



LIGHTING CONTROL

In Our Experience: what's possible & effective

Once upon a time, lighting controls (or intelligent lighting systems) were mainly used for the creation of attractive 'mood' lighting. As such, they had somewhat luxury air to them. However, everything has moved on now, and the technology behind intelligent control has become central to today's energy efficient world: unlike the humble rotary dimmer on the wall a bulb running at 50% brightness on a Lutron system, for instance, will save almost 50% of its energy.

We do not design lighting schemes: we leave the selection of lamps and positions to the client, architect or dedicated lighting designer. However, we specify, install and programme the systems that make them produce not only the required light levels but also to make them flash garden lights in the event of a burglary, or play music at the flip of a switch or shut down the whole house when you turn on the burglar alarm.

Today's lighting control systems produce not just pretty mood lighting but a host of ancillary benefits and we can show you a return on your investment in them within 3 years (on today's energy prices).

Some Fundamentals:

- **Not Necessarily Technical:** we have installed intelligent lighting systems which are operated from standard 'toggle' light-switches. As such when you use the toggle switch it triggers a preset scene and affords all the energy saving benefits, the ability to turn off all the house lights from one place and the security of the alarm integration. And all of this can happen from plates that do not look out of place on 17th century oak panelling.
- **Regulatory Change in Lighting:** as the old tungsten, incandescent lamp is mandated out of existence by the EU we are entering the world of LED and curly Compact Fluorescent replacements. These technologies are much harder to dim than their predecessors but with the use of an intelligent lighting system you can overcome this and be sure to be set-up for any future energy-saving bulb innovations.
- **The Guest Test:** in the past intelligent lighting systems have got a bad name for their inscrutable controls. We believe with lighting, as with all technology, that it should be presented as clearly and intuitively as possible. In other words a guest should be able to come to your house for the first time and be able to use their lights without special instruction. Through the use of toggle switches or carefully engraved plates and by reducing the buttons to a select few (with more sophisticated functions available through double-press features for those who are aware that they are there) we can simplify yet offer enormous control.
- **Retro-Fit:** although there are certain technologies from the likes of Lutron which allow a degree of retro-fitting the full suite of advantages of intelligent lighting systems are only available if it is designed in during re-wiring. It is best to involve a specialist at the earliest planning stages to ensure that you get the key benefits.

Things to bear in mind when evaluating this technology

- Which lighting system to use: Lutron, Dyalite etc
- Is Lutron's Grafik Eye scheme sufficient? Upgrading to Homeworks is often a better economic choice
- Identify clearly the lighting designer for the aesthetic angle
- Who will control and issue the load schedule?
- Patterns of usage in the house are vital to planning an energy efficient scheme
- Careful preparation of schematics is vital due to extra cabling required by DALI, 0-10v etc loads