as "furniture," for sitting or storage. Designer Alex Hochstrasser Industrial Design of Z?ich, Switzerland, chose nontoxic, durable, recyclable polyethylene because it’s safe for children. Jurors liked the design’s simplicity, noting it would easily appeal to a child. "It’s refreshingly low-tech and versatile," Russak said. "It really grows on you—it’s a discovery toy." Lovelady added, "I was pleasantly surprised by the quality; it’s very well-executed."

CLIENT|DESIGN Alex Hochstrasser Industrial Design, Z?ich, Switzerland: Alex Hochstrasser, president
MATERIALS|FABRICATION injection-molded, high-density polyethylene
HARDWARE|SOFTWARE Apple PowerBook G3, digital still and video cameras, Ashlar-Vellum, Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator
Designers at West Newton, Mass.-based Design Continuum created the Titanium series to bring padlock design into the 21st century—it had remained unchanged for 50 years—and to introduce new segment-specific products. Improvements include a rotary shackle with collar for added security against prying; overmolding to keep the lock from scratching what it’s protecting; keyhole covers that keep contaminants out; a front-facing keyhole for better ergonomics and single-handed operation; oval architecture for comfort; and easily changed parts that allow for aesthetic and functional tailoring to market segments. Jurors liked the product on all levels. “Form, functionality, aesthetics and marketability strike a successful balance,” Russak said.

CLIENT Master Lock Corp., Milwaukee

DESIGN Design Continuum, West Newton, Mass.: Gianfranco Zaccai, president/CEO; Joseph Geringer, senior industrial designer; Roy Thompson, Noelle Dye, Harry West, Maryann Finiw, David Chastain and John Fiegner, design team

MATERIALS|FABRICATION lock components: titanium-reinforced steel; body: stainless steel; bumper: injection-molded ABS overmolded bumper made of low-durometer materials

HARDWARE|SOFTWARE Windows NT, Ashlar-Vellum, ProEngineer, Zcorp 3D models
10. LEATHERMAN JUICE

Jurors said the Leatherman Juice, created by the in-house design team of Portland, Ore.-based Leatherman Tool Group, will give the Swiss Army Knife a run for its money. Available in various colors, this new line of pliers-based, multipurpose pocket tools consists of five contoured, compact tools, including scissors, pliers, corkscrews and screwdrivers. Designed to be more accessible to the commercial market, not just tool-heads, Juice is visually appealing and both lighter and smaller than its predecessor. Jurors felt the new line was a great improvement over the original. However, Russak noted that the packaging was confusing: "They need to do a better job of informing the consumer of the product's capabilities and variety of models."

CLIENT|DESIGN
Leatherman Tool Group, Portland, Ore.: Tim Leatherman, president/co-founder; Ben Rivera, senior product design engineer

MATERIALS|FABRICATION
handles: 5052-grade aluminum; frame: stainless steel

HARDWARE|SOFTWARE
PCs, AutoCAD, Windows, ELSA Gloria 3 video card
11. APPLE IPOD

Apple's MP3 player combines workhorse features—5 gigabytes of memory, or 1,000-song capacity—in a small package that maintains the company's distinct design language. Songs can be downloaded at the rate of about 10 seconds per CD of music, and iPod automatically charges over the same FireWire cable when connected to a computer. Jurors especially liked iPod's intuitive design. Russak praised its "attention to interactive design," while Lovelady commended Apple's design team for "consumerizing the hard disk."

**CLIENT|DESIGN**
Apple, Cupertino, Calif.: Jonathan Ive, Bart Andra, Danny Coster, Daniele De Iuliis, Richard Howarth, Duncan Kerr, Matt Rohrbach, Doug Satzger, Cal Seid, Christopher Stringer and Eugene Whang, industrial-design team

**MATERIALS|FABRICATION**
injection-molded ABS/polycarbonate, stamped stainless steel

**HARDWARE|SOFTWARE**
Ashlar-Vellum, Alias|Wavefront Studio
12. APPLE IBOOK

“It’s the perfect little sister to the Titanium,” Lovelady said of the 4.9-pound, 11.2x9.1x1.35-inch iBook. Designed to be compact yet durable, iBook’s features include a choice of optical drives—the combo drive allows users to watch DVD movies and listen to or burn CDs on the road—a super-high-resolution, 12.1-inch XGA display and a five-hour battery that indicates how much battery life is left. The computer’s integrated antennas allow wireless networking, polycarbonate construction offers impact-resistance, and breakable appendages have been removed to create a clutter-free surface. Russak noted that iBook was “a clearly sophisticated evolution of the original’s toy-like characteristic.” Lovelady added, “I like that they brought a high-end product into mass appeal. The expression and execution of material usage is a big part of what industrial design is all about.”

