

One flick will change Shabbat as we know it

The KosherSwitch[®] is a revolutionary and Halachically certified new technology

By Mark Karimzadeh

For years, most Mashadis and much of the Jewish world have been frustrated by trying to plan which lights to leave on for Shabbat, or which switches to put on timers, so as to keep the house properly lit for the family and visiting guests during this long night and day of rest. The situation complicates further when we experience a two-day Chag followed by Shabbat. One person in our community delved into the subject more intensely, and decided to see if he could find a way to be able to turn lights on and off during Shabbat and Chaggim, while still being able to maintain all the Jewish laws pertaining to the subject.

The result is a new patent-pending light switch, called the KosherSwitch[®] which was conceived and invented – in the spare time he had when he was not giving us reasons why Queens is better than Great Neck – by Andy Menashe Kalati. The technology employed in the KosherSwitch[®] allows a person to have control over the flow of electricity during Shabbat, in a way that is permitted by Halacha. The KosherSwitch[®] has already been endorsed in writing by Rabbinical authorities in the USA and Israel, including the rabbis of our own Mashadi community.

Although this new patented technology will allow it to be used for several different functions, initially, the product is set to launch as an in-wall light switch. It will be a replacement for traditional light switches and timers, and will apply to lighting. In the future, the company plans to roll-out the technology in other areas besides lighting, such as air conditioning, door access systems, in the medical equipment field, and generally any other realm in which the use of the device will be intended to do something that is in the spirit of Shabbat (which means that the switch is not intended for use on the TV or the computer).

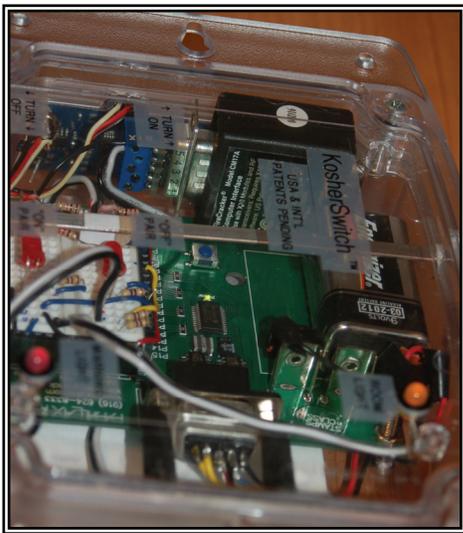
So how does this amazing gadget actually work, you may ask. The switch is a piece of plastic that's not attached to anything electrical, and when flicked into a new position, it is not actually doing anything, and it's certain that there is still nothing going on inside the device itself when the switch is moved. However, inside the device, there is a computer that sends a special pulse, or a signal, every few seconds (the exact amount of seconds is random, but at its minimum, it is a Halachically significant lapse of time). This pulse then sends back a signal to the



The KosherSwitch[®] Classic, coming soon to a wall near you.

computer, and if the signal indicates that the switch is in, to put it simply, the “on” position, it will cause the light to turn on. Similarly, if the signal notices the switch as being in the “off” position, it will cause the lights to turn off. In order to be certain that the basic Halachic law is fulfilled, the actions by the computer are never guaranteed due to failures that may occur randomly within the pulsing and light controlling processes within the switch. So it could take more than one pulse and signal to make the switch act on the flow of the electricity to the light.

In plain English, if you turn the position of the Kosherswitch[®] to “on”, in a matter of a number of seconds, the light connected to that switch will turn on. It may sound too good to be true, and some may see this as another way that the Jewish people are always trying to get around observing the real essence and meaning of some laws by creating “loopholes” so to speak (similarly to how some people view, for example, the selling of chametz for Pesach, the putting up of a wire for an eiruv, or the wearing of wigs by married women). At the end of the day, our Torah is a book of Laws, and any specific Law has certain exacting requirements and boundaries, and as our world continues to develop at such a fast pace technologically, any new introduction, such as the Kosherswitch[®], can be approved by the Rabbinical authorities as being something that falls within the boundaries of a specific Law – as has been the overwhelming positive response in this case. Interestingly, in many circles, technology is actually embraced for its potential to make religious observance easier, broader, and more fulfilling.



Transparent Kosherswitch[®] shows the inner workings

It is easy to see how much benefit this technology can bring to many people. By being able to control more exactly when lights should stay on and when they should be off, there is a great savings in energy costs. There is no need to have timers and timer switches peppered around the house and set week in

and week out, and there is no need to try and predict beforehand, which lights, or how many, will be needed to leave on for Shabbat. Not to mention the unexpected visit of guests, which may turn up in a house that is dark, because some rooms in the house are not usually used on Shabbat unless there is a guest known to be coming. Furthermore, those less observant could use the Kosherswitch[®] out of respect for their more observant family, relatives and friends that they know will be at their house from time to time on Shabbat. All in all, the Kosherswitch[®] allows Shabbat to be a lot more worry free – when it comes to the planning of lighting, as well as making it impossible for anyone to violate Shabbat, which they would do if they mistakenly, or by habit, turned a light on or off in the normal way we do today.

Andy Kalati is happy to say that his revolutionary idea is in its final product development stage. The company is already partially funded, and with the attainment of more angel investors, will be ready to mass produce and launch the Kosherswitch[®] in a large number of markets worldwide. The distribution is planned for direct to consumer through online sales, chain home improvement stores, Judaica shops and third party installers and contractors. The initial focus of distribution will also be in the institutional arena, such as for installation and use in hotels, hospitals, nursing homes and assisted living centers. Andy is hoping that he can begin evaluating and testing the Kosherswitch[®] first in our own Mashadi community. Final pricing has not yet been established, but the Kosherswitch[®] is expected to sell at retail for about \$50-65 per switch. Andy estimates that it will pay for itself within a year by the amount of electricity that is saved when using the device. For more information about the Kosherswitch[®] you can visit www.kosherswitch.com or email them directly at info@kosherswitch.com.

Editor's Note: As we were going to press, Kosherswitch[®] was granted US Patent# 7,872,576. Congratulations to Andy for achieving this notable "patent holder" status.