

BESPOKE MOMENTS TO REMEMBER: SYTNER GROUP BMW/MINI SHEFFIELD

MCS Turns the Process of Buying a Car into a Magical Occasion



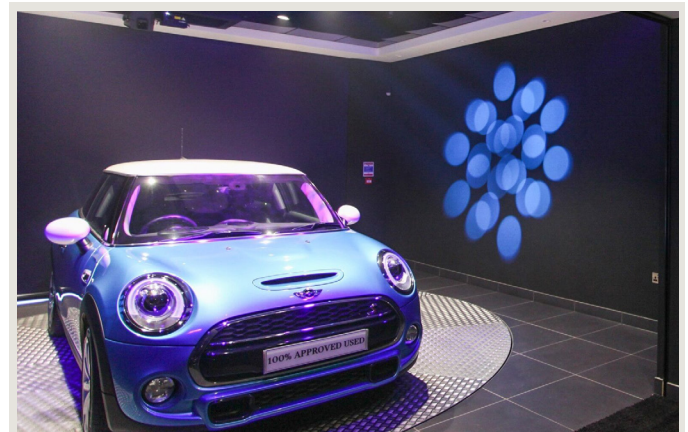
Next to a house, a new car is the most important purchase that most people ever make. So why shouldn't the setting for making that purchase be special in every way? That's the principle that seems to have inspired AV integrator MCS since carrying out its first car dealership project in 2003 and first dealership audio/visual integration project in 2007. Since then, the UK company has brought memorable AV experiences to about 280 dealerships of automotive brands including BMW, Audi, VW, Ferrari, Porsche, Lamborghini, Rolls Royce, Bentley, McLaren, and Aston Martin.

Behind the glamour of the showrooms in which MCS has been involved are exacting and sometimes copious sets of rules. Every automotive brand maintains unique and highly detailed commercial interior (CI) standards specifying how items such as furniture, layout, reception areas, coffee bars, and so forth need to look in order to support brand identity. The same guidelines apply to any of the visible manifestations of an AV system. One particular strength of MCS, according to Marc Hatton, the company's managing director, is "the ability to marry the necessities of retail standards with any opportunities for bringing a uniqueness to that particular project."

Never has this strength been better demonstrated than in a spectacular project, recently completed, for the Sytner Group's flagship BMW/MINI Sheffield dealership in Sheffield, England

—the largest of its kind in Europe. The basic requirements included an extensive digital signage network and networked audio system, which was installed throughout customer areas as well as various offices and conference rooms. A Wyrestorm NetworkHD system feeds 48 LG displays and 17 sources. More than 100 Penton loudspeakers, 96 inside and 10 outside, create a welcoming environment.

An RTI XP-6 control processor, which Sytner team members access through Apple iPads, controls what customers see and hear moving throughout the dealership, including a BMW Virtual Product Presentation that allows customers to "build their own" MINI in any of the dealership's consultation lounges.



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Marc Hatton
Managing Director, MCS

However, the pièce de résistance that best shows off MCS' tech savviness and creativity is the MINI hand-off bay—the place where customers come to pick up and drive away their cars. Rather than just finding their car covered in a cloth which is then removed with a flourish, the hand-off bay designed by MCS delivers the kind of showmanship one more readily associates with a high-end TV commercial. No mere unveiling, the customer's new car is rotated on a turntable and bathed in effects from moving spotlights, light batons, smoke, and lasers. Cloud ceiling speakers, supported by LD Systems Maui 11 G2 column loudspeakers, supply audible drama. An RTI AD-4X handles audio distribution.

RTI controls allow Sytner staff seamlessly to set up and launch the lights and sounds each handoff, including selecting the specific color scheme and music they want to use. Having positioned the customer in the hand-off bay, all the Sytner team member needs to do is press a button on the RTI wall controller. That takes care of house lights, plays countdown music, raises the blind and starts the turntable revolving. All of this is accompanied by a unique sound and light show.

“The selection of RTI products as the overall control system on this project was an easy and obvious choice for MCS,” says Marc Hatton. “Having utilized control products by RTI previously, MCS already had confidence in the performance, processing power and overall flexibility of use, making it a logical choice for control integration of the many various elements of this complex ‘show-based’ project.

“Of particular importance was the ability to be able to control precision timed events and sequencing, a fundamental aspect of the MINI handover experience. Using RTI products, we were also comfortable in the knowledge of being able to call on expert technical support, when required.”

“Our confidence has proven to be well founded as the system has operated without issue for a period of fifteen months and the overall handover experience has proven to be a great hit with the dealerships customer's, making the day that they collect their car a truly memorable event.”

List of RTI products used:

- AD-4X Audio Distribution System
- KX-7 Touchpanel
- XP-8S and XP-6 Control Processors



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