

We all know about the technological revolution — it has brought us inexpensive calculators, affordable word processors, energy efficient buildings, and in our own industry, the memory lighting control desk. Until now, that technology had passed the dimmer by. Few people have thought to ask more of their dimmers than that they sit in the dark, hum quietly to themselves and bring the lights up when instructed.

But at Strand we asked ourselves what benefits could be gained if we applied sophisticated technology to dimmers: what advantages could it give you the designer, the technician, the lighting professional? The answer is presented in the following introduction to...

LIGHTS!
EXTRA

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EC90

THE FIRST MAJOR ADVANCE IN DIMMING TECHNOLOGY SINCE THE THYRISTOR

This summer will see the official launch and availability of EC90, the first ever attempt to bring the full benefits of digital technology to that old reliable workhorse — the dimmer. Why? you ask. My old dimmers work perfectly well...they make the lights go up and down, don't they? Yes, and your old turntable played your records but provided a bit of snap, crackle and pop along with the music. And your old watch kept the time — provided you didn't ask for it to be too precise. But the compact disc player has significantly improved the sound quality of music through digital recording and playback, and the quartz crystal in a watch means no winding or adjusting the time once a week.

The obvious conclusion is that digital technology could actually provide the lighting professional with a better dimmer.

EC90 also expands the meaning of the phrase, 'integrated lighting system'. Bi-directional communication operating between EC90 and Galaxy means the two together provide far greater benefits than either operating individually.

FIRST, A BETTER DIMMER

Digital processing in the control desk



Strand Lighting

has been on offer for several years now. More recently, digital protocols have provided communication between the control and dimmers.

Some of the benefits of the application of digital technology to these first two areas have been flexibility, reduced installation costs and simpler control of large numbers of channels. By extending the principles of digital technology into the heart of the dimmer, the firing circuit, we can apply these improvements to new areas. Some of the basic improvements to performance you can expect from the dimmer are as follows:

Speed of Response

Because digital circuitry in the dimmer permits faster response than analogue, luminaires controlled by EC90 dimmers can react more quickly to commands. Chases can run faster, Instant-On really is, and Bump-to-Full actually does.

Stability

The crystal controlled firing circuit in EC90 ensures that dimmers will not drift over time or with temperature variation. There are no potentiometers to trim or adjust. The output curve of the dimmer will remain constant throughout its life without maintenance.