



THE YEAR IN REVIEW

2006 delivered numerous advances in lighting technology – and perhaps nowhere was that more obvious than at Lightfair International.

BY LINDA LONGO

The lighting world as we know it is changing at warp speed. The many industry professionals who were waiting for LEDs to have more practical applications than signage or special effects did not walk away from this mega-show disappointed. Manufacturers in all categories have been rising to the challenge and, in some cases, partnering with technology-based companies to do so. Simply put, it's hard to keep up with the breakneck pace of these developments – and the playing field is more crowded than ever.

Lightfair's record numbers – in both first-time exhibitors and attendees overall – can be attributed to the noticeable growth of the solid-state category in general, as well as the amount of individuals interested in viewing the product developments in person. Not since the fiber optics bandwagon in the mid to late 1990s has there been such a boon in lighting company upstarts.

At past shows, LEDs were primarily relegated to the lamp section. This year, not only did LEDs dominate that category, but nearly every fixture manufacturer had either already begun incorporating the technology into their lines or was planning to in the near future. To the delight of designers and specifiers viewing the exhibition, many decorative companies are actively exploring this capability for their products.

The other most obvious trend observed at Lightfair was the continued prevalence of tiny fixtures that can provide the same light output (or better) than their larger predecessors. Miniaturization is highly desired in almost every industry these days, and lighting is no exception – especially as it relates to providing illumination in tight spaces where previously it would have been impossible.

On the following pages, you will find a sampling of just some of the innovations that had people talking at Lightfair.

