



Bayer

INNOVATORS AWARDS

Bayer in association with The National Business Review



The winners

Bayer New Zealand and the National Business Review have presented 60 of the country's top achievers in innovation on these pages over the past six weeks. Today the six category winners of the Bayer Innovators Awards, in association with NBR, are named. Judges were looking for people who were setting an example of national and international achievement. **FIONA ROBERTSON** reports

#ONE SCIENCE



PROFESSOR NIKOLA KASABOV
AUT professor

Professor Nik Kasabov tends to get introduced as writer Kapka Kassabova's father – possibly because his field of information science research sounds far too difficult to understand. But talk to him for five minutes and it seems anything but dry and dusty. Professor Kasabov's work involves computer models that mimic the human brain's methods of learning by making connections. As if that doesn't sound impressive enough, his goal is to develop more powerful systems that are inspired by quantum physics theory. His models help extract knowledge from data with a wide range of applications – from

being used by Telecom to predict cellphone use to recognising cancer gene markers at Pacific Edge Biotechnology. Professor Kasabov founded the Knowledge Engineering and Discovery Research Institute (KEDRI) at Auckland University of Technology in 2002, an interdisciplinary institute that joins the research and commercial worlds. He has now seen 20 PhD graduates through KEDRI. Professor Kasabov's standing at international network associations gives New Zealand "quite a lot of international visibility" in the sector, he says. Through KEDRI he hopes to help more companies "find the gold in their data."

#TWO DESIGN & ENGINEERING



EDWARD SCOTT
Vice-president of engineering at Inveratek

It's thanks to Inveratek technology that you can now eat yoghurt without a spoon.

In a few years' time you might also be able to drink fizzy drinks from sipper bottles courtesy of an Inveratek invention, as Edward Scott is about to start trials on what would be the world's first ever carbonated sipper cap.

Mr Scott, who has more than 17 years' experience in plastics design, is vice-president of engineering at the Auckland-based intellectual property specialist.

Inveratek's four key staff met during their university days and have worked together loosely since 2003.

But it's only this year that

the company launched officially.

Inveratek helps companies develop their IP technology and licenses several packaging innovations. It's the sector CrushPak, the pliable plastic that makes for yoghurt-on-the-go, has been picked up by Fonterra for its successful "Splat" range for kids.

Its ProFlow technology can be used in bottle tops that open with a simple twist, delivering better seals and flow rates while using less plastic than standard bottle tops.

Inveratek's chairman is Yale University professor and keyhole surgery pioneer Henry Bolanos.