

# Cheap, inferior problem widening

The issue surrounding cheap, inferior products being 'dumped' in South Africa is one which is slowly spiraling out of control. Diamond Products speaks about its experience regarding this issue in the cutting disc market.



Cheap, inferior products are affecting the local cutting disc market due to the low purchasing price involved in this category. Due to the lack of support and training in this area, neither the consumer nor the retailer has sufficient product knowledge to differentiate between blades of value and those which offer none. The problem is fueled by the low purchasing price, however, the penalty due to inconsistent quality, inconsistent supply and the lack of training is high.

The lack of muscle, desire and resources from authorities makes it harder to follow up and prosecute those transgressing the law. All electric equipment used with water requires

SABS certification – Diamond Products goes to great lengths and cost to ensure that all of its products also carry the SABS mark of approval. Companies who then enter the market without the certification are reported, but no steps are ever taken to protect the consumer and retailer. "We need the authorities to start taking action and prosecute companies that do not respect trademarks and patents," says Brian Clark, a director at Diamond Products.

The lack of action results in fewer companies certifying their products, which leads to cheaper, inferior products landing on shelves. If we add the lack of product training to the mix, it leaves very few

options. "Without some product knowledge, how can a buyer at a retail store make an educated decision?" asks Clark.

This begs the question, if the sales staff in the store have no idea what is important in cutting discs, how will the consumer know? This results in the consumer buying the wrong product for the task at hand.

And combating these inferior brands is a struggle. Companies such as Diamond Products have to invest huge amounts in registering their brands and other avenues. "We advertise nationally, we attend trade shows, open days, do relentless product training and maintain a very strong corporate identity," says Clark.

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## Need to know more?

Diamond Products is a specialist in the manufacture, assembly, sales and support of diamond tools and equipment for the construction, glass, quarrying and flooring industries. Based in Jet Park, the company is unique in its ability to assemble and support its product range and is the only diamond tool company in South Africa with laser welding facilities for the manufacture of diamond blades and core drills.

## Dealing with concerns

It would seem that the general consensus is that all products have a place in the South African market, from cheap, inferior blades to the more expensive blades. "We need to educate the consumer and retailer in the correct use and application of diamond blades," says Clark. He feels that it is important that retailers be educated to ask the correct questions to ensure that the appropriate blades are offered. "We always say that if you purchase a Diamond blade from a reputable supplier or manufacturer, you get what you pay for," he says.

## The Diamond standard

Diamond Products offers the most comprehensive and detailed technical product information on its entire range of cutting blades, ultimately ensuring overall project success by matching the correct product to the correct application. DIY jobs can be carried out to the highest-quality standards, thanks to quality products and technical support provided by the company.

Clark points out that the company's entire range of diamond saw blades come standard with a unique in-store product guide, which explains in detail which blades are best-suited to various applications. "Matching the product to the job is vital, and Diamond Products provides essential user and safety information to all of its clients through

the product guide, as part of a value-added after-sales service offering. By providing this dedicated service, Diamond Products will ensure that the correct product is being used safely, for the correct application, every time," he explains.

The company prides itself on supplying the highest-quality product offerings to the South African market. Clark points out that all

distributors of its products are fully-trained in the various applications of the product, and that in-store training is also available to consumers. He highlights the fact that the company provides customer training as part of its after-sales service package.

"When we sell a machine, we endeavour to ensure that full safety and maintenance training is provided. What's more, official certification is awarded to the client after they have completed the training course, in order to ensure that the dealer is entirely knowledgeable to deal with the powerful and potentially-dangerous equipment. This benefits the entire business cycle, as the dealer is able to offer the consumer the best possible service on the highest-quality range of products," explains Clark.

Darryl Gray, co-director of the company, points out that the company's range of Enduro Purple blades, which are specifically-designed for smaller-scale projects, are the best option for DIY applications. "Although the Enduro Purple range of blades is aimed at a market where the purchasing decision is based on price, the quality of the blade has not been compromised. As a company, everything that Diamond Products manufactures is fully-backed and guaranteed," he says.

The Enduro Purple range of blades are custom-built for use on either a 115mm or 230mm angle grinder, and Gray points out that they are designed

for use in applications that include plumbing, paving, electrical and general construction. He notes that the manufacturing specifications of the Enduro Purple range of blades are the same as all of Diamond Products' premium blades. "Diamond Products is not sacrificing any quality in terms of how Enduro Purple blades are manufactured. All steel cores and dimensional tolerances of the blade are exactly the same as any of our other products," continues Gray, adding that, "Enduro Purple is a highly-durable and reliable blade, which differs slightly from our other range, as it has an appropriate-grade diamond and a different bond, which holds the diamonds in place. This decreases the lifespan of the blade, however, it makes the product more affordable and ideally-suited to smaller applications."

This DIY range of saw blades is perfect for anyone who is cutting building material with an angle grinder. What's more, the product comes in segmented blades for masonry and concrete cutting, turbo blades for natural stone and tile cutting and continuous blades for ceramic tile cutting. In addition to safety training, the after-sales service offered to clients by the company also includes thorough inspections of all machinery on a regular basis, in order to detect any signs of wear-and-tear or potential hazards such as failed bearings.

"Diamond Products is a well-established business that has a strong reputation for providing the highest-quality products, safety training and back-up support. One of our main goals is to ensure that our clients get it right first time when using our machinery, as you cannot put a price on safety," Clark concludes. **DP**

## For more info...

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