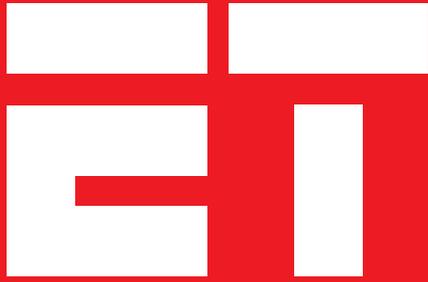


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# THE CITIES ARE OURS

Building smart –  
from the ground up



# Accessorise to suit your needs

With electrical contractors asked to work on a variety of installations – sometimes in very challenging environments – they need to be smart when it comes to choosing accessories. **Richard Rands, product manager at HellermannTyton, explains how innovation is creating helpful solutions whatever the job**



When it comes to wiring, an accessory isn't a symbol of style or fashion; it's there to do a job. Fundamentally, it must save time for the contractor in the field, and it must protect the installation over time to reduce the need for maintenance or repair.

The landscape is always changing. Whether that's due to legislation forcing new ways of working, or breakthroughs in design or technology prompting fresh ideas, the impact is the same – to make wiring accessories even faster, easier, safer and more long-lasting. This applies whether contractors are looking for products for fastening, fixing, identifying, insulating, protecting or installing cables.

Innovation is key, but it must be commercially minded. It's relatively easy to develop a great idea – the really hard work comes in making it practical for users. A wiring accessory is no good if it takes too long to fit, or costs more to purchase than the value it adds to contractors. At that point, it may as well be a fashion accessory.

So, at HellermannTyton, we're constantly looking to deliver products that are built to suit contractors. Below are two recent examples of how our pragmatic approach to innovation is supporting customers' needs.

## Moving towards metal

There's been a big shift towards the use of metal fixings over the past few years. This was kickstarted by the amendment of BS7671 of the Electrical Regulations, sped up by the 17th Edition of the Wiring Regulations and will certainly be tightened further when the 18th Edition is published this year.



The issue is simple: fire safety. Plastic fixings can melt in the event of a fire, causing wiring systems to collapse. Ever since a 2005 tragedy – when two firefighters lost their lives after becoming entangled in electrical cabling – highlighted the importance of keeping escape routes free, the industry has been looking to reduce the risks by making fixings more robust.

The challenge has been one of ambiguity – what actually counts as an escape route? Which buildings should be covered by legislation? The 18th Edition will hopefully answer some of these questions and will force more widespread adoption of metal fixings.

While some forward-thinking contractors are already using metal regularly, others aren't taking it seriously. The key is to make the use of metal as simple and effective as possible.

Metal fixings originated in heavy duty environments like the oil & gas sector. There's obviously a lot of development required to adapt solutions that were designed for this industry, into compact, convenient products that electrical contractors can use day in, day out.

Our focus in recent years has been to broaden the options available to contractors in metal. The range includes coated or uncoated stainless steel metal ball ties (MBT-Series) and a variety of clips. We offer metal fire clips for mini trunking (SSFC2516), cradle mount clips in stainless steel (SSCM8) and coated metal nail clips amongst others.

Stainless steel is the preferred material for our metal fixings. It is resistant to chemicals, can withstand high temperatures and doesn't erode easily, making it perfect for situations where fire safety is a factor.

## Flexible friend

Sometimes, innovation in wiring accessories is driven not by big shifts in legislation and policy but through our ongoing work helping customers to meet their specific challenges.

While we were building a new M-BOSS printer, we experienced a requirement to

mount cables over the printer motor, which had a cylindrical surface. Space was at a premium inside the printer so routing cables around the motor was simply not an option, prompting the business to design and manufacture an alternative solution.

As we had experienced this issue on a small scale, we realised that other customers must have similar challenges to overcome. This led to the development of FlexTack, a flexible self-adhesive cable tie mount designed for use on angled surfaces.

FlexTack makes the process of securing cables to curved surfaces much easier, as it delivers a more convenient and flexible alternative to cumbersome nut and bolt cable tightening. The process for securing cables to uneven surfaces via traditional fastening methods can be labour-intensive, largely due to the presence of bulky components and accessories.

This can have implications for the design of new products, which may need to be modified to accommodate inflexible cabling. This adds further complexity to the design process. By contrast, FlexTack provides a more efficient and convenient way of securing cables to round edges.

## The future is evolving

Today, installers have enormous choice in accessories to make their jobs easier. For manufacturers of wiring accessories like HellermannTyton, the pressure is always on – driven by market demand or societal trends – to continually improve the performance and effectiveness of our products.

Whether collaborating with customers, or debating updates to the Wiring Regulations, we're constantly working to anticipate and answer these challenges. With a dedicated new product development division, we're committed to designing, manufacturing and supplying wiring accessories that are easy to install and built to last, to make contractors' lives easier.