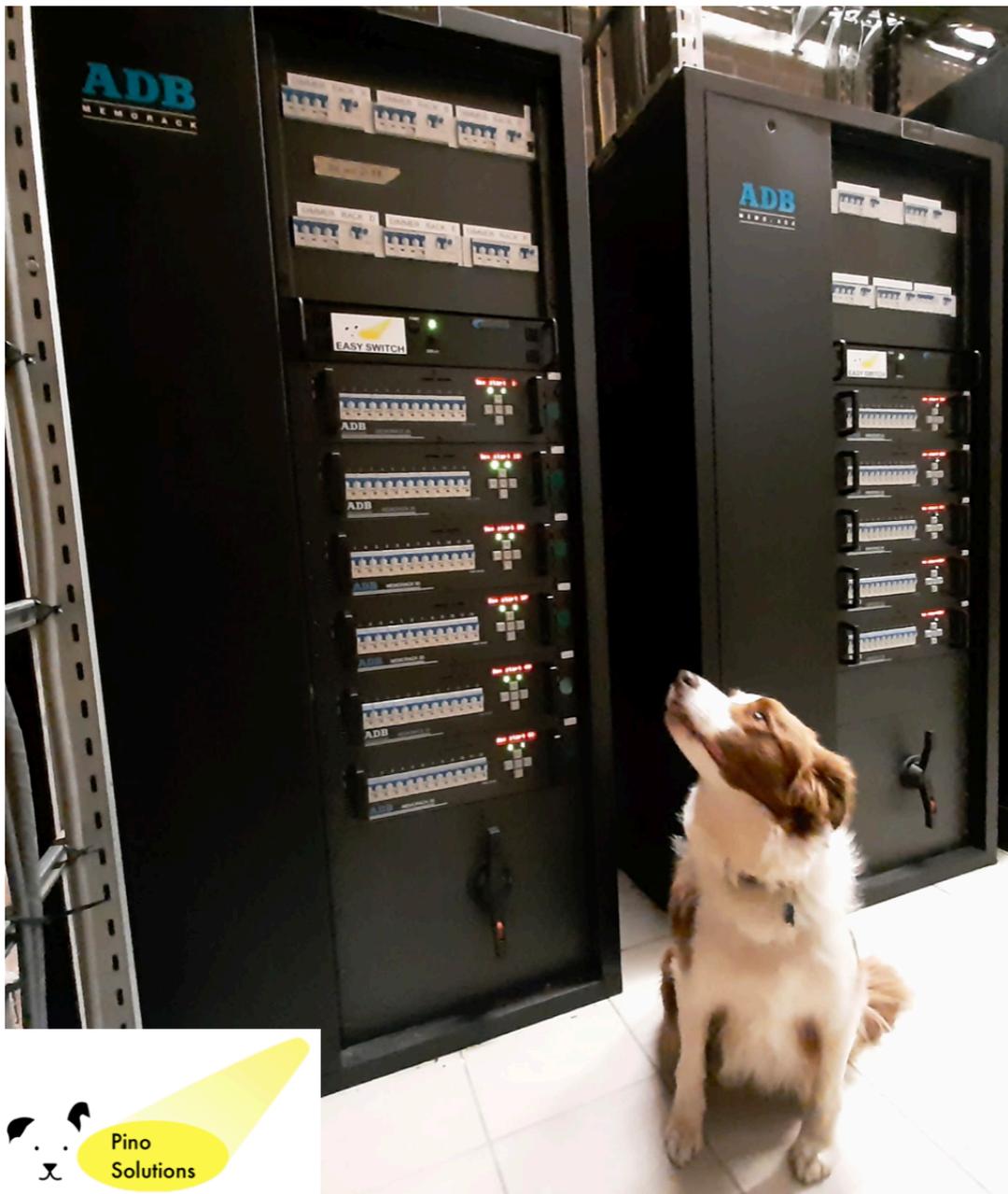

Focus on File

Project : CC Het Bolwerk - Vilvoorde



Installation: Summer Recess 2019



Introduction

As the lighting market shifts away from incandescent and discharge bulbs end users are left with a difficult dilemma: do we buy new fixtures or do we adapt our dimmer infrastructure so we can use both if we gradually make the transition to LED?

