



MERIDIAN

News

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Sooloos 2.1: Great New Features



A few months ago saw the release of Sooloos 2.0 with many new features, delivering enhanced functionality, flexibility and audio quality, including significant redesigns to the touchscreen interface, support for much larger media libraries, enhanced handling of classical music metadata, Meridian connectivity and more.

The latest update, Sooloos 2.1, free to system owners, takes the system further, adding Rhapsody music service integration, Internet Radio access, a new Crestron module distributed and supported by Crestron, a dedicated iPhone application, streamlined configuration and further interface development. The newly-enhanced Ensemble can be used with or without on-board hard drives.

The integration of the Rhapsody service provides access to an enormous additional music collection, seamlessly added to a user's library.



For only \$13 (US only at present) a month, subscribers gain access to hundreds of thousands of albums in the Rhapsody collection, streamed over the Internet whenever required.

Rhapsody albums can be added to the user's Cover Browser and then accessed just as if they were stored locally, with all the power, elegance and speed of the Meridian Sooloos interface.

Meridian at CES & ISE

The International Consumer Electronics Show runs from January 7-10, 2010 in Las Vegas: you can find us on the 29th Floor of the Venetian Tower, suites 235 & 236. At Integrated Systems Europe, 2-4 February in Amsterdam, we're at booth 5N78.

We will be announcing a number of new products, including:

ID40 Sooloos Card. This card suits the new 808.3 and 861 V6 products and delivers the highest possible quality playback from a Meridian Sooloos Digital Media System.

808.3. The new Signature Reference CD Player includes input and twin output SpeakerLink connections, preamplifier functionality and a slot for the ID40 Sooloos card.

861 V6. The new version of our flagship Digital Surround Controller includes SpeakerLink inputs and outputs. You can also install the new ID40 Sooloos Card, allowing replay of your Sooloos system at the highest possible quality.

G61R and G68 with SpeakerLink. New revisions of these popular Digital Surround Processors now provide eight channels of SpeakerLink output capability.

AC12. This compact unit includes RS232, S/PDIF, DIN and BNC Meridian Comms and SpeakerLink. It enables you to interface the latest Meridian processors fitted with SpeakerLink to older DSP Loudspeakers, and more.

In this issue...

- Sooloos 2.1 unveiled
- Meridian at CES
- Meridian Store opens in Bangkok

- A very special lens for the 810
- Art Cinema features 810 projector
- SpeakerLink FAQ

- DSP5200 – SpeakerLink & more
- The DSP8000 Experience
- New Meridian Processors

World's First Meridian Concept Store Opens in Bangkok



concept for the showroom. Taylor noted: "In its design, this showroom aims to fuse traditional luxury with cutting edge design in a uniquely British way. We have selected natural materials such as hard woods, leather and fabrics in combination with technological accents like fine metals and architectural glass and lighting.

"Reflected throughout the store is Britain's reputation for prestige and technical luxury, for which Asian consumers have long held respect, and which have always been key pillars of the Meridian brand."

Meridian, in conjunction with its exclusive distributor in Thailand, Deco 2000, recently launched the first Meridian Concept Store in the world – at the heart of one of the world's most vibrant and exotic cities, Bangkok.

Situated in Thailand's most exclusive shopping complex – Siam Paragon in the upmarket Pathumwan district of Bangkok – it's the first dedicated Meridian showroom in the world, and is set to become the flagship demonstration location for the company's range of products in Asia.

The Meridian Concept store is a unique retail experience, divided up into a number of focused zones:

- **The Gallery:** (see photo, top) a dedicated retail zone displaying the company's compact products and organisational history
- **The Concierge Reception:** an exclusive area where clients can discuss the finer details of their system and installation
- **The Meridian Experience:** a theatre for technical demonstrations of Meridian's class-leading home cinema products
- **The Crown Jewels:** (below right) a display cabinet showcasing a current or historical ground-breaking Meridian product
- **The Orangery:** (above right) a home set-up demonstration room featuring flexible Meridian system configurations.

important development for Meridian Audio. It's the first of our concept stores in the world and it's located in Bangkok – the beating heart of South East Asia. We're very confident in this bold new step as the Asian market for luxury electronics is growing rapidly."

