

Tribute to Nick Britz



Robert Izzett, Bruce Riley, Nick Britz and Duncan Riley of DWR.

Director and more importantly friend at DWR Distribution, Nik Britz, who has been with the company since its very start, is planning to leave South Africa and move to the United Kingdom.

Oh, the stories we have of Nick! There are so many memories and it actually makes you want to cry and laugh at the same time. The notorious tale that always comes to mind is back in the day when Nick worked for JR from Vedatec. Nick was setting up for an event at the exclusive Summer Place, a conference venue with immaculate gardens, located on the outskirts of Sandton. JR was elsewhere when he received a call from the venue, “Your technician has ploughed a forklift into our lawns.” Nick did not have a driver’s license and the forklift belong to another company! Apparently, he had walked past the machinery, seen the key in the ignition and decided to give it a go.

But young Nick was valiant and smart. As a youngster, life had been tough, but he worked hard for JR, gained experience and then found himself freelancing for a short spell. It was during this time, in 2006, when Duncan Riley decided to start his own company called DWR Distribution. Duncan resigned and was enthusiastic about his new venture, but as reality set in, he started doubting his decision. “I remember Duncan sitting outside, looking bleak,” said Sherryn Riley. “We need someone to help you Duncan.” Only one person came to mind, and that person was Nick.

Hiring Nick – although not confident at the time of how his salary would be paid – was one of the most important decisions DWR ever made. The company was run from home, the double garage painted with a counter installed to create a makeshift workshop.

“Life was simple back then,” smiles Nick. “I used to get coffee and lunch from Sherryn, and of course my first date with Nicolet (now his wife), saw us all making cables at the dining room table. How times have changed. I have been blessed to grow with DWR and watch it blossom to what it is today.”

Nick has been instrumental in making MA lighting fly in South Africa as well as playing a huge role in establishing the training provided by DWR. He has provided technical support to clients and done his fair share of roadshows and Mediatech exhibitions.

“It was an amazing experience right from the very beginning,” said Duncan Riley. “It was just the three of us, and I can still remember delivering our first lights to Andy Moore, then from Avtech. These memories are still very fresh and it has been incredible to see Nick’s journey over the past ten years, and watching him grow from

strength to strength.”

Once all documents and VISAs have been approved, Nick will be joining Philips Entertainment Lighting in the UK.

“The one thing I can say is that the UK must start preparing for Nick’s sense of humour... watch out!” said Bruce Riley of DWR. Bruce also remembers working with JR from Vedatech many years ago, where he and Nick did their first show together. “Immediately Nick and I hit it off as friends and when JR went back to Johannesburg, Nick decided to stay with me in Durban for a few extra nights before going home. That night we went out and blew every last penny we had made on the gig! Over the years Nick and I have built a strong friendship. He is one of those people you can call at any time of the night and he’ll cut off his arm to help you.”

Robert Izzett from DWR agrees. “I have learnt a lot from Nick in how to teach people and pass on knowledge. Nick has an amazing way of sharing knowledge with other people in a way that they really understand. Another thing I’ve learnt from Nick is determination and perseverance. When Nick problem solves he never gives up, he just carries on until they come up with a solution and that is a very valuable lesson. I have also learnt, from Nick, how to insult people in a nice way.”

The DWR team are very appreciative of everything Nick has contributed to the company. “We wish him well in the UK and hope all his dreams come true,” said Duncan. “While he goes through the motion of applying for visas and so on, Nick will remain at DWR until everything has been finalized.”

Ended Nick, “Thanks for everything and for helping me grow as a person, I will miss you all. I will now be supporting DWR from the other side of the ocean. It’s hard for me, but I have always only followed my instincts in life and feel this is the right opportunity at the right time.”

To the Britz family, we have been grateful to have you in our lives. Godspeed and we love you.