



NEWS RELEASE

Contact:

James David Smith, President and Product Designer
Office 1-866-258-4577 / 416-259-8499 (daytime & evening)
Cellular 416-720-5802
Jsmith@theatrewireless.com

RC4 Wireless Introduces Motion Products at USITT Stage Expo

Toronto, 17-Mar-2006 – RC4 Wireless has introduced a new series of RC4 receivers with built-in motor controllers. Intended for motorized props and set pieces of all kinds, they are described as safe, simple to connect, and easy to use.

The RX4-FD friction-drive controller directly connects to two DC motors and responds to RC4 Wireless control channels for speed, steer, and direction. Simply place a DC drive on each side of the piece, much like an electric wheelchair. Steering all the way to either extreme will spin the piece on center. Outputs are also provided for optional brakes. All drivers are protected against overheating and overloading, and operate from 8V to 30VDC.

The RX4-SERVO controller drives one DC motor and optional brake, and includes two limit-switch inputs and a rotary-encoder input. Using the encoder for feedback, the controller positions the target machine or system at any desired location. A single (8-bit) or double (16-bit) RC4 Wireless control channel sets position. The user can set acceleration rate, deceleration rate, top speed, and the size of the stopping window to match controller response to the target machine. Limit switch inputs can be configured to set ends of travel, stop the unit, or reverse direction.

Both the FD and the SERVO controllers utilize the RC4-MSS Motion Safety System, ensuring that any fault anywhere in the control circuit will stop the remote unit.

"These motor drivers, together with our very robust safety system, provide the level of reliability and redundancy required for critical motion systems on stage," claims James Smith, the RC4 system designer. "The FD is ideal for the sleigh in *The Nutcracker*, the chicken in *Into the Woods*, and any other large or small device that must drive around or across the stage by remote control. The SERVO is ideal for smoothly and automatically positioning pieces along a slot, truss, or other guide. All with no data or power wires!"

The RC4-MSS, which uses a precise heartbeat to detect and respond to any kind of system interference, is already in use in Shaw Festival's 2006 production of *High Society*. "In the most general sense, we have tackled two design challenges," explains Smith. "First, the radio link must be absolutely reliable – it can't go down. Then, the safety system must detect and intervene if the radio system does go down. In most cases, intervention means automatically cutting power to the motors and engaging the brakes. Our core RC4 radios, fine-tuned over a decade, meet the first challenge. Our MSS meets the second. Our motor controllers make it easy to implement both in a wide range of applications."

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The final piece of the puzzle is the RC4-HH, a “blank” handheld controller. Housed in a small NEMA4X enclosure, the HH contains both an MSS sender (a component of the safety system) and a buffered control-voltage (CV) input board with screw terminal connections. The user can easily mount any combination of knobs, sliders, selectors, or switches on the top face and wire them to the terminals. The HH connects to the RC4 transmitter via the CV input.

The RC4-TX32D provides 8 channels of CV, while the RC4-FlexTX provides 12 channels of CV, in addition to DMX channels. Any combination of CV and DMX can be mapped to dimmers and controllers throughout a show. Thus, an operator or automation system can be controlling motors, while the DMX desk is controlling lighting on the very same set piece. Everything is integrated into one easy-to-use and highly versatile package.



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James David Smith, President and Product Designer

Soundsculpture Incorporated (Buffalo)

60 Industrial Parkway, #580
Cheektowaga NY
USA 14227
1-866-258-4577
jsmith@theatrewireless.com

Soundsculpture Incorporated (Toronto)

88 St. George St.
Etobicoke ON
Canada M8Z 3Y7
416-259-8499
jsmith@theatrewireless.com

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