International retail design specialists KVB Design developed the unique

The Meridian Concept store opened its doors to the public on November 12th and represents the next step in the company's international expansion, which in itself affirms Meridian Audio's on-going success in positioning the brand at the very pinnacle of international high-end audio and vision.



Graeme Taylor, Meridian's Chief Marketing Officer, explained: "The Meridian Concept store marks an

The Art of Luxury Home Theatre – Art Cinema, Holland



Art Cinema BV is one of Holland's – if not Europe's – leading home theatre specialists. Founded by Erwin Roelandschap in 2004, at the heart of Art Cinema's headquarters in Enkhuizen is a stunning demonstration room built around the Meridian 810 Reference Video System. We talked to Erwin about his business, his customers, and how he approaches the market.



"The impetus to start my own company was the fact that I felt the way many AV dealers worked was not appropriate for the luxury market," says Roelandschap. "It was always focused on the product, and not what the product can do and how it provided a solution for the user."

Roelandschap and his business partner saw the potential in this marketplace, if it was handled in the

right way. "My partner's speciality was interior design and with my knowledge of AV technology and products it made a good match. So in 2003 we built our 50m² demo room at his place, and then in 2004 we started Art Cinema BV as a specialist in luxury home theatres."

Today, the company offers complete home and yacht installations. Says Erwin, "We work very closely with the client to make their wish come true: we talk about ideas not only around what we do, but also about how they want to live in their new home. We fulfil their desires with the right systems and equipment."

Art Cinema's impressive 8-seater demo theatre is built in an isolated room to eliminate sound coming in and out. The walls are of wood, covered with different thickness of plasterboard. "We made precision measurements to get the best acoustics," says Erwin. "The front stage is built in a baffle which is free from the projection screen. The speakers are behind the screen, so we use acoustically-transparent screen material."

"The 810's performance was just what we needed to complete our Art

Cinema Theater. No compromises – clear and solid picture beyond HD. This projector makes the Art Cinema Theater future-proof.

"Our customers know the Theater but are really astonished about the picture quality," says Roelandschap. "They feel there is now the perfect balance between sound and picture."



SpeakerLink FAQ



The DSP7200 was the first of a new breed in Meridian DSP loudspeakers, followed by the DSP8000, DSP5200 and DSP420, to incorporate SpeakerLink; the 808.2 Signature Reference Compact Disc Player was the first component, and we have recently released Sooloos networked products and Meridian Surround Controllers with SpeakerLink connectivity. As time goes by you will see this RJ45 "Ethernet-style" socket on the rear of many new Meridian products.

What is SpeakerLink?



SpeakerLink allows Meridian products to be connected with a single CAT5 cable. It carries both balanced digital audio (with SmartLink) and Meridian Comms signals (plus RS232 and some other features).

Why SpeakerLink ?

SpeakerLink allows two Meridian units to be linked by a single cable. Balanced digital audio means there is less likelihood of interference being experienced. However SpeakerLink is particularly useful simply for its convenience in custom installation environments, where CAT5 is common.

What cables do I need to run in the wall ?

You can use standard Ethernet cabling as long as it is STP (Shielded Twisted Pair) CAT 5 or 6 cable. You may need to meet additional standards when installing cable in-wall, but as far as SpeakerLink is concerned, CAT 5/6 STP is all there is to it.

What cables do I need to run across the floor ?

Meridian has been researching and auditioning a variety of CAT5 cables and has developed a flat Meridian-branded CAT5 interconnect for critical audio applications. We have selected this cable for its extremely high technical specifications and sound quality. The Meridian cable is available in 0.5, 1, 5, 10 and 15m lengths.

DSP5200 – Featuring SpeakerLink and more



Our popular smaller DSP loudspeaker, the DSP5200, is now shipping with SpeakerLink built-in, joining the DSP8000, DSP7200 and DSP420 in the family of SpeakerLink-equipped speakers released to date.

Meanwhile, a new firmware update is available for existing DSP5200s which adds a number of features including the 'apodising'-style filter originally rolled out in the DSP7200 and 808.2 CD player. This removes the pre-echoes from recorded material often generated by poor or earlier digital filter schemes, and can thus even 'clean up' earlier recordings, making them sound clearer and delivering improved stereo imaging.

