

SG Controls and Integration finds smart Spelsberg enclosure solution for latest 'Smart Building'

Modern day 'Smart Buildings' are capable of automating a host of building services such as heating, lighting, security and communications with the purpose of improving energy efficiency. Unfortunately, when a Building Management System (BMS) is installed poorly, reliability issues can quickly eliminate any savings. When it became apparent that the BMS at the innovative Think Tank building in Lincoln needed to be replaced, SG Controls and Integration was approached to provide a support. The SGCI solution was able to make dramatic improvements to the efficiency of the building, thanks in part to Spelsberg's modular AK distribution enclosures.

The Think Tank building is based within the campus of Lincoln University. A flagship building within the city, its purpose is to offer a hi-tech facility for budding start-ups originating from the university itself or from the surrounding areas. The building has a modern design and was originally built with a completely automated management system to reduce its carbon footprint and offer resident businesses the very best in terms of comfort, network speeds and conferencing opportunities.

While the building itself has been a great commercial success since it first opened its doors, it soon became apparent the original BMS was not suitable for the task required of it. This led to numerous operational issues within the building and unexpectedly high energy usage. Aware of the issues, the building's managers approached SG Controls, leading specialists in integrated building automation installation, to offer a solution.

Steve Goldspink, SG-Controls Managing Director, comments: "When the Think Tank approached us it was easy to understand their frustration. The building is high-tech, well designed and the perfect location for any modern start-up business to grow. The incumbent BMS simply didn't do the building justice, so it was clear to me that the most efficient solution in the long term would be to remove the hardware and wiring and start again.

"The University agreed, but told us that the building had to remain open while we carried out the work. Having worked with numerous banks and trading institutions we were well experienced to take on the challenge, but we knew we'd have to specify hardware that would allow us to re-wire the building one system at a time."

SG Controls specified a range of products from Loytec, that are din-rail mounted, with modular capability, making it possible to build the system up as the incumbent BMS was uninstalled bit-by-bit. To keep the wiring tidy and cost efficient, it was deemed best that distribution panels be used to house the controllers, I/O modules, gateways and routers. A modular solution was favoured to allow the installers to add sub-panels as the project progressed. Having worked with Spelsberg UK on previous projects, Steve approached the company to see what solutions were available.

Clare McCusker, Area Sales Manager for Spelsberg UK: "When Steve explained his requirements it was clear that he would benefit from our modular AK distribution housings. The enclosures can easily be mounted adjacent to each other, meaning that his team could build up the control panel as each new system was installed. Additionally the perspex windows at the front of each enclosure provide access for the system controls UI's (User Interfaces) whilst protecting the internal wiring.

"We worked directly with SG Controls throughout the project, so we could even offer customisation to each enclosure to make sure that it was delivered with the correct entry options and any necessary accessories."

As part of the installation project, many of the panels had to be installed in areas that were classified as 'wet plant rooms' – mounted near water cylinders and pipes. Where other solutions may have required an additional cabinet housing to meet building standards, the AK range has a standard IP65 rating making them suitable for installation in such areas without any extra expense. Additionally, the high quality finish of the units enhances the overall aesthetic of the range; an important consideration for a building known as much for its style as its functionality.

Steve continues: "Working directly with Spelsberg offered distinct advantages throughout the project. Clare and the team were able to make recommendations and even design solutions which, when they were delivered, integrated seamlessly with the panels that were already installed. The communication helped us to speed up the delivery of the project, ultimately making it more cost effective for the customer.

"In our business technology is always developing, so the chances are we'll be back at the Think Tank before long with the latest add-ons and possibly future upgrades. Thanks to the modularity of the AK units we know that we'll easily be able to add new controller modules, cable conduits and expand the system without having to re-wire the existing units."

“Space for you”

Spelsberg's company philosophy is based around the idea of providing flexibility and freedom to its customers. The space provided within each junction box; the large distribution and warehousing space; and the freedom to customise almost any product, irrespective of quantity, all equates to "Space for you".

About Spelsberg

Spelsberg is one of the largest manufacturers of electrical enclosures in the world. With over 4,000 enclosures available as standard and further customisation possible, it offers solutions for almost any application.

With the largest supply of non-metallic enclosures, ex-stock in the UK, its products are often available for delivery within 24 hours; customisation is possible on any product, including bespoke entries, engraved corporate logos or fitted terminals, within 48 hours. Products can be ordered direct from Spelsberg or from most leading supply specialists including RS, Rapid, Farnell and CPC.

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