Every venue will have its own approach to this question, factoring in their unique situation. Especially for venues that have recently been totally refurbished, newly built or have invested in new equipment. There is not always room, budget wise, to rethink technical needs in short time spans. But, however, it is a reality that needs to be faced sooner or later.



Vilvoorde, a 'future proof' city

In 2017 the city of Vilvoorde (B) launched, in co-operation with other cities, a Future Forum to make their cities future proof and transition to a Smart Region. This collaboration eyed investments in technology with additional expertise to provide more sustainable, efficient, cheap, time-saving operations and services. Vilvoorde has recently partnered with utility company Fluvius to change the utility lighting in most frequented municipal properties to LED (s.a. swimming pool, library), among them the Cultural Centre Het Bolwerk. Solar panels now power part of the infrastructure. Halogen and PLL lights have been replaced by LED lighting combined with DMX drivers or Dali protocol. The next step in making Het Bolwerk more sustainable was the adaptation of the conventional dimmers in the theatre hall. In line with this philosophy -maintaining or re-using existing infrastructure by an update- the Pino Solutions Easy Switch was the simplest, yet most efficient solution that presented itself.

The technical coordinator of the CC Het Bolwerk, David Liekens, first got acquainted with the Pino Solutions Easy Switch when Roadtech Services repaired an ADB lighting desk for them. After an additional introduction to the possibilities of Easy Switch during an info day themed 'LED in theatre', there was one conclusion: The Easy Switch was the right solution for the theatre to get it inline with the city's vision and really make it future proof.



Easy Switch: Easier, smarter, quicker

Het Bolwerk's dimmer infrastructure is housed in a small air-conditioned room next to the theatre. It consists of 2 ADB Memorack 180 which comprise respectively 5 and 6 Memorack 30 with 12 x 3kW dimmer circuits. These 132 channels are able to dim their conventional PC's and profiles, as conceived for the theatre over a decade ago.

But very often the theatre needs to hook up machines which need real 230Volt current. In-house Het Bolwerk have an array of moving lights, beamers, boosters, etc. but traveling companies also bring their own devices which can not be hooked up the infrastructure connected to a dimmer, even if the house-dimmers have a so-called 'dim switch function' (see inset).

Most 'Dim Switch function' are not all they seem...

The Dim Switch function on dimmers is phase angled and only suitable for resistive loads. It is not real 230 Volts needed for inductive loads e.g. moving lights, active speakers, smoke machines, dmx/artnet equipment. Using this function to power equipment that has a power supply could result in severe damage to equipment.



So here a first problem is encountered. As this is a very recent building (completed 2006) it is not yet the time to replace the ADB Memoracks which work just fine for tungsten lights. But how to connect other devices? In the conventional installation they cannot be fed from the same dimmer outlet. This means time-consuming installation of extra break-out boxes and cabling in the tracks, or worse still, from wall outlets in inconvenient places.

Alternatives were looked at by theatre staff to avoid having to resort to investing in extra power distro's and cabling. Alas, this option would result in untidy cabling, extra man-hours and a considerable extra investment.

Wouldn't it be just easier, smarter and quicker if they could just be hooked up to the same outlet? Of course it would! And this is where the Pino Solutions Easy Switch comes into play.



Pino Solutions Easy Switch to the rescue

Easy Switch: Keeping a slim budget

Because CC Het Bolwerk's funding comes from the city of Vilvoorde -as with every publicly financed institution- the key is to use the allocated funds smartly and efficiently. Because the Pino Solutions Easy Switch is so flexible it can be tailor-made for every kind of installation it is also much cheaper than standard options currently available on the AV-market.

So it was a no-brainer to choose the Easy Switch. *'The cost of implementing the Easy Switch system fitted perfectly in our annual investment budget, without having to make sacrifices on other projects or acquisitions.'* says David Liekens.

As the Easy Switch is an innovative upgrade for existing equipment it also qualifies as maintenance and can be budgeted under a different cost heading.

The normal yearly to twice yearly maintenance of the dimmers is also comprised in the Easy Switch installation. Which means yet another additional saving on operational costs.

