

**CONTROL**   
**TECHNIQUES**

# THE ORIGIN

**DRIVE OBSESSED**

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# EVENTS

**2000-09**

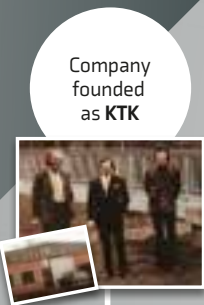
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**2020-**

Watch this space

# WE'RE HEROES, FOR EVER AND

## THE ORIGIN



Company founded as KTK

**1970s:** KTK relocated to Newtown in Powys, where it has been based ever since.

## 1980s



VC150

**1980s:** In 1980, Anyspeed Ltd was formed and quickly became a market leader in small DC drives.



Commander CD Flux Vector AC Drive



**1990s:** Global expansion was achieved with the acquisition of the subsidiary of a US corporation and access to a larger customer base.

The release of the Mentor II



1973



M Range Modular DC Drive

1979

6P Modular DC Drive



1982



VL750 AC inverter

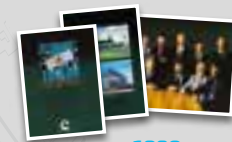
1983

1986

Launch of the world's first digital DC drive, Mentor 1



1989



**1980s:** KTK changed its name to Control Techniques in 1985 and embarked on developing a string of world-beating products.

1990



Commander CDS

1992

## 1970s

**1970s:** An early customer ran plastic blow moulding machines which made boots for Action Man figures.

## 1990s

# EVER.

## 2000s



**1990s:**  
James Bond and his female companion jumped off a 32-storey building in 'Tomorrow Never Dies' – thanks in part to technology from Control Techniques.



M'AX



**1990s:**  
The famous Unidrive Orchestra appears on BBC's Blue Peter programme.



Commander SE

Commander SK



Mentor MP

**Nidec**

**2010s:**  
In 2017, Control Techniques was purchased by Nidec, the world's number one comprehensive motor manufacturer.



Commander C

# AND WE'RE NOT DONE ...YET

1994

1995

1998

2000

2003

2005

2007

2008

2012

2018

2020

Dinverter



**1990s:**  
In 1995 Control Techniques was acquired by Emerson.



First generation Unidrive



**1990s:**  
Supporting superbands like Genesis perform to 1000's of fans.



Unidrive SP

**2000s:**  
Reliability wins the race again for Control Techniques in Formula 1, with a 160 kW inverter-based gearbox test rig installed at Jaguar Racing's prestigious headquarters.



**2000s:**  
A five-axis servo SCADA system helped an aerial ballet fly high in London's Millennium Dome.

Digitax ST



Unidrive M



Digitax HD



Pump drive F600

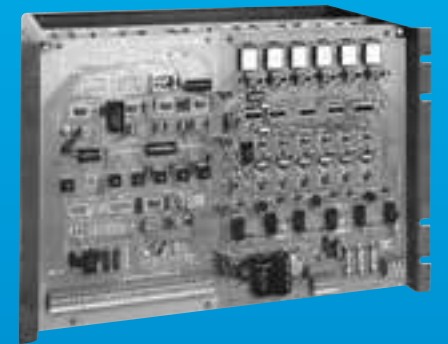


**2010s:**  
Eddie Hall, the world's strongest man helped launch the new Digitax HD the smallest servo drive on the market.



## 2010s

THE ORIGIN



# 1973: M RANGE DC THYRISTOR DRIVE

KTK's first ever product was the M range DC thyristor drive, which flew off the shelves and enjoyed immediate commercial success.

# '70S





# 1979: 6P MODULAR DC DRIVE

KTK established design leadership with the introduction of the 6P drive, the drive provided a particularly compact assembly with isolated heat sink cased enclosure and the highly attractive and new concept of a single printed circuit board, incorporating a wide range of functions, including fuseless thyristor, tacho loss protection and an on-board digital LED display of all significant operating parameters.



## THE ORIGIN

1970

1971

1972

1973

1974



*Pictured from left to right:  
Ken Briggs, Trevor Wheatley and Kevin Curran*

***KTK sponsored a new bridge in Newtown that linked the town to the local park. The bridge is still in use today.***

**1973:**

# **KTK FOUNDED**

Ken Briggs, Trevor Wheatley and Kevin Curran worked together in the 1960s at Mawdsley's, an engineering firm in South West England that was involved in the rapidly emerging drives business. The three men felt their firm wasn't innovating fast enough and decided they could do better working for themselves. In 1973 the trio established their own drives manufacturing company; KTK, which stands for Ken, Trevor and Kevin. Ken was responsible for product design, Trevor for sales and Kevin, who had a qualification in business administration, was responsible for business management.



