

## Why enter industry awards?

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*Richard Carr, managing director of specialist electrical contractor Volta Compliance, outlines the benefits of industry awards – and discusses Volta’s recent shortlisting for the King’s Award for Enterprise.*

Business awards – to enter or not to enter? Whether you’re operating in a niche market or a major industry, you’ll likely have a host of relevant awards to choose from. But should you invest valuable time and effort in drafting a submission?

At Volta, we believe so. Even if you don’t land the top prize, industry awards are an opportunity to build your brand, gain credibility, and set yourself apart from the competition.

It’s something we learned first-hand after entering – and being shortlisted for – a King’s Award for Enterprise in Innovation (previously known as the Queen’s Award).

Royal seal of approval

Always keen to aim high, we entered the then-Queen’s Awards because of their reputation – namely, as one of the UK’s most prestigious showcases for outstanding business achievement.

And we believed Volta’s streamlined customer portal was a strong contender for the innovation category. Designed in collaboration with our software developer, the portal enables businesses to manage their facility’s electrical compliance online. It streamlines an otherwise complex process, allowing them to access certificates, request retests, and even check their real-time compliance status at the push of a button.

We’d never before applied for an industry award, and recognised that it was a longshot. And, while Volta didn’t finish first on this occasion, our innovation was shortlisted – a fantastic achievement in itself.

The benefits of industry awards

Was it worth the effort? Absolutely! Where industry awards are concerned, the taking part really does count.

Not only did Volta's shortlisting come as confirmation that we were on the right track - it was also a marketing opportunity, giving us something exciting to shout about. Indeed, for SMEs, awards can be great PR, shining a spotlight on their achievements and providing content for blogs and articles.

They also serve as an endorsement from industry professionals, helping businesses to establish credibility. Volta's King's Awards shortlisting shows customers that we are specialists in our field - and that, more importantly, they can trust us with their electrical installations.

And industry awards can help a brand to differentiate itself, standing out in a crowded marketplace. Applying for the King's Awards was no small undertaking - but Volta is now one of a select group of electrical contractors to have been shortlisted.

Takeaways from Volta's first awards submission

Applying for the King's Awards was also a valuable learning experience - one we'll draw on for future submissions. But what were the key takeaways?

Firstly, I'd advise other applicants to allocate plenty of time to the entry process. Many industry awards require that you complete a detailed application form, pulling information from different sources and even collecting client testimonials to support your entry.

It's also important to read any questions or prompts carefully, considering how best to respond to them, and checking that your finished submission meets all the requirements. Try to include relevant facts and figures - the measurable outcomes of your achievement or innovation.

Finally, keep an open mind, and be ready to learn from the experience. While preparing Volta's entry, I found myself reflecting on our offering; the process helped me to step outside myself and see the portal from a client's perspective. These insights were truly invaluable, prompting me to consider - not just what was working well - but what could be improved in future.

To learn more about Volta Compliance and its services, visit <https://voltagecompliance.com/>.