

'DESIGN ICON' SUREFLAP IS PERFECT FOR KIWIS

Global popularity for microchip cat flap nominated for Cambridge product expo

Cambridge Scientist Sir Isaac Newton would be bemused to see that a 21st Century reincarnation of one of his inventions has been nominated as a 'design icon'.

SureFlap's inclusion in the Design Council initiative has rounded off a year in which it has expanded around the world and won 'best product' trade awards for its microchip operated cat flap.

The company was founded by cat lover and Cambridge physicist Dr Nick Hill following his frustration with a neighbour's cat. His innovative RFID technology has been used to create a cat flap that can identify a pet by its unique microchip, which acts as a personal 'key' for the home.

SureFlap has been nominated for inclusion in the 'Design Icons' exhibition, which will run at the Anglia Ruskin University in February. Its slim, elegant design is possible because the sophisticated technology requires minimal power so it can operate on batteries. Every aspect of the usability and functionality has been considered to create a robust and aesthetically pleasing product.

This year the company has expanded across Europe and launched in the USA. The latest country to be included is New Zealand, where SureFlap has established a new company.

SureFlap's Marketing Manager, Judith Bank, says: "We monitor visitors to our UK website and saw that more and more orders were coming from New Zealand. This is hardly surprising, as the Kiwi's love their cats, with many homes having two or more pets. However, the large cat population also means unwanted visitors are a common problem. New Zealanders were clearly turning to SureFlap as an answer, so we made setting up a company there a priority.

Alie of BackDoorCatDoorMan, pet door fitters based in Auckland, was one of the first to discover SureFlap and make it available to her customers. Alie explains that although it is a legal requirement to microchip dogs and register them it was only earlier this year that the importance of chipping cats was widely recognised.

She says: "Following the Canterbury earthquake many pets were separated from their owners but over 80% of the micro-chipped animals were quickly reunited. Since then the animal charity SPCA has been promoting microchipping very widely and we think that SureFlap provides an additional incentive to get your pet chipped.

"I started researching the possibility of offering a microchip cat flap last year and have been really impressed by SureFlap.

"Many people shut their cats out of the house during the day and they wander about looking for somewhere warm to go. With such a large cat population it is not uncommon for owners with cat flaps to have unwanted visitors and end up feeding all the neighbours cats. With SureFlap this is no longer a problem."

She welcomes SureFlap's commitment to New Zealanders as it will make the product more cost-effective and allow more owners to benefit from the advantages of a microchip-operated cat flap.

"When we are replacing an old cat door we recommend that the owner keeps it so they can put it back when they leave and take the SureFlap with them. It is the Rolls Royce of cat flaps; once you have one there is no going back!"

Judith says: "This has been SureFlap's most successful year to date. Highlights include receiving two pet retail trade awards, the PATS Retailer's Choice Award and PPRA Product of the Year Award and we were also finalists in the eCommerce Awards for Excellence 2011. This was good to have as it recognised the effort we have invested into developing our online strategy and the team's dedication to customer service."

The Design Council's Design Fund for Growth initiative has chosen Creative Front Cambridgeshire, based within Anglia Ruskin, to lead Design Icons, which will feed into a national series of design events taking place across the country over the next six months. The interactive Design Icons exhibition will showcase 20 of the most important products designed in Cambridgeshire over the last 40 years.

www.camdesignicons.co.uk

- ENDS -

For further information, please contact:

Claire Lynn/ Rachel Holdsworth, PR consultants

Holdsworth Associates

Tel: 01954 202789

Email: claire@holdsworth-associates.co.uk

About SureFlap

The SureFlap microchip cat flap recognises a cat's individual microchip, and will only open for cats whose identity is stored in it. It uses patented low-power RFID technology developed in Cambridge (UK) by Dr Nick Hill, and runs on 4xAA batteries.

Recommended by vets, SureFlap works with all European microchips and can be programmed to recognise up to 32 cats.

For more information visit www.sureflap.co.uk