1975

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1977

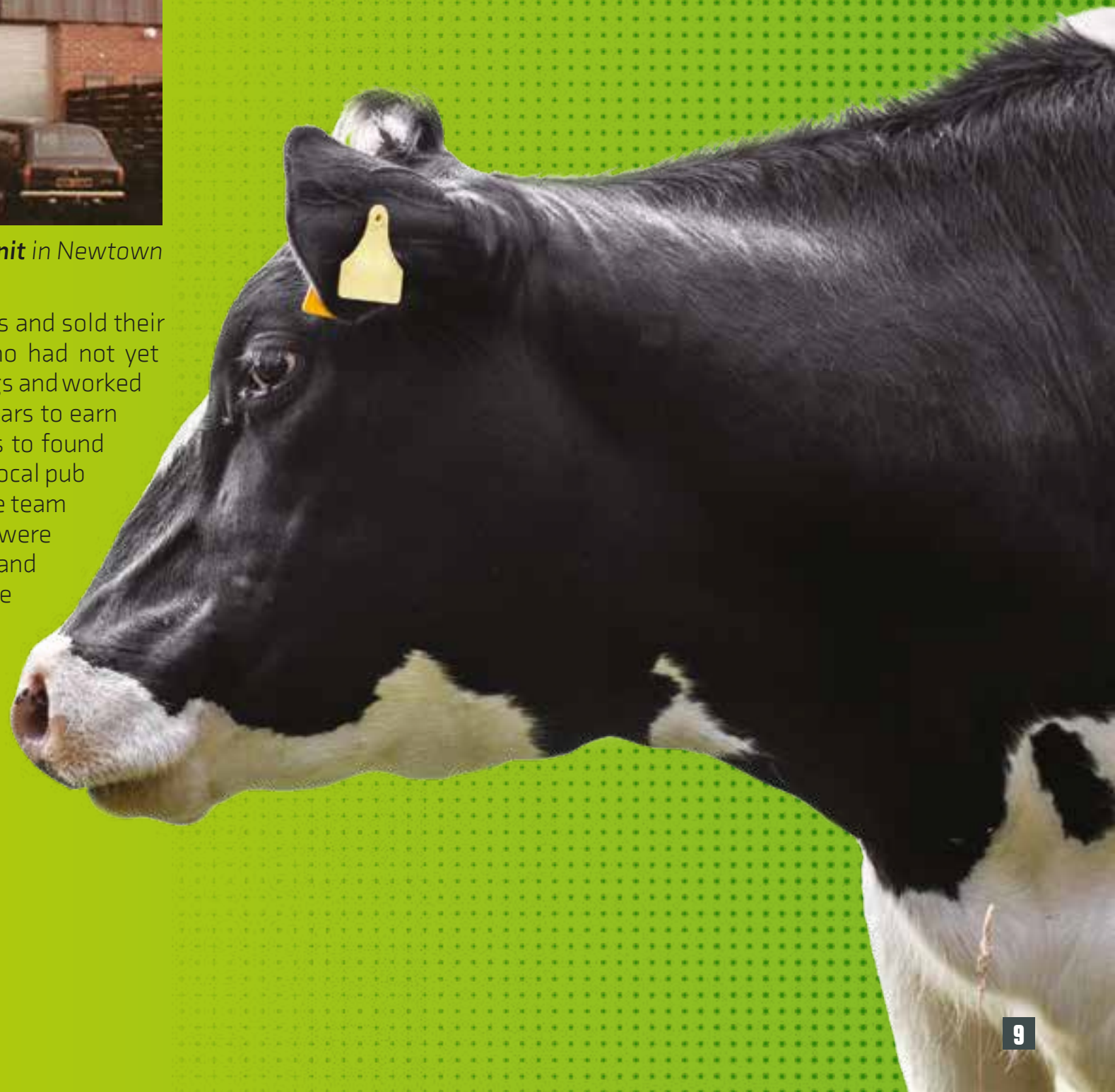
1978

1979



KTK's **first official manufacturing unit** in Newtown

Ken, Trevor and Kevin quit their jobs and sold their houses to raise capital. Kevin, who had not yet bought a house, put in all his savings and worked for the new firm for free for two years to earn his full share. The legal documents to found the company were signed at Ken's local pub on the River Severn estuary, and the team got to work. The first products were designed on Ken's kitchen table and tested in a cowshed with a suitable electricity supply that belonged to a friendly local farmer.



THE ORIGIN

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**KTK  
SERVICE**

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1979

# 1973: ACTION MAN

An early customer of KTK was a Leicester manufacturing firm who ran plastic blow moulding machines which made boots for Action Man figures, they used the M range DC thyristor drive which had been designed to fit in a standard 19-inch electronics rack. One Friday night, Trevor and Kevin were heading off to the pub when the phone rang. The drive on the blow moulder had failed; they grabbed their gear and headed for Leicester, an early example of their focus on after-sales service.



KTK Plant 1978

## THE ORIGIN

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## 1979:

In 1979, KTK moved to the small Mid-Wales town of Newtown, due to an offer of rent-free factory space from the Mid Wales Development Corporation. The company has been based in Newtown ever since.



*Very soon KTK outgrew their first manufacturing unit and moved to larger premises in Newtown*



*Attending exhibitions and trade shows helped KTK get a foothold in the drives industry*

1975

1976

1977

1978

1979



*Inside KTK*

## THE ORIGIN



## 1982: VL750 AC Inverter

Factories usually want to pack as many manufacturing machines onto their production floor as possible. In 1982, Control Techniques responded to this by releasing the VL750 AC drive. The drive was far smaller than any of its competitors, allowing OEM machine builders to build significantly smaller machines, saving valuable factory floor space for their customers.



## 1983: VC150

Single phase 200 V to 240 V compact open loop V/F digital variable speed drive with status LED for fans, pumps and other general purpose applications.

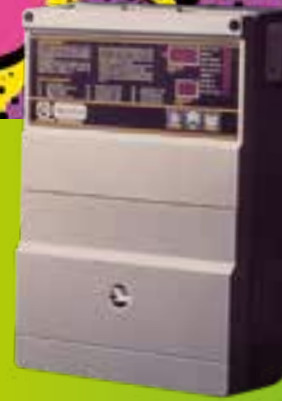
Predecessor to the Commander CDS which is of very similar design but has software parameter setup, the VC150 added an LED display and extended power range.





## 1986: MENTOR

In 1986 Control Techniques engineers figured out how to save their customers money by eliminating the need for a separate controller on their machines. This was achieved with Mentor: the first fully digital DC drive. Going fully digital allowed a second processor to be mounted in the drive. Motion control programs could now be stored on-board meaning an external controller was often not required.



## 1989: COMMANDER CD FLUX VECTOR AC DRIVE

In 1989, Control Techniques created the world's first practical flux vector AC drive. The role of the Commander CD is to control the speed of AC electric motors which are used for a host of applications from pumping, mixing and conveying to driving small machine tools and fans.



## THE ORIGIN

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# FORMATION OF ANYSPEED LTD.

By 1980 it had become apparent that there was a largely unsatisfied demand for high quality compact smaller drives in the range of 1-10 hp. Thus Anyspeed Ltd. was formed in Telford, as a sister company to KTK, which was a logical development of the mainstream business. Drawing on the same innovative technology which had so rapidly taken KTK from nothing to world status, Anyspeed followed suit by quickly becoming a market leader in small DC drives.

Anyspeed's outstanding export achievements earned the electronic small drive specialists new national and international recognition. Following a record 12 months of sales, both home and abroad, Anyspeed was awarded the coveted and prestigious 1987 Export Award for Smaller Businesses.





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Anyspeed added an advanced new AC drive to its range – the Commander – with phenomenal results both at home and overseas. Of all the Commander drives manufactured in the first 12 months, 66% were exported.



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1980:

# BIG IN EVERY WAY



We've never been afraid to stand out with promotional materials. Where others played it safe, we went in a different direction. This spirit has been evident in numerous campaigns over the years, from our wrestler friends shown here, to our partnership with the World's Strongest Man, Eddie Hall.



