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PRISM Awards

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At the launch of #LightSAred in 2020 with Projeni Pather (AAXO), Kevan Jones (SACIA), Duncan Riley (DWR Distribution) and Sharif Baker (TPSA)

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#LightSAred scooped the Silver Award in the category of Arts and Entertainment at this year's PRISM Awards – this after the campaign lit 505 buildings, theatres, and landmarks red across South Africa in aid of the live events industry, who then had not worked for five months.

Despite the win, the sad reality is that 15 months after the Covid-19 lockdown was first implemented in South Africa, many companies have been forced to close their doors permanently and retrenchments have seen thousands lose their jobs and for freelancers it has been an extremely hard blow. “It is a bittersweet victory for the industry – we have received recognition, but the wheels on the bus are not moving forward”, says Duncan Riley of DWR Distribution.

The #LightSAred campaign was held in August of 2020 with the aim of bringing attention to the desperate state of the live events industry, and to obtain a seat with government to discuss ways of keeping the industry on its legs and safely opening the industry under strict Covid-19 guidelines and protocols.

The initiative saw many competitors within the industry putting competition aside and coming together to save the industry, save jobs and feed their own.

The judge's feedback was positive with comments including, “The industry was hard hit so great work; Comes in very different – a real PR driven campaign; They went out of the box; Stood out – this campaign excited a lot of judges; Within the category, it woke you up; PR at the best; They got the minister talking to them too; The results were immediate; Great use of visuals to tell the story; Phenomenal to get over 500 building lit up and almost R5 million exposure, especially during a time when the media was closed.”

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The #LightSared incentive was born when Duncan Riley of DWR Distribution saw similar initiatives held across the globe after the live events industry was unable to work due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and he joined hands with Sharif Baker of the TPSA, and SACIA.

The campaign was made possible thanks to the participants in the live events industry from technical supply companies to actors, theatres, and event companies. It turned out that so many more people, besides crew, were affected from cleaners to ticket sales, décor suppliers, caterers, and other industries.

"It was special to see everyone stand together on the night and a special world of thanks to creative director and designer Shaun Sebastian. I would also like to thank a charity we support, #FeedourCrew who are still helping freelancers with food vouchers. This time has been so difficult for everyone so please give it all you have as we hang in there for a bit longer," says Duncan Riley of DWR Distribution.