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Artistic Licence and G-LEC embrace the RDM standard at LDI

One of the first inter-manufacturer RDM systems was seen at the LDI 2004 show in Las Vegas. British control manufacturer Artistic Licence provided German G-LEC's stand with its architectural control system Colour-Tramp, controlling G-LEC's new LightFrame transparent LED display.

After a lengthy development period led by ESTA, RDM, standing for Remote Device Management, is now so far advanced that it is possible for equipment from different manufacturers to successfully communicate with each other. "This is a major step forward for lighting control. Our customers can now see the power of RDM and the benefits they will receive," comments Wayne Howell, Managing Director of Artistic Licence.

RDM has been developed to meet increasing demands to control increasingly large and complex devices. "The DMX512 standard was really only developed with controlling dimmers in mind" observes Peter Ed, "at that time there just wasn't much of a need for systems bigger than 512 dimmers, or even dimmers that reported back to the control system".

Today, RDM provides the possibility to intelligently control devices with many parameters, such as moving lights and LED displays in a time saving and efficient way. "Just being able to patch a whole rig of moving lights or a whole wall with hundreds of LED sources automatically, without leaving the control desk, must make most producers sit up and pay attention" muses Howell. The automatic patching does however take a couple of minutes, enabling the operator to fetch a cup of tea!

RDM doesn't stop with just patching though. Fixture personalities can be controlled and operating parameters such as temperature, etc. can be reported back to the control system.

For devices such as G-LEC's LightFrame, RDM offers a real benefit. G-LEC equipment is often used in very large circumstances, for instance backing a stage or TV studio, on motor shows or even hanging off skyscraper walls! "The ability to patch and set personality of each individual LightFrame once the system is up and running, could be a real life-saver" adds Peter Ed; "also, the ability to change personalities dynamically by the control system, adds another creative tool to the designer".

Colour Tramp is Artistic Licences' flagship architectural control system, designed to give the designer the tools to "paint" in 2D and even 3D on the control screen. "It won't be too long before we are all laughing about the good old days when we had to patch each fixture manually!", adds Howell.

With the final release of the RDM specification due to be released soon, expect a great demand from manufacturers with the forethought to have prepared their products for this new standard, poised to take over where DMX512 began!

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