*Eddie Hall, the world's strongest man in 2017 became the **face of Control Techniques** and helped launch **Digitax HD***

1985

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1989



From left to right: John Day, John Stephens and Gareth Thomas **testing Mentor in 1986**

# 1985: KTK BECOMES CONTROL TECHNIQUES

In 1985, KTK changed its name to Control Techniques, and the firm embarked on a string of world-beating products – all developed out of its research and development facilities in Wales.



From left to right:  
Ken Briggs, Trevor Wheatley  
and Kevin Curran **outside the new  
Control Techniques manufacturing plant**



## THE ORIGIN

1980

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1986:

# THE START OF AN ERA



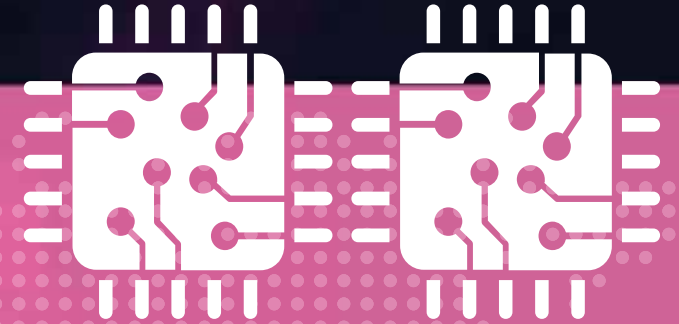
1985

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**MENTOR:**

# THE WORLD'S FIRST FULLY DIGITAL DC DRIVE

As Control Techniques grew, so did the company's network, developing close relationships with customers led to a wave of product innovation. In 1982, the world's smallest drive was invented, and in 1989 the world's first digital DC drive, the Mentor was created. This was the start of a whole family of Mentor drives, going up to the present-day Mentor MP, arguably the world's favourite DC motor drive.

Mentor was an advanced, fully microprocessor-controlled DC variable speed drive module covering the output range 7.5 to 750 kW as single-ended converter in four-quadrant, fully regenerative configuration. It featured a fully controlled six-pulse thyristor bridge, comprehensively protected against voltage transients and isolated from the control electronics.

The Mentor could be used in many applications and provided the reliability, power and control to increase productivity for new machines and applications where DC motors were already installed. With this drive, simple stand-alone applications were easily configured to control motor speed, voltage and current.

The introduction of Mentor marked a significant achievement in the field of DC drives technology by providing within a compact package all the accuracy and versatility inherent in microprocessor control, whilst remaining competitive in price with conventional analogue drives.

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# EXPANSION



**KTK Plant 1983**

A new research & development centre in Newtown, which not only contributed to the further development of KTK and Anyspeed but also formed a strong platform for the new Control Techniques technology transfer operation.

Anyspeed also moved into new premises in 1984, having outgrown its original factory. Operations were then conducted from a large, new 10,000 sq ft factory in Telford, with enough space to accommodate the upsurge in demand for small AC and DC drives. The long-term goal for Control Techniques was to establish manufacturing facilities in both Europe and North America to capitalise fully on the demand for the technology.

The showpiece for Control Techniques' manufacturing was the Mochdre printed circuit board plant in Newtown. The purpose-designed plant, which employed 90 people, was built in 1986 as a 10,000 sq ft facility, which was extended to double the size almost immediately, to include a module assembly plant.

**State of the art warehousing system** in the manufacturing plant



1985

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With **expansion** comes **bigger and better manufacturing facilities**. Pictured is the new **module assembly plant**

THE ORIGIN



## 1990: CDS

A single phase 200 V to 240 V compact open loop V/F digital variable speed drive with LED display for fans, pumps and other general purpose applications. Rated from 0.75 kW to 2.2 kW.

# '90S



## 1992: MENTOR II

Mentor II was Control Techniques' most advanced microprocessor controlled DC fully digital drive in the range 25 A to 1,850 A in single or four-quadrant format. It featured RS485 optically-isolated serial communications as standard enabling the drive to be part of a multi-drop control system and to communicate directly with programmable logic controllers and host computers.





