

# INSIDE CI



**Standby for a solid CI 'facting' now as SVI's ear to the industry ground and omnipresent install expert DAVE 'Gannin oop the Grove' SLATER once more takes us deep INSIDE CI...**

There is one thing that I will never get use to and that is the first train of the day, 5:30am is a stupid hour to be doing anything (There's a 5.30 in the morning too? – Ed). Here I am on another train catching up on my article after a gentle nudge from the boss. The old calendar has been rather full of late and it feels like I have been to every show with any amount of tech on display. This month it was the turn of the *Gadget Show Live Professional*, which was a strange old show with more for the consumer than the installer. It's still worth a visit and if you look hard you can find the odd gem or two, one stand that caught my eye this time was the shared stand from Robson Acoustics and Revere London, with a £94k Range Rover Sport and a pair of zebra skin speakers side-by-side it drew me over to have a listen. I've had aural experience of a pair of Robson Acoustic speakers before – I love their tonal range – and these slightly over-the-top zebra-skinned variety did not disappoint.

## Let There Be Light

Back to the real world and DSE are busy on a couple of lighting projects. I love lighting – it has completely been missed by internet trashing; yes you can buy fittings on-line but lighting design is key to a good lighting job. We have just finished a nice commercial set-up in London and, whilst trying out new ideas with light fittings can sometimes be dangerous, I think we pulled this one off. The restaurant has a mix of AR111 tungsten lamps running off a Lutron panel. I still love the colour temp of tungsten when dimmed to 45%, so marry this with a LED strip hidden behind large sheets of mirror firing onto the fabric walls and you start to get a soft cosy look to the place.

Good lighting is vital to most good designs – if you are covering the walls in expensive material it needs to be lit, as a shimmering of light will change the whole effect. I usually get into trouble with my friends when eating out, as I am very critical of bad lighting, usually noticing the quality of lighting over the quality of food. So one nice effect we always use in restaurants is to light the glass shelves holding all the spirit bottles, as colour change, if it is used correctly, works a treat. Naturally, it should not be like a sad 70s disco, changing at an epileptic-attack inducing superfast pace, but should flow smoothly and gently between colours, leaving you wondering if the wall was actually blue or green the last time you ordered a drink.

A big no-no is seeing the source of the light; lighting should be creating an effect working with its surroundings, blending in. We used the odd pendant



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Apps You Like It at the Gadget Show Live



fitting over the dark booths, but specify nice glass lamps with triple filaments and set them to around 40% brightness – just enough to take the glare off the lamp and to give a pale yellow colour temperature. The shades we used were deep in colour to let very little light penetration through them. We also decided to go with Lutron panels on this job due to the client having experience of them, with the slow ramped start and shut off, you will get far more hours of life out of your tungsten lamps, which is so important in a commercial install.

## Cool Kit & Caboodle

So what is new and worth a look at? Well, Control4 has brought out an upgrade to their software and we are now up to version 2.4. The upgrade adds 3G /4G support and simplifies the network setup. The Control4 OS 2.4 also delivers native support for Tuneln in the Control4 UI on HC-800 and HC-250 controllers, adding over 70,000 streaming internet radio stations. This means you can get music, sport, news and podcasts from around the world without searching for URLs. The new software update also powers the freshly released Control4 Remote Recharging Station. Designed as a quick, simple and easy retrofit for existing SR-150 and SR-250 System Remote Controls, the Remote Recharging Station includes a sleek unit, a replacement battery cover with charging pins, and a lightweight, high-power-density rechargeable lithium polymer battery. This is a nice addition to the line-up, as there is nothing worse than scrapping around for batteries to turn on your TV.

Another cool product I stumbled upon from a company called LampLed was their range of LED strips and profiles. I have always found it a pain to stick down LED strip and most strips come with adhesive tape, but within a short time it stops sticking and you get parts of the tape rising above the cabinets. LampLed have the perfect solution with a range of metal profiles that you fix to the surface then drop the LED strip into it, you have options for clear or opaque depending on how subtle you want the LED light to be. LampLed also supply other crimp on leads and right angle joints to make connections easy between strips. If LED and good looking LED fittings are your thing, then the QIS range, also supplied by LampLed, would be worth a look; the design is funky and the light output is superb. You can check out the full range over at [www.lampled.co.uk](http://www.lampled.co.uk).

## Tech, No Prisoners

So what's next in the Slater Calendar? Well, *INSIDE CI* is proud to be media partners of the *Home Technology Showcase* organised by Invision UK. The event is held on the 14th -15th May at Epsom Downs Racecourse in Surrey and is free to attend. Over the two days you can see all the latest technology on offer from JVC, Aquavision, LG, Wyrestorm, RTI, Elan and many more Invision UK brands. With the technical support staff on hand it will be a great chance to ask your questions on real world problems. You can find more info over at <http://www.hometechnologyshowcase.com>.

Well, here I am pulling into my station, so that was good timing, see you next month!

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