

How Three Low-Voltage Contractors Expanded into the Lighting Business

CONTRACTOR

Direct Line

PROJECT

Installed light fixtures, controls, sensors and cabling

APPLICATION

Retrofit office space at City Hall, Merced, CA

DATE

August 2011



“The way that fiber revolutionized telecommunications is similar to the way LEDs are revolutionizing the commercial lighting market. Fiber was a black art at the time, but has since changed the way we do business, and LEDs have that same potential. Everyone is looking to reduce their carbon footprint and intelligent lighting is a great step forward in that effort.”

— *Ian Crockford, Managing Director, Data Techniques*

Redwood Systems has opened up new opportunities in lighting for the structured cabling ecosystem. The company has created a groundbreaking networked LED lighting control and building intelligence platform that replaces traditional copper wire and alternating current (AC) power with a low-voltage networking infrastructure that incorporates digital current (DC) power.

Three established structured cabling solution providers — Parallel Technologies in Minnesota, Direct Line in California and Data Techniques in the UK — are leveraging low-voltage, networked lighting to increase business with existing customers, expand to new customers and improve and enhance their overall value proposition and brand image.

Data Techniques

Data Techniques is based in Hampshire and London, UK and provides specialist cabling services in the telecom and data sectors for a broad range of blue chip clients in data center, educational and commercial environments.

The company is leveraging its skills in low voltage and its relationship with Redwood to break into the lighting market with something new and different to talk to the customer about. Data Techniques is now able to offer a range of new features and services including energy efficiency, daylight harvesting, conference-room booking and advanced data collection and analysis.

Summary of Benefits

- **Gain access to the \$80B lighting market** with existing and new customers
- **Get prepared to install quickly** using wiring and techniques you already know
- **Enhance your brand** by delivering energy-efficiency solutions

“This is the future of lighting and Redwood is an innovator and market leader, so partnering with them is an opportunity to ride the technology curve.”

— Sean Osborn,
VP of Controls, Direct Line



The flexibility of the solution has been especially attractive to Data Techniques, which can address multiple customer requirements with Redwood Systems’ unique technology. With sensors next to each light fixture, facility managers can easily monitor temperature throughout a building or determine room utilization.

The company has found a great degree of interest in the system at a number of organizations, and, as a result, has quoted hundreds of thousands of dollars of new potential business in the span of just a few months. “We think installing and selling the Redwood solution can be a major part of our portfolio going forward,” commented Ian Crockford, Managing Director at Data Techniques.

Parallel Technologies

Based in Eden Prairie, Minnesota, Parallel Technologies designs, installs and maintains structured cabling solutions supporting voice, data and video connectivity. Its expertise includes designing standards-based copper, fiber, CAT 5, CAT 6 and wireless solutions for data centers, apartment buildings, commercial office spaces and warehouses.

Parallel Technologies has incorporated the Redwood solution into its Intelligent Building practice, which integrates control systems with IP networks. This move supports the company’s mission to help businesses curtail building inefficiencies, drive cost savings and promote a greener environment.

By integrating Redwood’s platform with security and building management systems (BMS), Parallel can gather detailed data on occupancy patterns and temperature that can be used to make buildings perform more efficiently, contribute to optimal space utilization and provide heightened security and surveillance.

“Redwood Systems got us into the lighting business and has allowed us to make our building intelligence practice more tangible to customers,” said Dale Klein, president of Parallel Technologies. “When customers see the installed Redwood lighting platform with built-in sensor network and dashboards, they better understand how their buildings can be more efficient and secure. Our ability to integrate the Redwood data with BMS and security systems provides new sales and service opportunities.”

Direct Line

Direct Line is a systems integration leader in the Bay Area providing services within the disciplines of audio/visual systems, structured cabling (voice/data/ fiber optics), and building controls & automation.

Direct Line is encouraged that their relationship with Redwood Systems is leading to a profitable revenue stream. The intuitive nature of the Redwood solution allowed the company to install the system with minimal formal training by Redwood, even with a challenging ceiling design. The fact that Redwood provides a true low-voltage cabling solution, as opposed to an overlay system, allows it to deliver the control and intelligence required to make the system configurable in minutes. For instance, it only required a couple of clicks to activate the daylight harvesting functionality.

“Redwood’s technology is so intuitive and familiar that we understood 95 percent of what we had to prior to any formal training by Redwood,” stated Sean Osborn, VP of Controls for Direct Line.

To learn more about becoming a Redwood Partner for installing or reselling lighting systems, please visit www.redwoodsystems.com/low-voltage.