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<title>
```



## 1995: UNIDRIVE



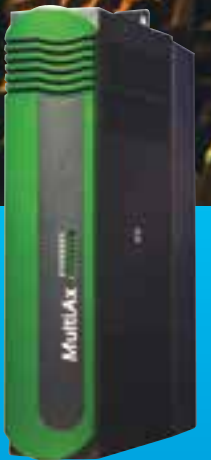
Unidrive was the world's first truly universal AC drive – a single product for all applications. It enabled all motor control requirements to be catered for in a single, compact product: sensorless vector open loop, flux vector closed loop and high performance brushless AC servo.

## 1994: DINVERTER

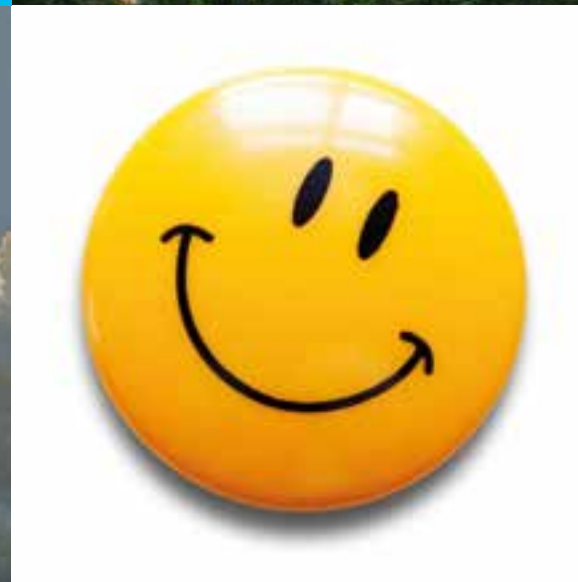
Dinverter was the compact low power, open loop AC drive in a bookcase format. The family of digital speed controllers operated in the power range 0.25 kW to 4 kW and combined full digital control and a high level of performance, with a host of advanced features rarely seen at the low power end of the drives market at that time.



## 1998: M'AX



The M'ax was a range of high-performance single-axis servo amplifiers for controlling permanent-magnet brushless motors that were installed with a Control Techniques Speed Loop Module (SLM). Each model in the M'ax range was supplied in one of two versions, each possessing a variation in functionality to suit a particular type of application.



## THE ORIGIN

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# 1990: MOVING TO THE US

Control Techniques quickly developed a simple method for global expansion: they would either label a Control Techniques drive with the branding of an existing manufacturer, or they would simply buy drives firms in other countries. The USA, as the world's biggest drives market, was a key target. In 1990, Control Techniques purchased the drives subsidiary of a major US corporation and adapted its product to their sales channels. Gaining the new drives company's customers immediately doubled Control Techniques' US sales. US growth has gone from strength to strength with head offices now in Minnesota.



*Nidec building in Minnesota*



*Emerson building in Minnesota*

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## 1995: SOLVING THE CHALLENGES OF THE WORLD'S MINERS

A major Scottish manufacturer of mining equipment had a problem: they needed a drive that was totally reliable in harsh mining environments. The drives were to be used in longwall shearing machines. Access to the machines was not possible when they were in use, so reliability was vital.

Engineers at Control Techniques worked round the clock to modify the Commander CDE drive for mining applications. The drive was mounted on a copper plate for water cooling, all circuit boards were coated with a protective spray, and the drive was specially upgraded to cope with extra vibration.



## 1996: BUILDING THE GRO

In 1996 the Control Techniques built The Gro, the ultra-modern research & development head quarters in Newtown, Wales. The Gro remains the HQ for Control Techniques to this day.

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# THE DRIVE THAT WOULD CHANGE THE WORLD.



## 1995: UNIDRIVE

### The world's first Universal AC Drive

The innovative Unidrive heralded a new era in motor control technology and drive system design, with a range of modes that were software selectable directly from the drive. For the first time, a single drive could handle all types of motor control, including AC and servo. This means users need only specify, stock and commission one AC drive product whatever the application. Unidrive fulfilled the need for a universal solution in a global market and could be as simple or sophisticated as the customer desired.



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With Unidrive, Control Techniques radically increased its sales, and was able to attract huge swathes of customers from its competitors.



Not for the first time, the company employed notable marketing techniques: the Unidrive Orchestra featured on primetime British TV show Blue Peter and magazine advertising offered customers the chance to drive an F1 racing car.

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# THE FAMOUS UNIDRIVE ORCHESTRA

With the help of 'Maestro Dingle Bingle', the Famous Unidrive Orchestra appeared on BBC's Blue Peter programme to show off Unidrive's capabilities.

The genius behind the ensemble is the computer, which determines the notes the musicians are playing. Messages are sent from the computer to the head of each musician. Apart from a bit of fun the orchestra was built to demonstrate the electronic capabilities of Control Techniques and to show how the drives can recreate musical sounds due to their outstanding accuracy. The drives also controlled the actions of the musicians so they looked like they were actually playing the instruments.



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# THE UNIDRIVE GRAND PRIX CHALLENGE

Heralded as the ultimate challenge, the free to enter Unidrive race days were used to compare the skills needed to compete with the qualities of Control Techniques – namely precision, speed and accuracy. Racing day heats took place at Brands Hatch and Oulton Park with the help of the Nigel Mansell Racing School. Winners of the heats qualified for the Grand Prix Final which took place once all the finalists had attended and been successful in gaining the National B Racing License Standard.



