

ELECTRIC AGAIN

Older readers might remember English Electric as more than just the title of an OMD album. To them, it flew the (Union) flag for 20th-century British industry and engineering. Deltics and Lightnings. The Lyons Electronic Office. The white heat of...atomic energy. Ahh, Rule Britannia!

Nostalgia addicts might welcome the news that English Electric, who disappeared in 1968, has now been revived as a brand by "the good people at Chord Company" (specifically, Alan and Sally Gibb). Time to dust off all the traditional clichés - warm draught bitter, cottage rose-gardens and the sound of willow on leather'?

Possibly; the new English Electric's first product is a Gigabit Ethernet switch, reflecting where technology is today. Optimised for music, the 8Switch has eight ports (hence the name) and is built into a machined aluminium enclosure. Its features include electrical noise isolation, temperature-compensated crystal-clocking with accuracy rated at 0.1 ppm, resonance-damping feet and front-panel indication of power, alarm and link status/speed for each of the eight ports. The 8Switch's £450 asking price also includes a 0.75m Chord Company C-Stream digital streaming cable worth £40. This story was alas spoiled for us after Chord's PR admitted to us that the 8Switch is made not in Preston, but "Asia, to keep the price down". He did however add that "British-built (EE) products will follow".

Further details: *English Electric, (01980) 625700. englishelectric.uk*

