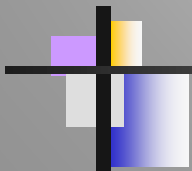


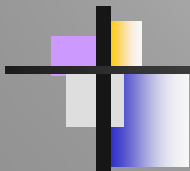
# EFTA Study on Certification and Marks in Europe

Main findings

Chris Evans

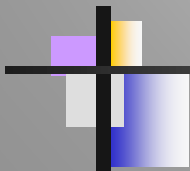


Definition of "Mark": A symbol affixed on a product in accordance with a certification scheme that may operate in one or several European countries. These marks are sometimes referred to as *quality, safety, private or voluntary* marks.



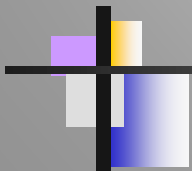
# Study parameters:

- Qualitative research (100+ interviews).
- Based on the certification and marks found on a product from each of: Toys Directive, LVD, MD, PPE Directive.
- Additional studies of example European wide schemes such as the Keymark.
- 5 countries: France, Germany, UK, Spain, Norway.
- Marks on food, or those affixed on a product solely for ethical or environmental reasons were not studied.



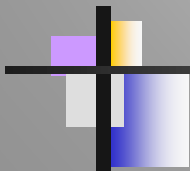
# Certification and marking in Europe is a confused market

- There are several thousand certification bodies in Europe, many operate marking schemes.
- If there is no mutual recognition arrangement, certification may need to be repeated in each country.
- If a certificate is accepted in another country, it may still be necessary to pay extra licence fees for the affixing of the equivalent mark for that country.



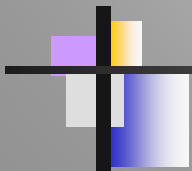
# Manufacturers do not always affix a mark to a certified product

- Industry experts estimate that 95% of (non-CPD) products for which CE Marking applies fall under module A, which permits manufacturers to self-declare the product's conformity without requiring certification.
- Where voluntary certification is used in connection with a self declaration, it does not follow that a mark (in addition to the CE marking) will be affixed to the product since use of a mark is optional.



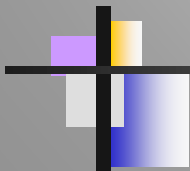
# Is CE marking “winning”?

- For the product sectors studied, CE marking is increasingly the only marking found. If additional marking exists, it is usually only one mark, amongst which the German GS Mark was prominent.



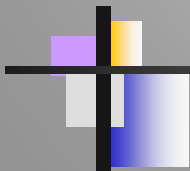
# Relocation of production gives a new boost to certification and marking of consumer products

- Many European manufacturers have relocated production to other countries.
- Certification and marking of consumer products are increasingly used for electrical products manufactured in Asia.
- There has been a decline in the marking of products manufactured in Europe, particularly those supplied to industry.



# Will the big certifiers drive down the cost of certification and marking?

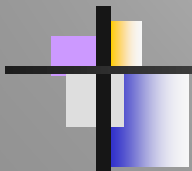
- Certifying bodies have increasingly internationalised.
- Some have opened facilities close to manufacturing plants in Asia.
- This can lead to advantages for manufacturers due to cross-border mutual recognition within a certifying body.





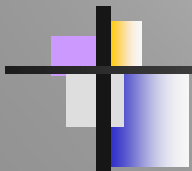
# SMEs hit hardest by multiple certification and marking

- SMEs, needing to establish a brand reputation, may use marks to build trust in their brands.
- Brands already established at the European level do not have these particular requirements for marks.
- Therefore, multiple certification with or without marks, can amount to a barrier to trade for SMEs.



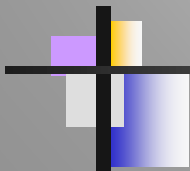
# Consumers and marks

- There is little evidence that individual consumers look for marks on a product.
- Consumers can misunderstand the meaning of the marks they see.
- Consumer organisations that test products believe marks add no value.



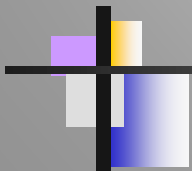
# Manufacturers seek voluntary certification for consumer products

- Manufacturers have their own reasons for requiring certification and marks:
  - As a requirement of their quality management policy which is to have their in-house testing double checked
  - If the manufacturer does not have in-house testing facilities, the test certificate can be used as part of the technical documentation required by legislation before affixing the CE marking



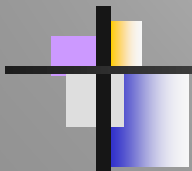
# Mistrust in the CE marking drives certification

- Manufacturers come under external pressure to certify and mark products:
  - The distribution chain asks for them
  - Insurers ask for them
  - Professional buyers sometimes mistrust the CE marking, particularly if it is based on a supplier's Declaration of Conformity



# Is there a future for European marks?

- European marks have been slow to develop. Although there have been a few successes more recent attempts to develop the Keymark by CEN and CENELEC have been less successful.
- A European mark cannot be implemented successfully unless manufacturers, certifiers and specifiers are all prepared to support the scheme.



# ... or is the GS Mark winning for consumer products?

- The study found the German GS Mark on consumer products throughout the European market.
- It was re-launched in support of the German implementation of the General Product Safety Directive but 90% of GS marked products also carry CE marking.
- The GS Mark is supported by public authorities:
  - owned by the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
  - has a legal status in the German implementation of the General Product Safety Directive – although referred to as a voluntary
  - authorities undertake market surveillance of the GS Mark, accreditation of GS Mark certification bodies is undertaken by a public body (ZLS)

