

INSIDE CI



The busiest man in install, DAVE SLATER, takes another monthly five minute breather to bring us up to speed on everything Inside CI...

It has been another busy month of travelling up and down the country, taking in everything CI. I feel I must be the best-trained installer in the country now having attended yet another selection of courses, blending into the crowd with my *Inside CI* hat on. I was invited to the THX course being held at JVC HQ in London; and it's brilliant! If you think you know everything about calibration, you are sadly wrong. I found that there were brand new techniques which I could implement when out on-site that would help me through the process of calibrating the latest screen. In the training there were four to five screens from various manufacturers for attendees to play with, and it's very surprising to see how the different screens behave when hooked up to the calibration software.

Next up in the diary was a short train journey to attend the Wyrestorm training; Wyrestorm have introduced a number of new products of late that will appeal to all. On display was the new modular matrix, which is available in 8x8 and 16x6 variations, with built-in PoH (Power-over-HDBaseT – the latest evolution of PoE) and routable RS232 functionality. Installers can create a completely customised matrix with this, selecting from eight modular multi-format transmission cards, including VGA, DVI, HDMI, analogue audio, digital audio, all built to your specifications and delivered to your door! The world's first HDBaseT class D digital audio amplifier was another interesting product on display – I can see us using this on screen installs to boost the sound and take the control from the onboard TV speakers. We have also in the past found it difficult to locate a beefy amp in a slim hang on the wall cabinet installation, but I think this little beauty will tick all the boxes.

The course is well structured, allowing for time after the theory sessions to get your hands dirty on setting up a distribution network.

Snap Happy

After so much work it was time to party, with of course the annual *CEDIA Awards*. This year was slightly different for me however as *Inside CI* had the important job of filming the whole awards ceremony, so I could no longer get smashed on free wine! I have to say "wow!" – I loved every minute of it. The *Awards* are so well put together and it's not until you get involved behind the scenes that you realise how good a job all the team from Wildwood and CEDIA do.

The event was hosted by technology broadcaster Emma Barnett and sponsored by AMX, Control 4, Crestron, Kaleidescape and Rako, celebrating the best in system design, installation and integration in the home technology sector. We had a two camera setup based around Canon's brilliant technology and as a gadget man I just love this type of kit. With screen technology jumping up a couple of notches it's always good to see source recording kit this good. Though I am not too sure that I enjoyed the 30 hours of post-production and rendering with file sizes in Gigs not Megs! But, anyway a brilliant time was had by all – rarely do you get time to see everybody from the industry gathered under one roof, and it was great to catch up with all my friends and colleagues.



Tottenham Hotspot

So, with no rest for the wicked, I was off to The House of The Future next, which is a show apartment just off Tottenham Court Road. This London property has been kitted out with some of the finest tech you will ever see – I love the £10k tap that makes you whatever variant of coffee you desire! The whole apartment has a James Bond feel as, at a touch of a button, screens are revealed, seating rotates and sound systems kick in. There is some amazing tech in this house – the bar area is fully kitted and the drinks glasses are fitted with electronic chips that send messages to the bar to say the drink needs replenishing. The only possible downside to this is: who is going to man the bar in my house?

The design elements to the place are truly amazing and never once do you feel you are in a basement apartment. The lighting design carries off the perfect job of creating the effect of sunlight streaming through roof lights and false windows, and with the added touch of colour change you can alter the whole feel of the room.

The innovations in technology don't stop at the electronic toys, as the kitchen has worktops that have the appearance and toughness of granite, but are made out of recycled paper costing around £250 a square metre. The attention to detail is not just in the items on show either, the guys at Cornflake took me behind the scenes to look at the equipment room where the kit is laid out across four large racks with every termination and every radius within millimetres of each other – a truly impressive installation work at its best, and the installer showing me it was so proud of their work.

High Fibre Diet

Finally then, what's interesting in the news? Well I like the idea that BT have announced that it is to roll-out super-fast 300 Mbps fibre. With a projected 100,000 premises which could benefit from this technology, maybe I should not be getting too excited yet for an upgrade to my connection. BT have also announced the new home hub 5, the next generation modem router that's due to be in our hands later this year, offering Gigabit Ethernet ports and an integrated VDSL Modem. This is a significant change for BT Infinity users as you will no longer need the secondary white modem which is currently used.

That's me signing off to another busy month; see you in August after a week off in the sun!

Dave Slater is MD of DSE Group, incorporating DSE DIGITAL.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

+44 (0)1914 914 141 dave@dsegroup.co.uk www.dsegroup.co.uk

