25 BEST PRODUCTS OF THE YEAR

FORTUNE

DISPLAY UNTIL DECEMBER 20, 2004

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Founders
Larry Page and
Sergey Brin

The 25 BEST PRODUCTS of the Year

Of the thousands of new product designs that manufacturers sprang on the public this year, which ones qualify as truly great—and why? Check out FORTUNE's second annual design roundup, which focuses exclusively on mass-produced consumer goods that hit the U.S. market in 2004. (Okay, in our eagerness we did include a couple of products that will not be shipped until next month—but they can be ordered now.)

To assemble this list, a team of four reporters spent months scouring the products landscape for innovation in materials, function, and form—ideally, all three. We quizzed designers, manufacturers, retailers, and consumers. From a field of hundreds, we winnowed the list to about 70 contenders. Then our distinguished panelists (see box) told us which they loved and which they didn't. With their help, we chose the 25 winners you see here.

By Kate Bonamici, Abrahm Lustgarten, Oliver Ryan, and Julie Schlosser

OUR PANEL OF EXPERTS

GADI AMIT, industrial designer and president of NewDealDesign

PAOLA ANTONELLI, architecture and design curator at New York's Museum of Modern Art

SCOTT HENDERSON, industrial designer formerly with Smart Design; now heads Scott Henderson Inc.

MARCO IANSITI, professor of strategy and technology innovation at Harvard Business School

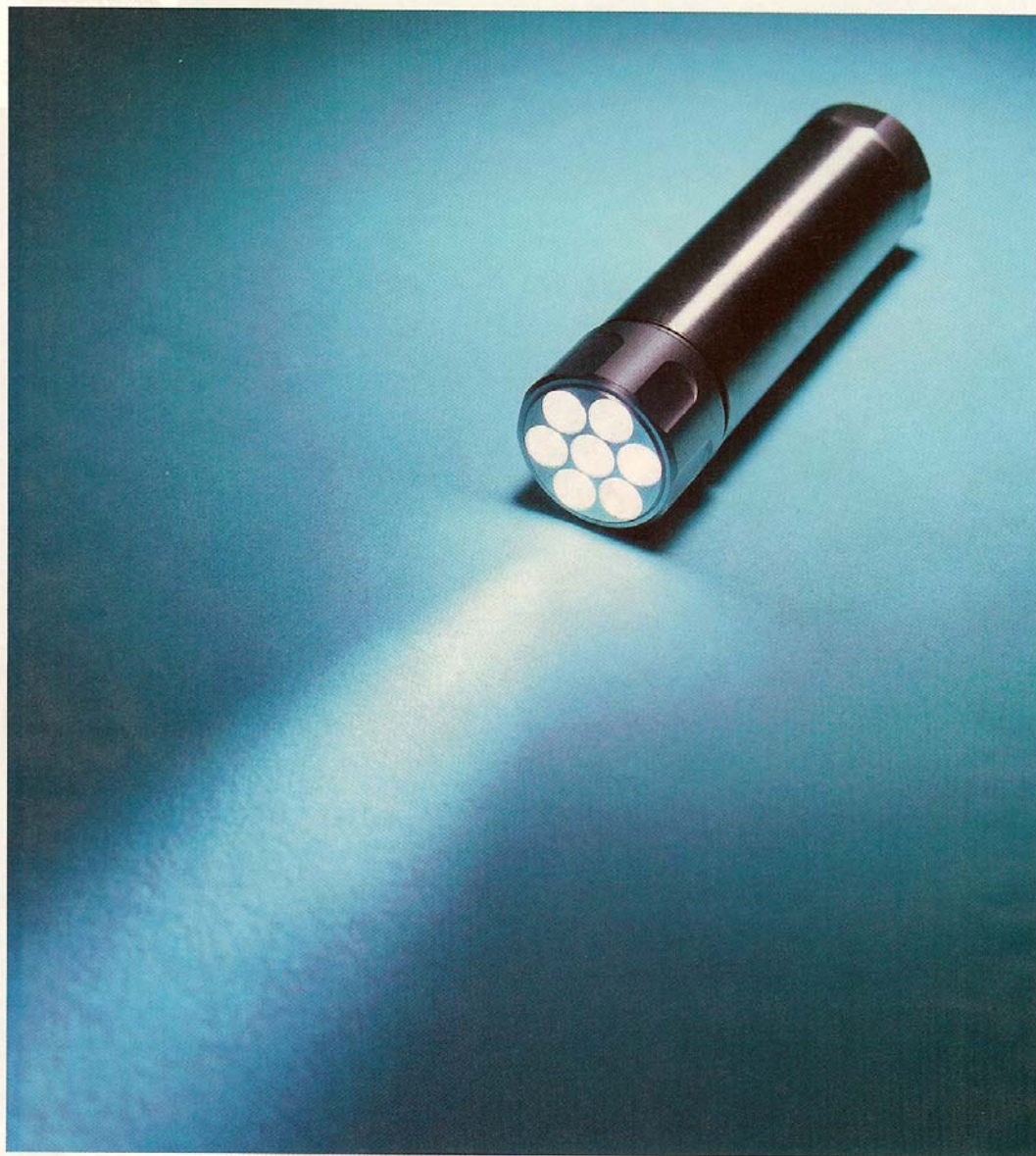**RICHARD KOSHALEK,** president of the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena

PATRICIA ROLLER, co-CEO of strategic design firm Frog Design

CAMERON SINCLAIR, architect and founder of Architecture for Humanity

PAUL THOMPSON, director of the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum

HARRY WAKEFIELD, founder and editor of MoCoLoco.com, a noted design blog

PHOTOGRAPHS BY NICHOLAS EVELEIGH

MCKINLEY 7 LED FLASHLIGHT The little McKinley (shown actual size) packs a big beam, the product of seven light-emitting diodes. And because LEDs can last for decades, you may never have to change the bulbs. "A good use of LED technology," says Sinclair. **Designer:** Peak LED Solutions. **Price:** $55; peakledsolutions.net