

The Winner

The Volkswagen Piazza, Hatfield.



The realisation of the sophisticated design for the new showroom relies on four structural trees. Their innovative engineering offers support to the entire roofing component of the showroom, while occupying minimal floor space. Relying on openness and accessibility for its impact, the Piazza features substantial glazing on three sides. Cross-bracing was not an option as it would interfere with the aesthetics of the design. Bracing for the three sides is taken up by the roofing component in the horizontal plane. The outward appearance of the structural systems has not been altered in the process of localising the German concept. In addition, significant reductions in manufacturing costs have resulted. The success of this project is evident in the possibility that VW AG may decide to

export locally manufactured structural elements for the remaining Piazza concept dealerships worldwide.

The judges' comments:

"A unanimous choice of the judges for the 1999 Structural Steel Awards, this project illustrates the elegant application and use of steel in a commercial building. Every aspect of the use of steel has been carefully engineered and detailed and replicates the engineering simplicity and complexity of the cars on display. In achieving a consistency of language, maximising the showroom floor space and at the same time giving clear visual access to the public, this project sets new standards in structural steel design for architects and engineers."

PROJECT TEAM

Developer: Hatfield VW. *Architect:* KSDP Pentagraph (Pty) Ltd. *Structural Engineer:* Leech Price Associates (Pty) Ltd.
Quantity Surveyor: SBDS Quantity Surveyors. *Main Contractor:* Bartlett Construction (Pty) Ltd. *Steel Fabricator & Erector:* Tass Engineering (Pty) Ltd