Other features of the upgrade include greater transparency thanks to new speaker equalisation filters, and faster bass response from an improved extension filter.

The update is free to existing DSP5200 owners. Your Meridian Config application will indicate when an update is available.

Meridian Controllers – Now with SpeakerLink



The start of 2010 sees the launch of new versions of all three of Meridian's Digital Surround Controllers, led by the 861 V6 shown above.

A common feature of the three units is their inclusion of SpeakerLink for direct connection to Meridian DSP Loudspeakers: in addition, the new versions of the G68 and the G61R see the rationalisation of the two G Series controllers. The three available controllers now offer a clear 3-tier product differentiation and distinct feature sets.

861 Version 6

The 861 is Meridian's flagship Digital Surround Controller and has set the standard since its introduction in 1998. The 861 Version 6 confirms that position and adds significant new features that enhance the connectivity and functionality of the system.

SpeakerLink

The new 861 V6 includes both SpeakerLink inputs and outputs, for simple and effective connection to the latest Meridian DSP Loudspeakers and components.

Eight channels of SpeakerLink output are provided, meaning that all 861s will now support a Meridian Digital Theatre setup out of the box, saving cost and

reducing complexity. SpeakerLink inputs are also provided, allowing direct connection to components such as the 808.3

MMHR

An eight-channel MMHR (Meridian Multichannel High Resolution) input is also provided, allowing a direct single-wire connection to an HD621 for the highest possible quality from HDMI-based sources such as Blu-Ray Disc players.

Sooloos Connectivity

The optional ID40 Sooloos Card allows the 861 V6 to render audio from a Meridian Sooloos digital media system. Control commands sent through the 861 can also be used to control the current Sooloos Play Queue.

The 861 can upsample and process the audio from the Sooloos system for the maximum quality, for example using upsampling or Trifield rendering technology, allowing full Sooloos integration into the Meridian Digital Theatre. The ID40 card also fits the new 808.3 CD Player.

There will be an upgrade programme allowing existing 861 owners to take advantage of the largest specifications.

G68

There are two big changes on the G68. One is that G68 now offers eight-channel SpeakerLink outputs – supporting a full Meridian Digital Theatre – along with two Meridian SmartLink inputs for DVD players and the HD621, thereby supporting the most common home theatre sources.

The other development is the fact that there is now only one G68 version, containing all the most-requested features of the product, including multiple analogue and digital inputs including USB, dramatically simplifying specification and ordering of the G68.

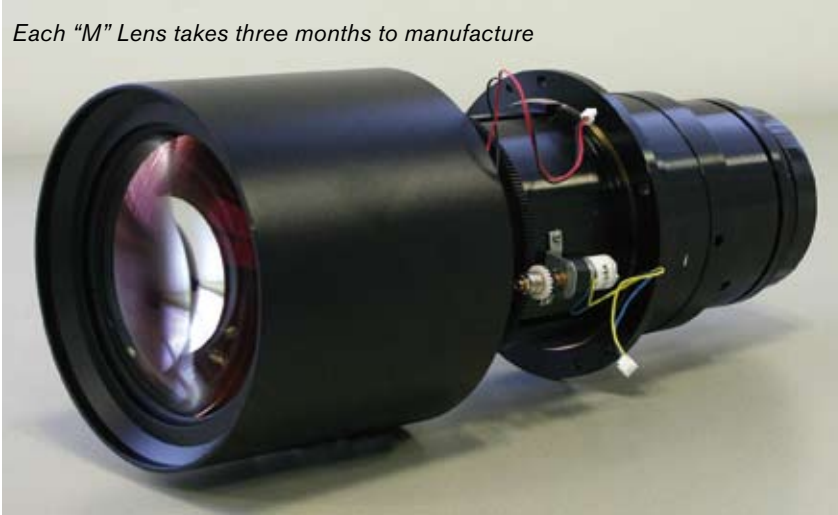
G61R

The G61R, the best value Surround Controller in the Meridian product line, now also offers eight channels of SpeakerLink outputs, once again removing the need for an AC11 in new system specifications.

