Dream Sets delivers on a massive scale for Scania Southern Africa

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Scania, a leading global manufacturer of trucks and buses, recently launched its new product line for the African market at a much-anticipated launch event, held at Montecasino in Johannesburg.

Blue Moon brought on board Dream Sets, one of South Africa's prominent set and technical services companies, to manufacture the set and exhibition areas and to deliver technical services for the event. Toni Van Oostenrijk of SpaceCadet, who took the lead role in designing the look and feel of the set for the event, drew inspiration from the front grill of the new Scania trucks, which he worked into the design of the bar and reception area. "When we first proposed this idea to the client, they seemed a little sceptical. However, as with so many of Toni's designs, as soon as they saw it, they instantly fell in love with the concept," says Dream Sets project manager, Billy van der Merwe.

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Billy explains how Dream Sets, together with their partners, managed to conceal and then dramatically unveil three full-sized trucks inside a dome structure by using some very creative stage design.

The event was hosted in one of Gearhouse In2Structure's 6 Bay SupaDomes, which spans an impressive 36 meters by 72 meters long, and is one of the most robust and expertly engineered structures of its kind in the world. Designed and manufactured in South Africa, In2Structure's Supa Dome boast a load capacity of three tonnes per arch for rigging, which provided Dream Sets with all the capacity they needed to load in an impressive amount of lighting and audio equipment, in addition to a number of LED screens and set pieces for the event.

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The Scania launch event comprised several phases, starting with a heritage walk, which provided visitors with the opportunity to amble through an exhibition space leading into the cocktail area. The exhibition was achieved using back-lit lightboxes with images of Scania trucks printed on fabric. The stations were designed to celebrate the company's long history of innovation, from the first vehicles that date back to the late 1900s through the decades to the present. "Plinths were placed in front of each of the lightboxes and objects representing each decade were displayed to create a tangible sense of nostalgia and an appreciation for technological advancement, which is a driving force behind Scania's identity as a company," Billy explains.

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Once organisers were ready to open the main gala event, guests were welcomed into an impressive dinner and entertainment space, that was initially concealed using screens and an LED video wall. Once inside, they were invited to enjoy a meal and some live entertainment amid keynote addresses by Scania senior management. Dream Sets built a fully functioning stage for performances – which does not seem like an extraordinary endeavour until you realise that the structure was actually being used to conceal the trucks awaiting the moment of reveal. "We constructed the stage using blocks on wheels and a solid wall that was used to screen the space beyond the stage, where the Scania trucks were on exhibition," Billy explains. He goes on to point out that the tetras-like boxes were on wheels and therefore could be moved into position to

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reveal the truck showroom space behind the stage at the right moment.

To create the appropriate mood and add the required drama to the reveal, Dream Sets made use of their extensive inventory of event lighting inside the venue. “Our entire lighting inventory was in the dome, including our Robe LEDWash 800s, the ColorSpot 700s and the 150s, with a few additional fixtures. We also worked closely with LaserX, one of the leading providers of laser technology for the eventing industry in South Africa, to create an innovative and impressive laser show during the climactic reveal.”

“There were a number of challenges that we had to overcome to make this event happen the way that we

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envisioned it," Billy points out. "Logistics are always going to be a test on an event of this size, which was further complicated by the fact that we had to manoeuvre around full-sized trucks that were an integral part of the set and event design in a confined space. We also had to contend with the fact that Montecasino is one of the busiest venues, in one of Johannesburg's most intense business and residential areas." Billy credits the amazing teamwork and open communication between stakeholders as central to the success of the launch. "We are very proud to have delivered an event that has been recognised as one of the best the global launches of the New Truck Generation by Scania, and we would not have been able to achieve these high standards without everybody's passion, commitment and attention to detail!"

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