

The Queen's Award for Technological Achievement

The blown fibre technique was developed to speed the task of feeding new fibre-optic cables through ducts and pipes.

1994 - Blown fibre

Optical fibre is fed from a reel into a small diameter feed portion of the duct while compressed air is introduced alongside. The air drags the fibre along the duct - potentially over lengths of several kilometers.

The blown fibre technique was first used outside BT in 1986 in a system carrying cables under the runways to the new Terminal Four at Heathrow Airport.

About the Queen's Award

The Queen's Award Scheme was instituted by Royal Warrant in 1966 and can be awarded in one of three categories - international trade, innovation and sustainable development.

The Awards are made by the HM the Queen on the advice of the British Prime Minister, who is assisted by an advisory committee that includes representatives of Government, industry and commerce. Winners are announced annually on the Queen's birthday, April 21, and the winning company holds the award for a period of five years.

There is no easy way to win the Queen's Award. It doesn't depend on the luck of the draw - every application is subjected to rigorous assessment. What counts is the extent to which an achievement in the fields of international trade, innovation and sustainable development, when examined objectively against strict criteria, turns out to be an outstanding performance.