UPM wins top award for tool to hang posters

Innovative project featured at STEM competition

AN INNOVATIVE tool called Skypatcher from Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) clinched the Diamond Award in the Professional category at STEM Invention and Innovation Competition (SIIC 2023).

The tool for attaching posters also secured a Gold Medal and received a Top 5 Award.

SIIC 2023 is an online science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) competition which features four main categories including for young technocrats, students and professionals.

According to a media statement from the university, the Skypatcher project is by KIK (Kumpulan Inovatif dan Kreatif) Langit Putra under the purview of UPM's deputy vice-chancellor (research and innovation).

KIK is led by Asrizam Esam.

The innovation is designed to speed up the process of attaching posters at exhibition booths and enhancing the safety of exhibitors.

Exhibitors who need to attach posters on standard shell scheme booths, commonly used in exhibitions, often spend a considerable amount of time attaching the posters and there is a risk of the materials falling over.

The new tool by UPM is capable of attaching posters in as little as 11 seconds.

It was conceived based on difficulties experienced due to the absence of any tools in the market to assist in the process of attaching posters at such booths.

Usually, the method requires the use of ladders. However, the large size and weight of ladders make them cumbersome to carry and problematic due to the limited space at exhibition sites.

Asrizam said that besides safety issues, attaching posters at the same height without tilting them was a tedious and time-consuming task, yet crucial for presentation.

"The Skypatcher prototype, developed using recycled materials, can speed up the process of attaching posters by 70% and completely eliminates the risk of a poster falling down.

"This lightweight and easy-to-use tool can be operated by a single person, unlike other methods which require two to four people," he added.

Skypatcher, which has been granted copyright protection, also won first place in the UPM 2022 Innovative and Creative Group competition.

It was developed in collaboration with team members Mohammad Hisham Omar, Wan Mohd Hafiz Wan Baharuddin, Muhammad Izzat Nor Adzmi, Nor Azizah Ismail, Wan Nuryani Wan Mohamed Rosly and Shahriman Hashim as the facilitator from Putra Science Park and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor's Office.

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>
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Skypatcher is the third innovation produced by KIK Langit Putra related to marketing activities. Their previous innovations were Skytider, a hanging tool, and Skyridder, a wire and hanger remover for streetlight poles.

SIIC 2023 is an initiative of the technical and vocational education and training division of Education Ministry in collaboration with SM Teknik Terengganu Parent-Teacher Association, alumni as well as Digit 360 Sdn Bhd, a startup company from Universiti Teknologi Mara.

The programme aimed at nurturing talents of students and educators in the STEM field, as well as to cultivate students' interest in research and development.

A demonstration of how the Skypatcher works. The tool is an innovative project by UPM.