Easy Switch: More than a simple upgrade

But the Easy Switch is so much more than just a simple upgrade of dimmers! *'If equipment is regularly maintained, there will be no surprises during a show. You want your equipment to be fully operative at all times.'* says Roadtech Services' senior maintenance engineer Victor Anderssen. *'We don't just install the Easy Switch and move on, we also check the wiring, connections and soldering on every board. We even verify if the dimmers have had the latest modifications since they were installed and execute them if need be. All this is comprised in the standard maintenance service we offer.'*

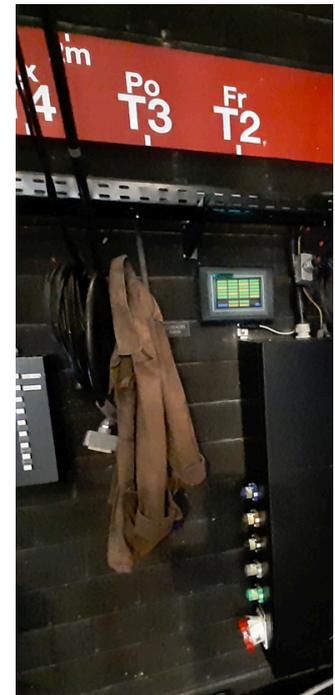
The Easy Switch Master Rack module only takes up 2HE in the ADB Memorack cabinet. It is hardly visible in between the breakers and individual Memorack 30 modules that make up the original ADB Memorack 180 dimmer configuration. There is no additional rack or annoying cabling that might be in the way in a fairly cramped area.



Every venue is different so this also calls for a tailor-made approach for the use of the Easy Switch.

The Master Controller Unit in Het Bolwerk is a wall mounted simple to use 7" touch screen. It is very discreet and user friendly. Switching dimmers from dim function to 230V really is just - literally- at the touch of your finger tips.

David Liekens: *'As our dimmers are located next to the stage but in a different room for practical considerations (air-conditioning and noise-levels) it is not very practical to have the commands in that room when having to communicate with the people on the other side of the wall. The Easy Switch Master Controller Unit has been installed on stage [see inset] and is easily accessible which makes communication much more relaxed and makes our day schedule much simpler.'*



One technician is responsible for switching the channels needed to the right setting. This avoids misunderstandings and really smoothes out the set-up. Another plus is that the technicians don't need to start up a dmx controller to recall settings. Because the Easy Switch is totally autonomous and saves the settings -even when the dimmers have been powered off overnight- it enables them to get cracking as soon as they walk on the stage. And when the gig is finished and the stage is cleared for another production, all settings can be reset to default with one single tap on the screen.

Installation of the Easy Switch system only took one day and the venue was fully operative again in the evening.



A word from the technicians at CC Het Bolwerk

'I would recommend installing the Pino Solutions Easy Switch to everyone who has traditional dimmers and is now struggling to hook up equipment that needs real 230 Volts. It's really a small investment, it cuts back on a lot of work and it's safe. And I speak for all my colleagues here: We are really glad we chose to take the step. It really makes a difference time-wise, cabling-wise and results in a lot less malfunctions or fault-finding when receiving external productions in the theatre.'



TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Location	CC Het Bolwerk	Vilvoorde, Belgium (2006)
ADB configuration	2 x Memorack 180	132 channels
	5 Memorack 30 12 x 3kW	
	6 Memorack 30 12 x 3kW	
EASY SWITCH CONFIGURATION	1 x PS 195001/72	Kit Easy Switch Master-rack 72
	1 x PS 195001/60	Kit Easy Switch Master-rack 60
	1 x PS 192001B/7"	7" Master Controller Wall mount

The options discussed as installed in CC Het Bolwerk are just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to possible configurations and options.

More customized and venue-specific solutions are available, including Easy Switch for portable dimmers (touring or mobile racks).

Other dimmers brands are also able to accommodate the Easy Switch system.

www.pinosolutions.be

Contact the Pino Solutions team for more information or make an appointment and try the Pino Solutions Easy Switch system in the Roadtech Services workshop.

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For every purchase of an Easy Switch system a donation will be made to the animal shelter in Sint Truiden (B) to help dogs like Pino to find a new home.