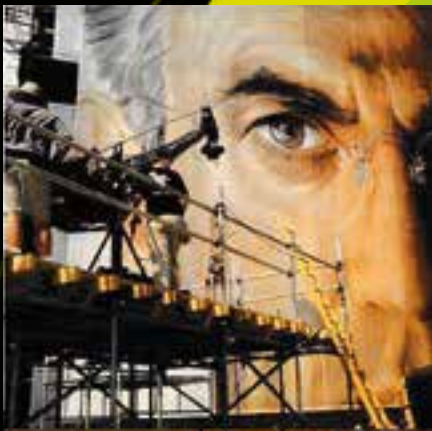
1990

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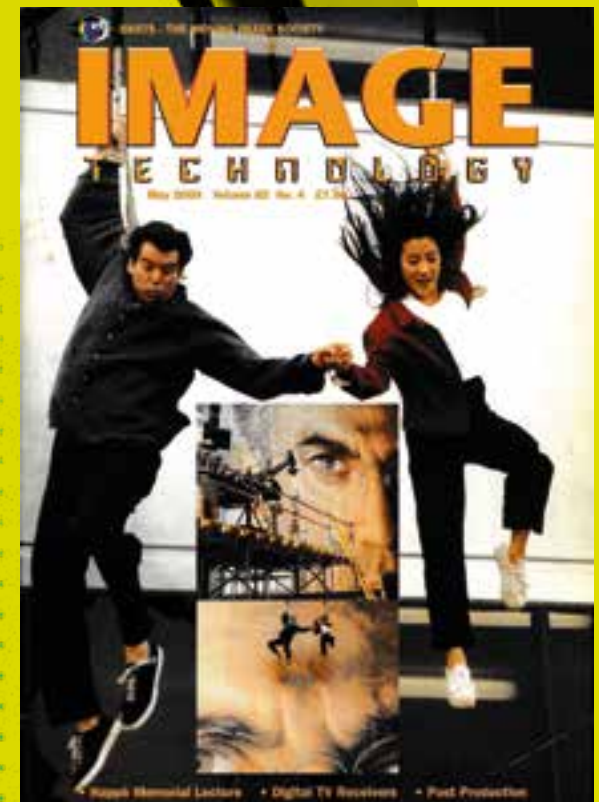
1993

1994



## 1997: SAVING JAMES BOND

James Bond lived to fight another day – thanks in part to technology from Control Techniques. James Bond and his female companion jumped off a 32-storey building in 'Tomorrow Never Dies', where the pair grab an advertising banner which rips down, allowing them to plummet 15 storeys. Historically, such leaps have been achieved using air descenders, but these are slow and can cause long delays between takes. The system consisted of a take-off motor, a pinch roller and cable all controlled by a Unidrive with on-board logic module. Its ability to ensure that tension was maintained in the cable meant that no loops developed in the cable. The system was designed, manufactured and shipped within three weeks.





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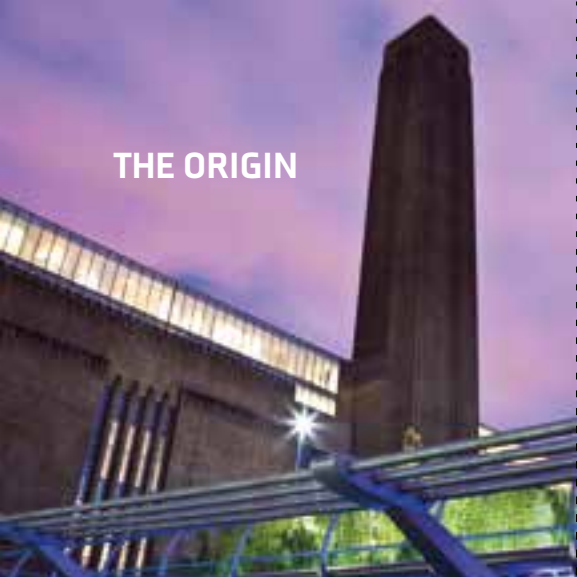
## 1997: GENESIS

It's not just behind the scenes where Control Techniques drives are fuelling innovation. From controlling podiums and platforms, to complex motion and synchronisation of scenery, props, lighting and sound; our drives have helped tell some of the biggest stories in music and theatre.

In 1997, as part of its 'Calling All Stations' tour, British rock band Genesis incorporated Control Techniques technology into its elaborate performance rig, and in later years we also worked with names like Robbie Williams, Pink, Cirque du Soleil and the Royal Shakespeare Theatre. The show always goes on.



THE ORIGIN



## 2003: UNIDRIVE SP

Control Techniques created a new benchmark for AC drive performance and flexibility with the launch of the unique Unidrive SP drive system. The Unidrive SP marked the evolution of AC drives from dedicated controllers of speed and torque to fully-fledged Solutions Platforms in their own right. It provided unequalled universal control and communication capabilities to handle the most complex centralised and distributed applications, as well as the versatility and simplicity of operation required for standalone applications.

Phil Sewell, Executive Vice President Sales and Marketing stated "The Unidrive SP provides technical solutions combined with cost benefits that answer the demand of drive users, both today and tomorrow!"



## 2000: COMMANDER SE

The Commander SE, an AC open loop vector powerhouse, combined unmatched flexibility within a small footprint. Best of all it was simple and easy to install. Its first 10 parameters met the needs of nearly 90% of drive applications.





## 2005: COMMANDER SK

Commander SK is a simple, compact, cost-effective, open loop vector AC variable speed inverter drive used to control the speed of an AC induction motor. The drive uses an open loop vector control strategy to maintain almost constant flux in the motor by dynamically adjusting the motor voltage according to the load on the motor.

It is a simple-to-install, easy-to-use, high performance drive design with integrated features that allow advanced functions to be performed. The Commander SK is ideal for a wide range of industrial automation and process control applications.



## 2007: DIGITAX ST

Digitax ST is a dedicated servo drive optimised for pulse duty. The drive is designed to meet the demands of modern manufacturers for smaller, more flexible and higher performing machinery. The drive can be tailored for a variety of applications and is available in 5 variants;

- Base – for centralised and coordinated motion
- Indexer – for ease of use and point-to-point positioning
- EZ Motion – for easy programming of high performance and synchronised motion applications
- Plus – for flexibility for the most demanding applications
- EtherCAT – built in for integration with industrial EtherCAT networks



## 2008: MENTOR MP

Mentor MP is Control Techniques' fifth generation DC drive and integrates the control platform from the world's leading intelligent AC drive technology.

This makes Mentor MP the most advanced DC drive available, giving optimum performance and flexible system interfacing capability. The drive allows for maximum motor performance, enhance system reliability and interface digitally with modern control equipment using Ethernet and fieldbus networks. The drive is designed for high power configuration and ease of retrofitting from Mentor II.



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# 2000: MILLENNIUM DOME DANCERS



A five-axis servo and SCADA system, designed and commissioned by Control Techniques, helped with the production of an aerial ballet at the Millennium Dome. The rapid, multi-axis motion control and positioning system was used in the Lovers' Duet, where two dancers were suspended 44 m above a crowded arena. The sheer height of the dome meant any servo system had to be situated over 50 m in the air, close to the roof mounted hoists and winches it controls, with its associated supervisory SCADA at floor level.

