



At the Opening Night Awards Ceremony, Peter Cobb, co-founder and senior vice president of eBags, is honored with the 2009 TGA Award, the industry's ultimate recognition of outstanding professional achievement. eBags is the world's largest online retailer of bags and accessories.



Ken White of Landor & Hawa accepts the first place Product Innovation Award for the light-as-air Sub Zero G Collection. The ultra strong and lightweight luggage, in black and red, features a glass fiber frame structure, cubic packing capacity, a 5-year guarantee – and weighs just under 6 pounds for a 28.5" bag.

The 2009 Awards Ceremony

The Travel Goods Show

The Travel Goods Show is the only time of year you can find the industry's leaders clustered together in a single location, which is why it's the ultimate business trip for the travel goods business. It's also the one time we gather together to recognize the true stars amongst us, with the TGA Awards Ceremony.

This year's awards program was held right on The Show floor, as a prelude to the Opening Night Party, and was a great way to close out a busy day of writing orders and seeing what's new. It was a record turnout, perhaps inspired by the record number of entrants in the Product Innovation Awards. Here's your chance to meet the winners.

TGA Award Winner Peter Cobb

It's hard to remember how business was done before we could get online, click and shop. It's been a game-changing development, one so integrated into our cultural fabric it's hard to imagine life without it.

One of the very first online luggage stores was eBags, and co-founder Peter Cobb was there at the very beginning, when everyone was still trying to figure out how to make online shopping work.

Peter is very cognizant of the fact that the Internet has changed our lives. "The other day my son asked me, 'Dad, when you were my age, what was your favorite website?' And I had to explain that when he was born — he's 15 — there was no Internet. We didn't use the Internet. This is something that's really evolved in the last 10 years."

But Peter is much more than an online retailer. He's been an active TGA

supporter, working for the industry at large by serving on the TGA Board of Directors for six years in various roles, including his current one, as TGA's Chairman-elect. (See pages 62–65 for an in-depth feature on this year's TGA Award recipient, Peter Cobb.)

Community Service Award Eagle Creek

Doing good for the community can be as simple as writing a check, but it's not the same level of commitment — or as effective — as rolling up your sleeves and going to work. But that's what Eagle Creek does for San Diego's North County Community Services Food Bank, a tradition that goes back 20 years.

For 2008, Eagle Creek set a goal for themselves to raise 50,000 pounds of food for the food bank, the only one in San Diego's north county, which distributes food to more than 18,000 individuals each month. They exceeded that margin by a long shot, bringing in enough food and funds to provide the



Immediate Past President of TGA Ed Gerch of Kingport Trading presents the 2009 Community Service Award to Eagle Creek Travel Gear, accepted by Ricky Schlesinger.

bank with 86,000 pounds of food.

Tim Ney, director of community relations for the food bank, said "Eagle Creek is a huge asset to the community. There'd be a huge impact on our food bank if they didn't exist." The company brings in so much food they even out-contribute the local Vons, Albertson's and Ralph's grocery stores.

Product Innovation Awards

If it weren't for product innovation, we'd still be traveling with steamer trunks and wheel-less luggage. And consumers would have little reason to visit their local travel goods retailers.

Innovation is the engine that drives our industry, which is what makes the Product Innovation Awards such an important part of The Travel Goods Show, and such a vital part of our industry's product development cycle.

This year brought a record number of entrants to the Product Innovation Awards. And with such fierce competition, this year's winners truly *are* winners.

If these are hot enough to turn the heads of seasoned travel goods professionals, they've got to be hot enough to be attention-getting for travelers.

Third Place: Traveler-ER from Traveler's Supply

Traveler-ER is one of those devices that makes you think, Why didn't I think of that? It's a USB thumb drive that allows you to securely store personal information, medical history, emergency contact, health insurance and personal physician information in an encrypted format. Emergency personnel can



Marcy Schackne of Heys USA accepts the second place Product Innovation Award for the Heys USA BioCase. Made of polycarbonate composite, the sophisticated business case, in black, silver and magnetic maroon, locks and unlocks with a biometric reading of a personal fingerprint, ensuring safety and security for its contents.



Matt Masterson and Pam Emma from Traveler's Supply accepted the third place Product Innovation Award for the Traveler-ER password protected USB drive, a handy little gadget that was designed with input from emergency medical and travel professionals and stores emergency information and medical records.

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access your info with any computer that has a USB port, without having to be online.

Traveler-ER allows you to determine what information is encrypted, and what's not — so you can put pdf copies of your passport and other sensitive info in an encrypted format, but leave your medical information available.

“As baby boomers age and their medical histories become more complicated, this allows one to keep it all straight,” said Awards Committee Chairman Peter Cobb, who notes that this provides incredible peace of mind for people who are on prescription medications and might experience adverse reactions if inadvertently given conflicting medications. “Even something as simple as blood type is sometimes a mystery for traveling companions. For example, I’m currently traveling with my wife and three kids, and I don’t know any of their four blood types.”

Second Place: Heys USA's BioCase

Heys USA introduced a first for the luggage industry, taking a page from James Bond’s playbook with the BioCase, which uses a fingerprint scanner for ultimate security and peace of mind (no keys to lose, no combination to forget).

Fingerprint scanners aren’t new — but this is the first time this technology has been applied to luggage. The BioCase is available as a 19" business case and also a 20" carry-on. Its electronic fingerprint scanner can be programmed for multiple fingerprints, so you can grant other people access to the case if you aren’t around.

“Part of innovation is breaking new

ground, and sometimes it is applying technology available in other categories and incorporating it into your own products,” said Peter Cobb. “The product has James Bond coolness to it — people will ask to see it work, over and over.”

First Place: Landor & Hawa Sub Zero G Collection

As airlines enforce luggage weight restrictions with all the same humorless zeal of Victorian schoolmarm, lightweight luggage has never been more important. What used to be a convenience issue is now a real monetary concern for passengers, as they try to dodge overweight charges. Landor & Hawa is here to help.

The Sub Zero G Collection sets a new weight standard, and it’s breathtaking. With a 28.5" roller that tips the scales just under 6 pounds, the Sub Zero G’s ultra light construction is a new paradigm in lightweight luggage design. “These cases are as much as 10 pounds lighter than competitive cases,” noted Peter Cobb. And that gives you a lot more room for gear, clothes and souvenirs before you hit that 50-pound overweight limit.

The Buzz Award GoToob from humangear


The Buzz Award is TGA’s equivalent of the people’s choice prize, the most talked-about item in the New Products

Pavilion, as voted on by attending retailers and media representatives.

It was a fierce contest, with a record number of new product exhibitors, and a record number of product innovation nominees. But in the end, GoToob’s convenient simplicity won out.

GoToob allows travelers to pack liquids, lotions, shampoos and gels in colorful 1.25- and 2-ounce containers. They’re made from food-grade silicone, with rotating collars that can be turned to position the words “soap,” “lotion,” and other commonly carried ingredients for easy sorting.

The larger size even includes a suction cup, so it can be affixed to the shower and used as a mini-dispenser — no more fumbling for shampoo after it’s tumbled to the floor.

It’s a smart-yet-simple solution to a common problem. And one that makes a lot of sense. 



Chris Miksovsky of humangear, a new exhibitor at The 2009 Travel Goods Show, proudly shows off the GoToob, winner of the Buzz Award.