

# Tech

THE LATEST IN LIGHTING, STAGING, AND PROJECTION

## Intelligence Gathering

### A Look At The New Wybron InfoTrace System

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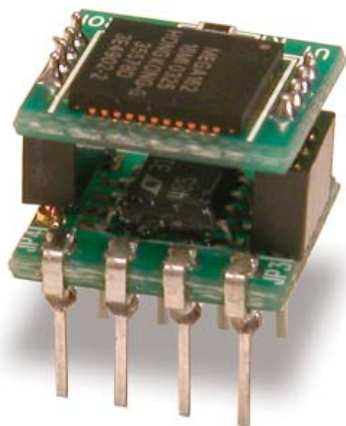
**T**here is a saying that if you build a better mouse trap, the world will beat a path to your door. While Wybron's new InfoTrace system is definitely a better mouse trap, and Wybron's headquarters in Colorado Springs is a beautiful part of the country, it is a bit remote. You're probably better off beating a path to Wybron's booth at

LDI 2006 [Booth #1731] or to your local Wybron dealer for an in-depth demonstration of this new technology. As lighting systems get more complicated, the InfoTrace system is designed to make setting up, operating, and maintaining those lighting systems that much easier. This article is an introduction to this new technology, intended to point out some of its benefits. To really understand what Wybron has accomplished, you have to see it demonstrated in person.

InfoTrace is a new system that uses Remote Device Management (RDM) for the control and management of DMX-controlled lighting devices such as color changers, moving lights, conventional lights, and accessories. A complete InfoTrace system consists of the following components: InfoGate software, InfoChip legacy converter, InfoStore, a web-based aggregate information tool, and Wybron's new line of IT products. The heart of the system is InfoGate, specialized software that uses RDM to facilitate remote addressing and diagnostics for potentially every piece



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**InfoChip is the technology that allows DMX devices without RDM capability to be recognized by InfoGate and communicate back to the system.**

of DMX equipment mounted on a rig, even non-Wybron gear. InfoGate works with all RDM-compatible equipment from any manufacturer. And for legacy equipment built prior to RDM—which is most equipment—any non-RDM equipment can be upgraded with the installation of an InfoChip. Because InfoGate can work with any equipment, the setup, unit testing, and troubleshooting for an entire rig can be coordinated from a single laptop or a PDA.

“InfoTrace simplifies the setup, maintenance, repair, and integration of professional stage lighting,” says Keny Whitright, founder and president of Wybron. “Time saved during load-in and pre-show checks translate into more time to create innovative lighting sets for stage, touring shows, architecture, and other spaces.”

Wybron’s IT range of equipment—Coloram IT color changers, CXI IT

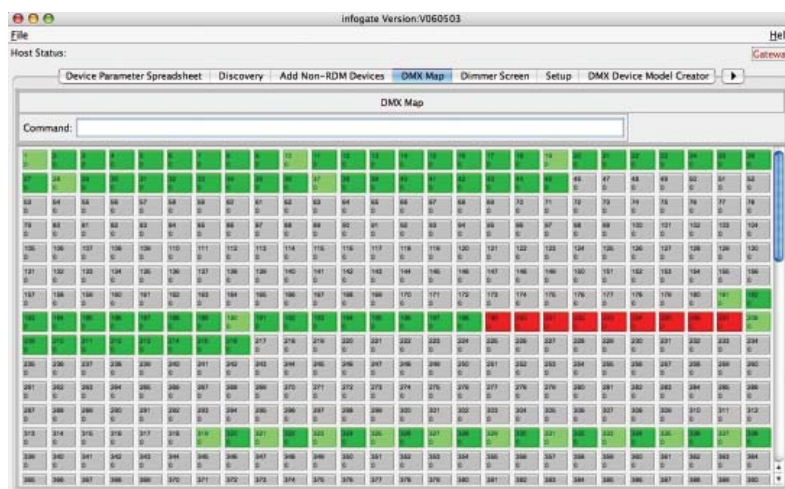
**“We desperately need a more comprehensive way of understanding our industry. Technology is impacting our business in ways that were almost unthinkable a decade ago.”**

