

The UK's most innovative lighting and controls solutions provider, Prime Light, is celebrating 30 years in the business.

Launched in 1992, Prime Light is a leader in the UK commercial lighting industry. They provide components, controls, and custom lighting solutions for every type of business purpose. As they reach the end of their third decade of successful operation we ask Prime Light's managing director, **Sean Hounslow** about the past, present, and future of the organisation.

Thirty years is a long time in business. What are the biggest changes you've seen in the UK lighting industry since 1992, and how has Prime Light evolved to meet these changes?

The most obvious change has been the shift in manufacturing. In recent years, a substantial portion of the lighting fixtures market has shifted to the far east, with China being the largest manufacturer.

Fortunately, Prime Light had the foresight and agility to adapt, and we embraced this sea-change very early on. While many other UK lighting businesses failed, the rapid shift to offshore enabled us to grow organically and through select acquisitions. Thirty years ago, we were a small business with a small product range, simply feeding OEM and replacement parts to lighting manufacturers and distributors. Now, in addition to maintaining our expanded base in manufacturing and distribution, we offer more than 50,000 products, own a cluster of strong brands, and offer OEMs and end users such as

retail and local authorities off the shelf and custom lighting and control solutions suitable for most applications.

Prime Light has grown from a lighting components provider into a resource that offers so much more. What else will the organisation be offering soon?

We'll be doing our bit to save the planet with our 3Rs approach – Reduce/Reuse/Recycle. Far too many luminaries and lighting components end up in landfill at the end of their service life. This is wasteful and polluting and it must stop. We're working with our customers and our designers to develop a 'cradle to cradle' life-cycle, with a high percentage of defunct components being reused or recycled into new products. This reduces waste and helps the environment by lowering demand for raw materials. We're also taking this approach a stage further by building easy replacement features into many of the products we offer. This gives our components a longer life as obsolete parts can be quickly swapped out as lighting technology evolves.

Lighting used to be focused on simple illumination or display, but now it's also used to direct retail traffic flow, alter interior usages, in emergency interventions and to deter crime. How else do you see lighting being used for commerce in the future?

The next big thing in lighting will be mood enhancement. Current lighting products used to create atmosphere or influence human behaviour, such as dimmers, or simple colour changes, are quite crude in their utility. 'Tune-able lighting' will be revolutionary in comparison.

How so?

Tune-able lighting can provide a complete palette of colours and light intensity coupled to intelligent control. This allows interior and exterior spaces to react to time of day, events, space utilisation, human presence, and a range of

desired behavioural results. Science has revealed the presence of a third photoreceptor in the eye that influences our mood and brain function. Tune-able lighting could tap into that signal stream to enhance our emotional senses and increase our feelings of well-being. For example, to drive an increased sense of comfort and satisfaction.

Wow.

Yeah. It's pretty cool.

Sustainability was barely on the radar in 1992, now it's the number one topic in business. What is Prime Light doing in the race to net zero?

Apart from the radical changes we're making to reduce landfill waste, we're also working hard to reduce greenhouse gases by making business lighting more energy efficient. Adopting LED lighting and smart controls across all our facilities has reduced our lighting energy consumption by 40%, and we're loudly communicating these kind of benefits to all our customers, particularly end users. Installing high efficiency lighting and smart controls to optimise usage does more than help a business get closer to their net-zero goal, it also reduces their power bill. We've proved that in some applications, businesses can receive payback on their investment within a few months. After that, it's all good news, with continued and significant savings in both money and CO² emissions.

How has the Prime Light mission evolved over the years, and what benefits do your customers gain from the special knowledge and experience of your team?

Innovation drives everything we do. We've gone from a simple components provider to a sophisticated solutions provider, and we provide everything from 'just in time' supply, to intelligent systems for retail, hospitality, logistics, manufacturers and more. Our customers know we think outside

the box and that our team has the depth of skill and experience to deliver the solutions they require. Seamless service and cutting-edge technology are what Prime Light is all about.

If you could predict life at Prime Light in 2052, what will the company be doing

I would hope that our current path towards innovation and as a solutions provider has expanded and that we are not only larger in terms of business, but also in the scope of our operations. I see Prime Light as continuing to be the 'go to' resource for anything and all things in commercial lighting and interior/exterior and environmental control systems.

Lastly, what lighting technology would you love to see invented?

A light source that powers itself without burning natural resources.

Like perpetual motion?

Well, maybe not as far-fetched as that. Although the source would have no wires attached, and it would be controllable and fully programmable, with returnable data sensors built in to report on movement. The light source could be powered by a permanent natural feature, such as temperature change, the flux between day and night, or even the pull of gravity.

That would be a game-changer. Will Prime Light sell it?

Definitely.

Prime Light provides smart lighting solutions for all types of purpose and for every type of business. Talk to us before you begin the process of planning your next commercial construction or replacing your building's existing lighting system.