Much more difficult in system terms, was accommodating the circular profiles within the Lovers' Duet routine. This entailed mounting the panel which enclosed the servo and axis control system on a circular turntable suspended from the dome roof. With the table in motion the process of ensuring continuous signal integrity between the roof mounted servo system and the floor-mounted SCADA was much more difficult. These problems were overcome, and design requirements were met with the system by Control Techniques.

2005

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**2000:**

# FAST AND FURIOUS FORMULA 1 GEARBOX RIG

In Formula 1, the difference between winning and losing is often measured in hundredths or thousandths of a second. However, even a team which has an edge cannot be successful if its cars are not running when the chequered flag falls.

Reliability also wins the race, a fact recognised by the enormous sums that F1 teams spend to prove components under race conditions in the test laboratory. Jaguar Racing is at the forefront in this respect. The team invested in a large 160 kW inverter-based gearbox test rig.

Built at Control Techniques, the gearbox test rig and the associated motors became a part of a suite of advanced testing facilities at Jaguar Racing's prestigious F1 headquarters. The rig is used to simulate the on-track conditions gearboxes routinely encounter during F1 races. This includes load on one wheel only or simulating the over-run condition when the wheels drive the engine.



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**2005:**

# A NEW GENERATION OF COMMANDERS

## THE BEST-IN-CLASS PURPOSE AC DRIVE

In 2005, a new generation of the Commander family of general-purpose drives was unveiled, the Commander SK. The Commander SK drives were typically 50% smaller than the previous SE generation, launched in 2000, but with much more power.



2005

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# COMMANDER SK

## SIMPLICITY WITH FUNCTIONALITY

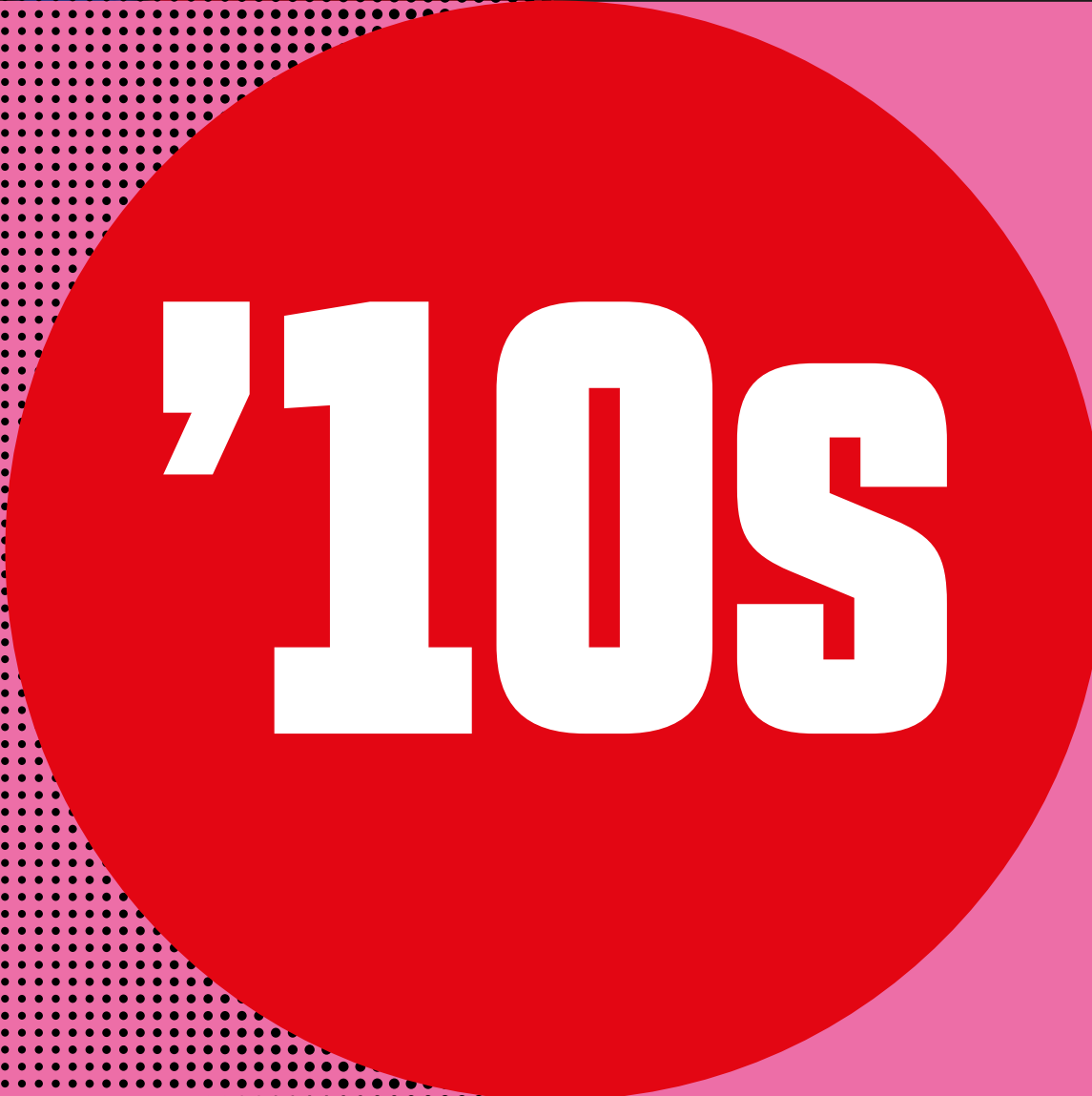
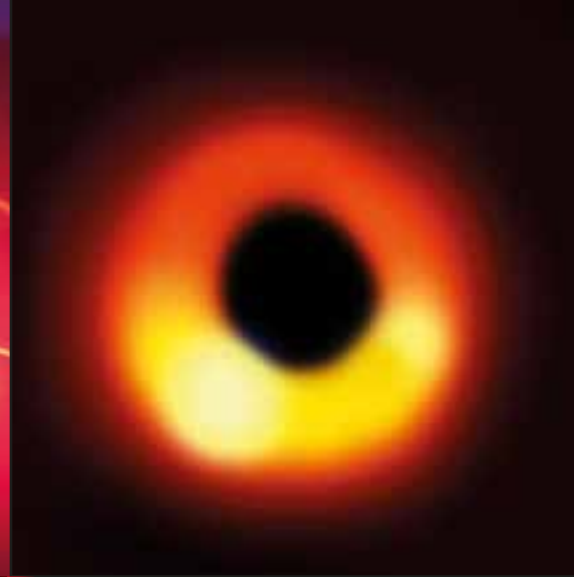
This new generation was designed with ease of use in mind, with the key parameters needed for 90% of applications printed right on the front of the drive, the drive's design ensures straightforward installation and commissioning. When faced with more complex applications, the Commander SK can be relied on to deliver.

Control Techniques spent 2 years developing the drive, which was aimed at the global market for general purpose drives which in 2000 was worth \$3bn, with an expansion of 5% every year.



Phil Sewell, Executive Vice-President for Sales and Marketing said **"It's probably the simplest drive in the general-purpose market, but there's a big drive inside waiting to get out."**

THE ORIGIN



## 2012: UNIDRIVE M

The Unidrive M family of drives were designed specifically for industrial applications. Led by the results of extensive customer-driven market research, each model is tailored to specific application needs identified within industry through extensive market research.

Unidrive M is evolving the future of the automation industry with the latest drive technology which includes over 21 patents granted and 42 patents pending.







## 2018: DIGITAX HD

The Digitax HD range brings ultimate performance to high dynamic applications, where high peak torque is required for fast acceleration. With a drive width of 40 mm, costs can be reduced by maximising cabinet space.

The drive comes in 3 functional variants to support all common industrial and is flexible to accommodate any automation architecture.



## 2018: NEW COMMANDER C SERIES

The Commander C series is built on six generations of knowledge and has been designed to be a simple and compact AC motor speed controller to meet advanced requirements in a wide range of applications and provide optimum user experience.

Its embedded intelligence eliminates the need for an external controller, saving both on cost and space when installing the Commander C drives into a system.



## 2020: PUMP DRIVE F600

Applications involving the flow of water demand extreme reliability and low energy consumption. Control Techniques' F600, part of the newly introduced Specialist series of industry-specific drive technologies, builds on the company's five decades of drives expertise, delivering precise, dependable control in the areas it's most needed.

This isn't a generic drive with pump features tacked on; it's a dedicated, specialist pump drive, designed from the ground up to deliver reliability and efficiency for flow applications.



2010

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# 2014: GREEN LIGHT FOR NEW TECH LAB

To ensure business growth and development Control Techniques commissioned works to begin on a new engineering lab at the company headquarters that would house around 35 highly skilled research & development engineers.

The new, industrial scale facility would enable the company to expand its offer through the development of new products and technologies.