There are also two Meridian SmartLink inputs for best connection to Meridian DVD players and the HD621. In addition to replacing the previous version of the G61R, the new unit provides an effective replacement for some former G68 versions and allows an excellent introduction to Meridian with its support for both Meridian DSP and third-party passive loudspeakers.

810 Lens A Technological Masterpiece

Each "M" Lens takes three months to manufacture



Of the four lenses available for Meridian's world-leading 810 Reference Video System projector, the most interesting is the medium-throw or "M" lens, the one most commonly required for home theatre applications.

About the M Lens

This lens features a 2.2:1 – 3.6:1 zoom ratio and is fully compatible with the 810's anamorphic lens assembly. But it's the lens itself that is particularly interesting. It's a prime example of how Meridian delivers a lot more than a simple off-the-shelf projector: indeed, the calibration process alone takes four days.

16 All-Glass Custom Elements

The M lens is custom-made for Meridian by Nittoh, a leading Japanese lens specialist with a history stretching

back to the 19th century. Nittoh has a wealth of experience in producing lenses for exceptionally high-quality applications. Even so, the Meridian lens is the most sophisticated design the company has ever made.

It features 16 all-glass elements, for maximum image quality and minimum loss (many cheaper lenses use plastic). Almost every element is made of a different type of glass, and they are arranged into five groups.

In-House Manufacture

Virtually the entire lens is made in the Nittoh factory, with only the raw glass being bought in as each element is formed by pressing from powder under enormous pressure and intense heat. Everything else is done in-house at Nittoh, including glass grinding,

polishing and fabrication of all metal parts and plastic mouldings, to final assembly, testing and calibration.

Three Months to Cool

Simply making the raw glass takes over a month and a half, while polishing it into lenses takes another two. The lens features extremely high-precision mechanical systems and optics - indeed the lens elements are made to such a high degree of accuracy that the glass has to be allowed to cool for no less than three months to ensure that it meets Meridian's exacting specifications.

And as the lens is focused or zoomed, internal element groups move back and forth with an accuracy that measures in micrometres.

No-Compromise Standard

Often the compromise involved in commissioning a special lens to accompany a projector is that it does not offer the same level of controllability as the native lens. Typically, this means that it is manually operated. In the case of the Meridian Nittoh lens, however, the unit is fully motorised for maximum usability and ease of installation, and interfaces seamlessly into the projector's control system.

The result is sparkling image quality from a lens made specifically to match the characteristics of the projector and to suit a wide range of home theatre applications.

Len Wallis Audio, Sydney: 25 Years with Meridian

Meridian was pleased to mark the recent 25th anniversary of leading Sydney retailer Len Wallis Audio's association with the company. The anniversary was celebrated during a special Len Wallis Audio customer appreciation night at their headquarters, where Len was presented with a commemorative plaque in Italian Marble and a special Meridian F80 signed by co-founders Bob Stuart and Allen Boothroyd. The presentation was made by Meridian's Paul Webb and Justin Cohen.



Says Len, "We had a lot of success with the two channel offerings, but it was Home Theatre which really took off for us."

"We have always been of the opinion that Meridian manufactures the best and most flexible Home Theatre systems available, and once we convert a customer to Meridian they usually stay a loyal Meridian fan. We now have clients on their third or fourth Meridian systems."

"Coupled with the superb support we receive from your distributors – Amber Technology (we all need our hands held at one time or another) – the product is a no-brainer."

The DSP8000 Experience



DSP8000 Experience in their showroom followed by a private audition in their own home.

All Meridian digital loudspeakers deliver extraordinary performance, combining pristine digital quality and accuracy with warmth, creating an astonishingly natural sound. And surprisingly, there are no bulky speaker cables or external power amps; everything is inside the elegant cabinet. With the power and dynamics to accurately reproduce the true sound of a full-size concert Grand Piano, DSP8000 is one of the most impressive of all loudspeakers.

Late last year saw the UK introduction of a programme designed to create a unique opportunity for prospective customers to experience Meridian's flagship DSP8000 Loudspeakers – The DSP8000 Experience.

