Every day Standards and standardisation make a difference in the lives of New Zealanders. Standards solutions help to keep our homes, buildings, playgrounds, and health services safe. They can also be used to protect our environment and to improve the quality of goods and services.

“We would not purchase any product that doesn’t meet minimum Standards … we wouldn’t want to introduce a product to children that has any parts that could harm them.”

Jay Esser, Director, JAYZ International

JAYZ International imports toys and puzzles that stimulate the brain and encourage young minds to think. When director Jay Esser talks to manufacturers, Standards are at the top of his mind.

“We would not purchase any product that doesn’t meet minimum Standards”, says Jay. “We always seek to know that products have been tested before we would even consider importing them. We wouldn’t want to introduce a product to children that has any parts that could harm them, or paint that has lead, or any moveable part that could break off.”

JAYZ imports mainly from the USA and sells to major retailers such as Toyworld, PaperPlus, and Whitcoulls, as well as independent specialty retailers. Wooden toys are their best sellers, with the What’zit, a manipulative toy painted in many colours, being the most popular. It meets all European and USA Standards, which are rigorous for painting and ongoing testing. Testing occurs not only at the onset of production, but on a continual basis to ensure that future batches meet requirements.

Jay is considering importing a new product line, which will come under EN 71 Parts 1 to 4. This means that every product in that line will have to meet both New Zealand and Australian Standards. Jay believes that Standards offer a level playing field for companies like his and ensure that only safe products are imported and sold.
'I’m sure that many of the toys that I played with as a child were painted with lead, not that we necessarily put those toys in our mouths, but there wasn’t any of the testing for lead that there is today. Even though lead paint is no longer used, there’s still a need to test for it to be sure.'

Jay began his importing business 22 years ago after a trip to Chicago to visit friends. They told him about ‘The 24 Game’, a new maths tool that was being used in schools. It became his first foray into importing and the business has expanded considerably since those early days. Today JAYZ International is New Zealand’s leading importer and distributor of educational resources and mentally stimulating games, puzzles, and toys for the entire family.

JAYZ supplies products to New Zealand schools, educational institutions, teaching colleges, toy and game retailers, museums, zoos, plus many other specialist retailers, concerned about the education and future of New Zealand children.

‘It’s very important that New Zealanders get behind and get involved with Standards’, says Jay. ‘We need them as part of our growing economy. Consumers too are becoming more aware of their importance and I think that’s very healthy.’