

Builder claims Chris's home as its own design

CELEBRATED Noosa-based building designer Chris Clout has accused a Gold Coast builder of using his national award-winning home to publicise its business without his permission.

Mr Clout, who collected the overall 2009 National Design Excellence Award in April for the Japanese-inspired home, said yesterday that iwantthathome.com.au lifted the design and represented it as its own in its company brochure.

He said family-run iwantthathome.com.au, part of the Yarker Corporation, was in breach of the Fair Trading Act 1989.

He said he had sent a letter to the company telling it to pull the picture from the brochure or face legal action.

"It's misleading. People will think, 'That looks like a cutting-edge design, let's go see these guys and get that,'" he said.

"What are they going to say, 'We didn't actually do that - it's a national design award winner'?"

Mr Clout, 26, won the Best New Home (350-450sq m) at

the national awards with the Japan House before collecting the overall award.

He doubted the company would be able to reproduce the home, if that was its intention.

"Everything we did in that house is custom designed by myself," he said.

Lisa Yarker, creative director of iwantthathome.com.au, denied the company intentionally set out to misrepresent itself by using Mr Clout's design and had since removed the photograph from its website.

She said she bought the photo, along with many others, from US-based firm iStockphoto.

This firm promotes itself as the world's leading royalty-free stock multimedia firm.

"It's definitely an issue with iStock. They say they're royalty-free photos," Ms Yarker said.

The US firm iStock could not be reached for comment yesterday.



DESIGN THIS: Noosa building designer Chris Clout threatened legal action when he found another company was claiming his house design as its own.

PHOTO: GEOFF POTTER/N235K3