CLIENT|DESIGN
Apple, Cupertino, Calif.: Jonathan Ive, Bart Andre, Danny Coster, Daniele De Iuliis, Richard Howarth, Duncan Kerr, Matt Rohrbach, Doug Satzger, Cal Seid, Christopher Stringer and Eugene Whang, industrial-design team

MATERIALS|FABRICATION
injection-molded polycarbonate, die-cast magnesium

HARDWARE|SOFTWARE
Ashlar-Vellum, Adobe Illustrator, Alias|Wavefront Studio
13. HANDSPRING VISOR EDGE

Jurors noted that Palo Alto, Calif.-based IDEO's design "carries" the Visor Edge, a sleek, metal-cased handheld organizer. Part of Handspring's Visor line, the .44-inch-thick, 5-ounce Edge is designed to be portable and comfortable, as well as stylish (it comes in three colors). Other design features include the soft-sculpted stylus—which nests neatly into its slipper and clips onto the Edge’s side—and the detachable Springboard slot, which can be mounted for adding accessories such as a digital camera, cell phone or GPS receiver. "I love the minimal use of pure materials," Lovelady commented. Russak said, "The thinness gives it sophistication."

CLIENT Handspring Inc., Mountain View, Calif.: Jeff Hawkins, Peter Skillman, Mitch Huitema and Melissa Trott, design team

design IDEO, Palo Alto, Calif.: Martin Bone, Chris Flink, Dennis Boyle, Dana Nicholson, John Raff, Michael Chung and Scott Whitman, design team

MATERIALS|FABRICATION stamped aluminum, injection-molded plastic, die-cast zinc pen

HARDWARE|SOFTWARE Adobe Photoshop, ProEngineer
14. TRIAX S SERIES

Designers at Beaverton, Ore.-based Nike created the Triax S Series-Speed and Stamina—using Circadium curve-construction technology. Created for race day, Speed has a streamlined shape and tells swimmers what they need to know during race conditions, offering 43-lap memory and water-resistance up to 30 meters deep. Stamina boasts a countdown timer, split/lap display and event counter, as well as 100-lap memory and water-resistance to 50 meters. A power-save mode lets users set the watch to "fall asleep" during inactivity; the watch "wakes up" when the user pushes any button, extending battery life. Although neither juror was drawn to the watches' inconsistency of shapes, Russak noted that they don't detract from the design, though the face graphics appeared to be too arbitrary.

CLIENT|DESIGN
Nike Inc., Beaverton, Ore.: Ed Boyd, creative director; Jack Wilson and Leo Frazier, senior CAD sculptors; Garth Morgan, developer; Ted Helprin, designer; Scott Wilson, creative director; Phil Frank, Aurile Tu, Kamol Prateepmanowong, Jason Martin and Chris Robbinette, senior designers; One & Co., San Francisco: Joe Tan, lead designer; Jonah Becker and Catherine Bailey, industrial designers

MATERIALS|FABRICATION
injection-molded plastic, stainless steel, scratch-resistant polycarbonate crystal, mineral glass

HARDWARE|SOFTWARE
Alias|Wavefront Studio, Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator
15. WOVO SERVEWARE

Designed to bring the look of contemporary, hand-blown glass to an affordable level, the nine-piece WOVO Serveware line includes kitchen items such as salad servers, a thermal carafe, ice bucket and serving tray. The collection’s original forms were first carved by hand and then recreated using digital sculpting for mass production. With its heavy construction, organic contours and unique finishes, the plastic serveware, designed by New York-based Smart Design for WOVO, mimics high-cost tableware without the high price. Lovelady said the product felt very substantial for the price range, noting that "the execution of the materials is very strong and the forms felt artistic and emotional." Russak added, "It’s a great addition to the ‘high design for the masses’ trend."

CLIENT WOVO, Woodridge, Ill.

DESIGN Smart Design, New York: Scott Henderson, director, industrial/lead designer; Arsenio Garcia, designer

MATERIALS|FABRICATION injection-molded SAN, injection-molded clear ABS

HARDWARE|SOFTWARE Windows NT, ProEngineer, ProDesigner, Ashlar-Vellum
16. HONORABLE MENTION

OXO GOOD GRIPS ROLLING PIN

NIKE GET FIT COLLECTION

SIEMENS MB 9100 BLENDER

INTEL PERSONAL AUDIO PLAYER 3000

TELESPREE MOBILE PHONE

BRANDSCOPE LITTLE RED ROADSTER

Palm M125

NETGEAR NETWORKING DEVICES
PERSONAL BLUETOOTH SYSTEM FOR IXI MOBILE

WETNOZ PET PRODUCTS

P&G PUR ULTIMATE WATER FILTRATION PITCHER

SAMSUNG PERSONAL MP3 PLAYER

BURTON ION SNOWBOARD BOOT