Technical Note TN6

18th September 2008

G68 Zone Outputs

Overview

Most versions of the G68 can act as the centrepiece of a Meridian system spread across two or three zones. This allows sources situated within the Main zone to be accessed from the additional zones. In the case of G68ADV, G68AXV and G68XXV, the additional zones can be fed audio and video signals from the main zone. G68AXD, G68XXD and the now-discontinued G68D allow audio to be distributed to the additional zones, but they have no video-distribution capabilities. The discontinued G68J has no zone capabilities whatsoever.

The system is designed to utilise a "Zone Controller" in each additional zone. The Zone-Controller is a Meridian product which provides an interface within the zone for the user to select source and volume level. This control may be via infra-red, RS232 or from the front-panel (if applicable).

Within the current Meridian range, the following products are suitable for use as Zone Controller:

G01
G02
G51
G92
G95
G68
G61R
C61R
DSP speakers (except DSP420)

In addition to accessing the sources in the Main zone, it is possible to use "local" sources within the additional zone. This may involve placing an extra product, such as a disc player, in the zone. Alternatively, local sources may be internal to the Zone-Controller, e.g. The disc player and tuner within a G95.

It is important to note that, although the G68 on its own can supply additional zones with audio and video signals, such a system is limited in functionality.

Limitations of G68 without additional Zone Controllers:

1. No IR control of the third zone is available.

2. IR control of the second zone is hampered:
(i) Volume is adjusted using "Shifted volume" commands. These are issued by pressing "Function" and the volume keys on the MSR+.
(ii) Sources are "toggled" through using the "Record" key.

Although a programmable or learning remote-control may circumvent the inconvenience of the volume commands, there is no way of selecting sources using a single command.

RS232 does not suffer from these limitations.

3. Control of a Meridian player in the Main zone is impossible unless that player is the source currently-selected in the Main zone.

Connections between zones:

The G68 is capable of feeding audio signals to the additional zones in analogue or digital form. Where possible, it is advisable to use a digital connection as this will minimise the risk of introducing noise and distortion to the signal. This is particularly pertinent in cases where a long cable run between zones is required.

G68ADV, G68AXV and G68XXV include support for sending Video signals to the additional zones. These are available in composite and S-video form. Any video sources connected via composite or s-video to the G68 can be switched through to the additional zones for viewing on a suitable display device. It may be relevant to bear in mind that the G68 features neither conversion between video-formats nor video scaling.

Each additional zone requires a comms connection to the system in the main zone. If the Zone-Controller is a DSP speaker, a "5M" lead is used; all other Zone-Controllers are connected to the main zone using a "5C" lead. Naturally, these leads must be suitably-lengthy.

Configuration:

The configuration of products in multi-zone systems involves changing parameters on products in the additional zones and may also involve changing parameters on products within the main zone. It is important to note that the Meridian set-up program "MConfig" does not support the configuration of additional zones. Instead, the settings must be accessed via the products' front-panels or on-screen menus as applicable.

The parameter that allows independent control of zones is the "System Address" setting within Meridian products. The main system is set to "System Address 1" or SA 1, the second zone is SA 2 and the third zone is SA 3.

Although eight system addresses exist within Meridian comms, the maximum number of independently-controllable zones is three.

The Zone-Controllers within the additional zones must have their System Addresses set accordingly. The method for adjusting System Address varies across the product range and is detailed in manuals supplied with the individual products

Full instructions for configuring all combinations of products is beyond the scope of this document. For further assistance, please contact Meridian Technical Support.