**—Keny Whitright**

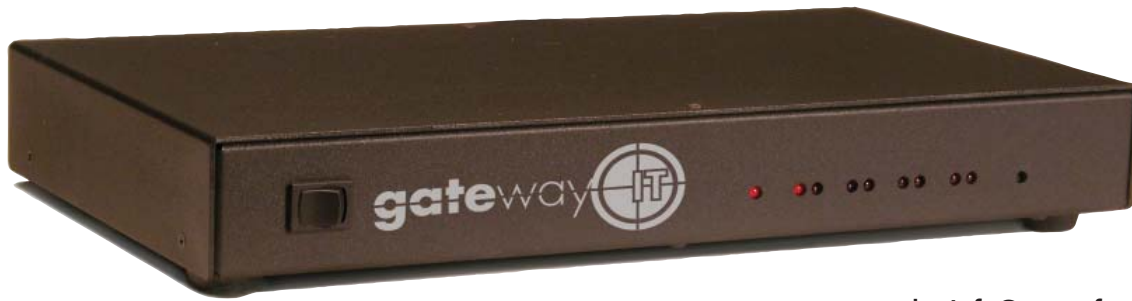
dual scrollers, and Eclipse IT and Eclipse II IT mechanical dowsers, and ColorExpress IT Gelstrings—is equipped with a series of sensors that can relay a wide variety of information to the InfoGate software. InfoGate can both send instructions to devices and gather back status information from the devices. These sensors can detect everything from light, temperature, and voltage to fan speed and even gel string frame color information. So, while RDM equipment will allow identification and remote addressing,

IT equipment can give more specific status information and even warn of potential problems, possibly averting failures in the middle of a show. If the status of a device indicates any problem, InfoGate displays an alert with the nature of the problem and the exact location. Troubleshooting is now done in a fraction of the time.

ColorExpress IT Gelstrings have InfoTrace capability too. Every gel string is built with a radio frequency identification (RFID) tag, which relays information to the sensors in Coloram



**InfoGate software allows interactive, remote DMX addressing via drag & drop. In this instance, the red squares indicate overlapping DMX addresses.**



The InfoGate Gateway, the black box with the InfoGate software: each unit can process up to four universes of DMX (2,048 channels). Additional black boxes can be connected to accompany an unlimited number of universes on a single laptop.

IT and CXI IT scrollers. The tag contains individual frame information as well as a unique job number, which allows for easy reordering.

The InfoGate software can control and monitor an unlimited number of lighting devices. The data transfer occurs through a black box gateway, which can process up to four universes of DMX (2,048 channels). Additional black boxes can be connected to accompany an unlimited number of universes on a single laptop.

InfoChip is the technology that allows DMX devices without RDM capability to be recognized by InfoGate and communicate back to the system. It can be installed by the user in place of the DMX receiver/transceiver IC in any non-RDM gear, regardless of manufacturer.

For any multi-channel device, InfoChip and InfoGate will detect the footprint—its number of DMX addresses and their functions. Any unit equipped with an InfoChip will work in both an InfoTrace environment and a standard DMX environment.

For permanent installations, operations requiring remote monitoring,

or multiple locations, Wybron offers InfoStore, a web-based program that gathers all the information sent from InfoGate. This makes the supervision of multiple locations possible, even from a distance. (It should be noted that InfoStore is not a required component to make the InfoTrace system complete.) For instance, at the end of a production, complete status reports can be sent to InfoStore. The lighting dealer or rental house can view reports immediately, and any replacement parts or repair orders can be arranged in advance. You could track touring equipment and send an order for additional equipment or a service call between shows. You could also test out a rig in the shop with InfoTrace, and when the equipment arrives on site, it is already known if every piece of equipment is present and working.

InfoStore can also analyze combinations of readings, detect trends, and store unlimited amounts of information. Before long, it will be able to know the average life of a lamp or gel string under various conditions.

In the past, setting up and monitoring a lighting system required

constant access to a lighting console, hand addressing dipswitches at each fixture, and locating problems by physically inspecting the equipment. With InfoTrace, all of these things can now be done by one person equipped with a laptop or a PDA.

“InfoTrace makes it easier to do what we could only accomplish with long costly hours in the past.” Whitright explains. “The benefits of InfoTrace go beyond traditional lighting products because with the introduction of this bold new technology, lighting designers and engineers will buy themselves time and ease of production.”

As lighting systems continue to get more complicated, rather than simpler, with the addition of new products, the new InfoTrace system from Wybron has the promise to make the lives of technicians that much easier. With the development of the InfoChip, the ability to bring legacy equipment up to a new standard means that this is not just a Wybron product but an entertainment technology product that will make taming the whole lighting rig an achievable goal. **LD**

# *Innovation without boundaries.*

*Apparently, the whole world was waiting for someone to deliver on the promise of RDM.*

*Wybron's recently unveiled InfoTrace System does just that...and the applause has been thunderous.*

*Thank you, PLASA.  
Thank you, LIVE DESIGN.*

*Find out more at  
[www.wybron.com](http://www.wybron.com)*



**Advancing The Art Of Lighting**