Control Techniques started development on a new 900 m<sup>2</sup> engineering lab on land adjacent to its headquarters in Newtown, which was completed in late 2015.

Edwina Hart, Economy Minister, "I am delighted the Welsh Government is supporting the expansion of Control Techniques, an anchor company that makes a significant contribution to the regional economy and a major employer in mid Wales."

2015

2016

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2019



Pupils and teachers at the local Penygloddfa Community Primary School put together a time capsule containing items which signify life at the school in 2015, including photographs, newspapers and a school jumper. The time capsule was buried underneath the new development.

The pupils were then treated to a tour around the building site to see the work in progress, before being given a guided tour around Control Techniques' headquarters.

**2015:**

# SCHOOL BURIES TIME CAPSULE

A Newtown primary school made a small piece of history at Control Techniques new tech lab development in Newtown.



2010

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2017:

# BOUGHT BY NIDEC

In January 2017, Control Techniques was purchased by Nidec; the world's number one comprehensive motor manufacturer, with about \$11bn in sales (2017).

Nidec manufactures all kinds of motors; from **micro-motors** that make mobile phones vibrate, to **supersized motors** for the largest industrial applications.



*Nagamori-san meets with First Minister Carwyn Jones during his visit to Newtown in 2017*

# Nidec

2015

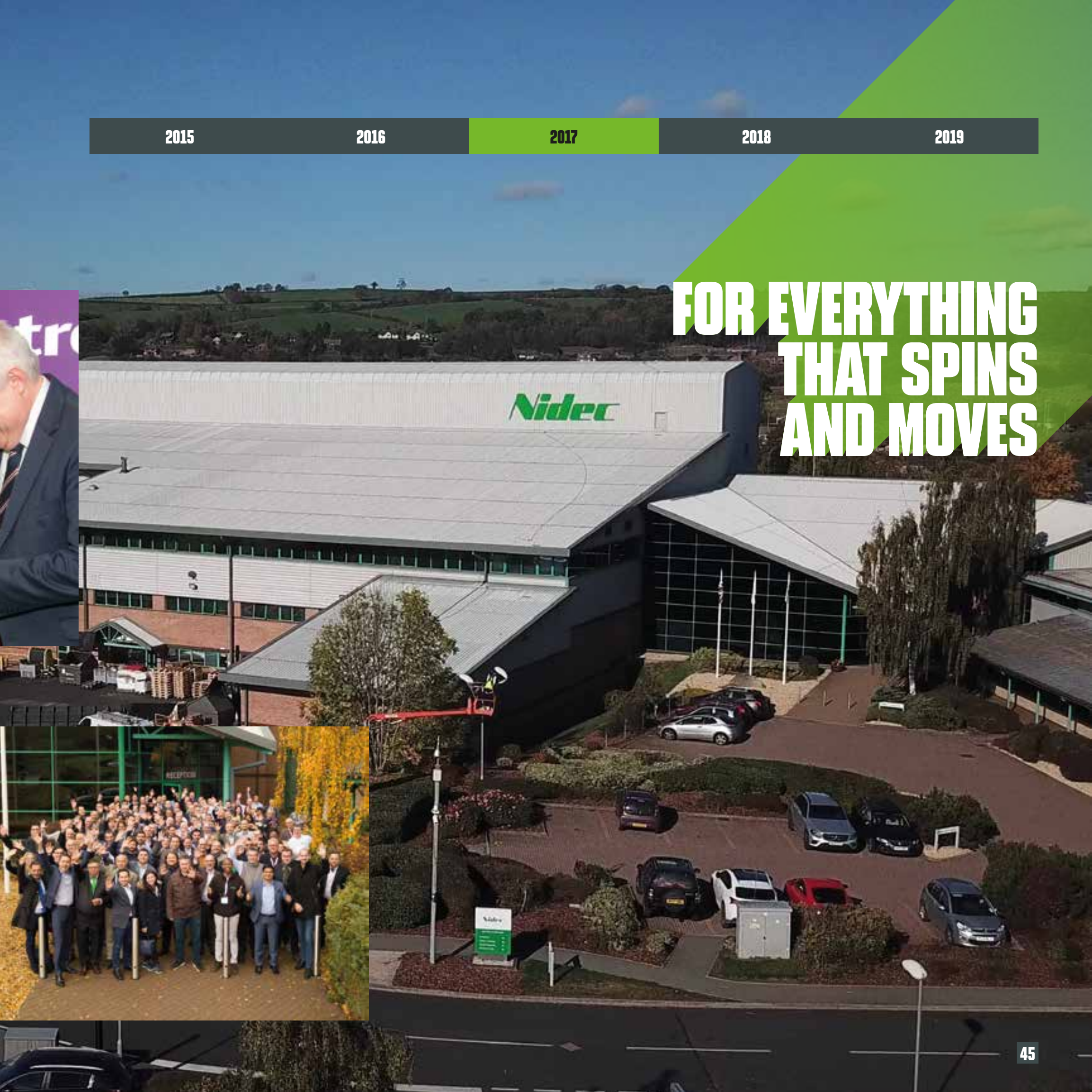
2016

2017

2018

2019

**FOR EVERYTHING  
THAT SPINS  
AND MOVES**



2010

2011

2012

2013

2014



**2018:**  
**MINIMUM SIZE  
MAXIMUM  
PERFORMANCE**

Eddie Hall, the strongest man on the planet, lent his considerable strengths to Control Techniques as an official brand ambassador. Eddie helped to promote Control Techniques globally in a series of adverts, public appearances and other projects, starting with the release of Digitax HD.

Eddie Hall, 'Control Techniques is, like me, a specialist in its chosen field. It understands the importance of identifying your strengths and working hard to achieve your goals. I'm excited to be the face of a British success story in Control Techniques, and I look forward to helping the team there make the right impact.'

2015

2016

2017

2018

2019

# 2018: DIGITAX HD

## One servo system for all your automation needs

Control Techniques customers wanted to pack the latest servo drive technology into even smaller spaces. So, Control Techniques engineers stepped up, the result: the Digitax HD M750 servo drive with UltraFlow technology. The unique, patented UltraFlow system represents another world first for Control Techniques. The system allows machine builders to further reduce cabinet size by up to 50% through expelling heat from the drive directly outside the cabinet. This approach allows drives to be stacked without the need for air channels between them.

Digitax HD has a minimal footprint, alongside exceptional power density, making it one of the smallest servo drives on the market today. It is only 40 mm in width and can fit in a cabinet just 200 mm in depth.



2010

2011

2012

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2014

2019:

# AWARD WINNING DIGITAX HD



The 32nd annual Control Engineering Engineers' Choice Awards shines a light on 26 categories of control, instrumentation, and automation products, revealing the best of those introduced in 2018 as chosen by the Control Engineering print and digital audience.

A total of 102 finalists from 44 companies were listed on the ballot for evaluation. Automation professionals from Control Engineering's subscriber lists then voted to identify the products they felt were the most exceptional based on technological advancement, service to the industry, and market impact.

The Digitax HD servo drives won both the Motion Control – Drives category and the Plant Engineering's Product of the Year 2018, for new outstanding product in the manufacturing and non-manufacturing industries that help engineers do their jobs in a smarter, safer, efficient and productive way.





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2019

# 2019: COMMANDER 5-YEAR WARRANTY



# YEAR 5 AS GOOD AS NEW

In September of 2019, Control Techniques launched a free, five-year warranty for its Commander range of general-purpose drives. Anyone who purchases a drive from the Commander range, will now be able to register to extend the products' warranty from two to five years, at no extra cost. The move to extend the warranty is testimony to the products' exceptional track record for reliability and durability.

2010

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2019:

# CHARITY ABSEILING

Control Techniques organised a charity event in support of those suffering from Crohn's Disease and Colitis. To raise money, 32 brave volunteers from Control Techniques and several of the UK's biggest lift integrators, abseiled off the Northampton National Lift Tower, the UK's tallest testing centre at 127.5 metres.