Many people have heard about how remarkable Meridian's DSP Loudspeakers are, but have not had the opportunity to hear them. In partnership with Meridian Audio, Meridian Premium Partners invited valued customers to enjoy The

To support The DSP8000 Experience, Meridian provided promotional material including an invitation card and covering letter and press release that can be personalised, artwork for banners and sales staff support documents.

The scheme was launched in the UK and is now being promoted in Canada, the United States, Sweden, Holland, Germany and the United Arab Emirates.

Meridian hits the Inside Track

Meridian retail partners have given the company top marks in US industry publication Inside Track's 25th anniversary Supplier Loyalty Survey. Each year the publication quizzes retailers and custom installers, asking them to grade suppliers and their products on 16 parameters – and Meridian gained "top-notch" grades.



Says Inside Track's Editor, Gisela Schoell, "In a very difficult year, Meridian dealers have recognised the company's exceptional partnership attributes by awarding them top-notch grades, essentially across the board."

She went on, "Meridian was rated truly outstanding on both Product Innovation and Dealer Training, earning first places on both parameters, and finishing second overall in a group of 18 Home Audio/Electronics companies".

Meridian Returns to St. Moritz Art Masters



Following on from the successful inaugural St. Moritz Art Masters festival last year, the Swiss alpine resort was once again transformed into a hive of arts and cultural activity. Meridian celebrated its association with the annual arts festival through the release of a special limited edition F80, individually badged and numbered and finished in the

unique Art Masters' metallic gold. Just twenty were available exclusively to attendees, with some purchasers buying more than one.

St. Moritz Art Masters invites visitors to experience 'exceptional discoveries': and Meridian was one of them. Meridian systems featured at key venues, with F80s at the Badrutt's Palace hotel, while the foyer of the Kempinski Grand Hotel Des Bains housed a Meridian Sooloos system.



Leading German artist Gerhard Richter selected music to complement his exhibition at the Paracelsus Building, played on Meridian's 808 Signature Reference CD player and DSP7200s.

St. Moritz Art Masters also included a full cultural programme.

Musical highlights included the Chamber Orchestra Vienna-Berlin and the Mariinsky Brass Ensemble, under the direction of maestro Valery Gergiev.



With Dunhill at the Links



Meridian was proud to support the recent 2009 Alfred Dunhill Links Championship event at St Andrews, Scotland.

The Dunhill Links Championship is one of the world's leading golfing events. It's played over three courses: the Old Course at St Andrews, the Championship Course at Carnoustie, and the Kingsbarns, south of St Andrews. This year saw 168 professionals and 168 amateurs taking part, playing in teams of two, each comprising one professional and one amateur.

Products were featured at the Old Course Hotel Golf Resort and Spa

and the Fairmont Hotel. The event provided a fantastic opportunity to demonstrate the Meridian Sooloos Digital Media System, DSP7200s and the Alfred Dunhill AD88 to guests and golfers participating in this prestigious competition.



Meridian Supports Galapagos Benefit



MICHAEL MULLER

November 11th at the Milk Studios, Los Angeles, saw an exclusive exhibition of photos of Galapagos Island creatures taken by renowned photographer Michael Muller. The event was sponsored by Swiss watchmaker IWC Schaffhausen on behalf of the Charles Darwin Foundation, which works to protect what is one of the most fascinating wildlife resources on Earth. Meridian was invited to support and provide audio & video systems for the event.

The event showcased Muller's impressive photography talents as well as highlighting the need for continuing support of the islands' threatened wildlife. Muller's photography was presented on four Meridian MF10 projectors running four separate slide shows taken from Muller's work, which includes over 12,000 images of the area taken specially for the watchmaker.

Meanwhile the Meridian 810 Reference Video System was used to show a special HD presentation of a film on the Galapagos commissioned by IWC in support of the Aquatimer product line and the Foundation. A Meridian Sooloos system was featured adjacent to the main entrance for demonstrations to attendees.

Over 200 people attended, including several Hollywood A-list celebrities. Each went home with a gift bag that included Meridian brand and product brochures.

David Weinhart, one of Meridian's retailer partners in the Los Angeles area, was on hand to answer questions, and arranged several private appointments to audition Meridian systems.