

Philips-offspring compete with Philips

Two of Anton Philips's offspring are competing against Philips with a super energy-saving lamp. But for how long?

When Anton Philips established a light bulb factory in Eindhoven in 1891 nobody could have expected that two of his great-grandsons, Warner Philips and Frans Otten, would become formidable competitors of Philips.

Their company, Lemnis Lighting, is today launching a new super energy-saving lamp onto the market. According to Managing Director Frans Otten, this is an 'important innovation'. Whilst Philips is busy building a new lighting factory in Singapore, Lemnis is manufacturing its new lamp in Eindhoven. The Pharox as it is called, consumes 90% less energy than a normal 40 watt light bulb and has a life span of at least 50.000 hours. In fact it is an LED lamp that doesn't work with a filament but with a semiconductor which gives light when an electric current passes through it.

The Pharox lamp looks like a light bulb and also fits into a light bulb fitting. According to Otten "the price of between €25 and €30 is quite high". This is why he is pleased that the first production series of 100.000 lamps is being supplied to and distributed via energy company Oxxio. If production levels increase, then costs will be lower. In particular, Otten points out that there are tremendous opportunities for saving energy associated with the use of this lamp. If each Dutch household replaced four light bulbs with Pharox lamps and they are turned on for 4 hours a day, then 1.5 billion KWh of energy per year would be saved in the Netherlands. This is equal to the annual energy consumption of all the households in Amsterdam. According to Otten, it would amount to savings of approx. 40 euros per household per year on energy bills.

Philips is the lamp's main competitor on the market. With his sense of marketing, Otten refers to his invention as being 'superior'. "This innovation is tremendously important because we have developed an LED lamp with a considerable output without using phosphorus during its production which other manufacturers do. Our competitors use massive quantities of phosphorus causing serious environmental damage. This is a problem that we don't have" says Otten.

His company is not afraid of the competition. "If it turns out to be necessary then we will become a big lighting manufacturer but that's not really our aim. There is enough production capacity in the world. We are concentrating on the licensing of our technology. At Lemnis we would prefer to stick to research and development". In other words, Otten would rather make use of the existing

production capacity of a large lighting manufacturer and it would seem to be a logical step to work together with Philips. Then there would at least be the feeling that the invention was staying in the family.

Lamp war

Philips against Philips

The light bulb was the cornerstone of Philips

Lighting is still a core division of the present Philips concern

Anton Philips's offspring are introducing an energy-saving lamp