

# What's good will be copied!

We all know the situation: someone presents something entirely new and innovative to you and you somehow have the feeling that you've seen it already. Nowadays, you get this feeling with imitation consumer goods from countries far away offered at rock-bottom prices, such as those famous handbags or luxury watches.

At first glance, these products look like the original. But when you take a closer look, you can see slight or even very obvious differences in detail and quality, but it's too late then!

As a manufacturer of capital goods, we as well are confronted with such practices, along the lines of "what's good will be copied". After all, we can be proud of the fact that our product is obviously so good that even others believe that they can make a success with it. We have been observing this practice of pirating products for some time now in the sector of high volume products such as diaphragm gas meters and meter service governors for the international market. Recently, there have also been industrial metering systems providers promoting existing solutions as their own innovations.

For instance, the measuring cartridges were introduced in our turbine gas meters at Elster-Instromet as early as 1981, rectangular piston profiles of the rotary gas meter were introduced as early as 1999 and Absolute ENCODERS with optical scanning of the mechanical roller index have been in daily use since as early as 1999. So the innovative power of the "pirates" doesn't appear to be that fantastic after all.

The products must certainly be incredibly good if competitors use our development engineers' original ideas and technologies. However, we must ask ourselves the question as to how respectable and trustworthy a supplier is if he pretends to be innovative but is actually only pirating. There are other examples of this, but we do not intend to discuss them at this point. The thing is: an innovative lead and know-how are the real qualities of a market leader.

In the Elster Group, we are concerned with what is really new to advance the efficiency of gas metering and gas pressure regulation. With this, we associate process reliability and manufacturing quality appropriate to the medium of "gas".

If the minute hand drops off of a pirated watch, it is not really a tragedy – it does, of course, have consequences!

That is why we firmly believe that an original is always better than a pirated copy.

But what can we say? – People will continue to pirate our products!



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## Publishing dates:

Three editions for the year 2007