*Terri Rees, Planner, Newtown, Powys*

*Anthony Pickering,  
President*

2015

2016

2017

2018

2019



Kevin Richardson,  
Outside Sales Engineer South East, UK

The courageous souls agreed to abseil off the tower to raise money for Crohn's & Colitis UK, a charity that supports the circa 300,000 people in the UK with Crohn's Disease, Ulcerative Colitis and other forms of IBD (Inflammatory Bowel Disease). Crohn's & Colitis UK not only provides support and brings people together, it drives pioneering research, campaigns to improve lives and builds a brighter future for sufferers.

Anthony Pickering,  
President and Eddie  
Hall, The world's  
strongest man 2017



2020

2021

2022

2023

2024

2020:

# HOW TO RUN A FACTORY IN A PANDEMIC

The BBC visited Control Techniques in Newtown to see how the 350 employees were being kept safe during the COVID-19 pandemic.

During lockdown production was suspended for 3 weeks, the Shenzhen facility in China was first to go into lockdown and the lessons learnt have were then applied to the Newtown facility. Including; 53 washing stations, plastic shields sealing off work areas, mobile screens on wheels, extra shifts to reduce employees on site at one time, a new one way system and foot door handles.



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# CONTINUING TECHNICAL

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# PROL ROQUES



2020

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# A BOLD NEW IDENTITY



ABCDEFGHIJKLMN  
OPQRSTUVWXYZ  
0123456789

Light  
Regular  
Bold  
Black

... and yes, we're still



**Control Techniques** launched a new identity, marking the next stage in its evolution as a brand.

2020 was the year to reinvent ourselves with a striking change in the brand's visual identity, backed up by a comprehensive set of principles covering the purpose, values and ongoing strategy of the business. An entirely new suite of branded materials has been created, with the new identity touching every part of the organisation.

Pam Chahal, Global Marketing Director, "It has been evident for a while that there was some confusion in the marketplace over who Control Techniques is, and where it stands in today's competitive landscape. In recent years the business has changed ownership, which brought its own challenges, but we are now completely aligned and looking to the future.

"With the launch of our new identity, we took things back to square one and tried to answer the fundamental questions facing any organisation. The outcome of each stage informed the next, which has led us to the launch of this exciting new brand. Control Techniques has been active for nearly 50 years, so there was a lot of heritage we had built up. By focusing on our strengths, we have developed a bold new vision for the future of our organisation, confirming our position as a challenger to the establishment.

"It was really interesting in the development of this new vision how passionate our people were. The term 'Drive Obsessed' comes as a result of seeing the drive and determination of our people to empower our customers to achieve amazing things."



2025

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"Heroes are made by the paths they choose."

## THE ORIGIN

2020

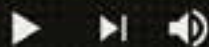
2021

2022

2023

2024

Guided set up screens for commissioning  
within the Connect software tool



9:49 / 29:25



DRIVE

COMMANDER

DFS SERIES

This History Book is an ongoing project,  
any contribution towards Control Techniques' history is welcomed.  
Contact [Brand@mail.nidec.com](mailto:Brand@mail.nidec.com) to contribute to any future issues.

2025

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# THE LAUNCH EVENT

Ahead of the brand launch on October 15, a teaser trailer was released on Control Techniques' 47th birthday, along with a second shortly after, hinting at something new on the horizon. Teaser emails and invitations were distributed internally, generating momentum throughout the Control Techniques family. Oh, and we also took over the largest B2B networking site on the internet: LinkedIn. No big deal. Prior to our external launch, our employees posted a simple green box with our vibrant new green alongside a mysterious hashtag – #driveobsessed – piquing interest in what we were doing, and driving people to our dedicated launch microsite at [driveobsessed.com](http://driveobsessed.com). The results surprised us all, as LinkedIn became awash with our glorious new green. Safe to say we made an impact.

All of which led to October 15, one of the biggest days in the history of Control Techniques. The start of something special. Our live launch event was attended by over 1,000 people and has since racked up thousands more views on YouTube. Alongside this all of the newly-branded materials went live, including our refreshed website, social media channels, corporate materials and our new identity was fully unveiled at our Newtown HQ.

The time has come for us to shine.



**CONTROL TECHNIQUES  
DRIVE OBSESSED**

# CONTROL TECHNIQUES

*Nidec*

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