

Durban based AV Company invests in L-Acoustics KARA II

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Craig Browning and his son Keagan from the AV Company.

The AV Company, headquartered in Durban and led by Craig Browning and his son Keagan, has just taken delivery of an L-Acoustics KARA II system from DWR Distribution, which immediately was put into action for a finance conference held at the Sandton Convention Centre.

The investment is a dream come true for Keagan. "About five years ago, I had the opportunity to work on a project utilizing L-Acoustics, and I immediately fell in love; there's simply no comparison," Keagan says. "We started discussing the possibilities of purchasing the system in

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December last year, and in February, placed the order with Richard Smith.”

The shipment included 12 KARA II loudspeakers, 8 SB18 high-power subwoofers, 3 LA12X amplified controllers, and various accessories. When it reached Johannesburg, the next step involved manufacturing flight cases and bags, and by the beginning of September, everything was prepared for the conference.

“The AV Company have been fantastic,” says Richard Smith from DWR. “They are keen and eager, and the new system is perfect for the work they do. It is scalable for their market and can be combined with other L-Acoustics gear for bigger shows when needed. It has been a pleasure working with Craig and Keagan and we appreciate this opportunity.”

Unpacking the brown boxes for the first time was almost a surreal experience. “We had a lot of gear on the event, but we were so careful handling the new L-Acoustics equipment,” smiles Keagan. “You couldn’t look at it wrong, you could only touch the handles and it was like looking after a new baby. However, it’s an investment that needs to pay for itself, and that’s where we, as the AV company, come in. Being a father-and-son-run company, it’s not just a short-term investment. I hope to have this sound system with me for the rest of my life, so its longevity is crucial for us. It will always be our first proper sound system.”

The pair share a strong bond, likely because family and business have been a part of Keagan’s earliest memories. “My father initiated the AV Company in Johannesburg back in 1991,” he reminisces. “It all began in the garage at our house, and from a very young age, probably no older than six, I was setting up drum kits, CD players, keyboards, and sound systems, connecting wires and systems. On Sunday afternoons, I’d come into the house and ask my dad to help me lift a speaker onto a stand because it was too heavy for me. On occasion my mom would drop me off at school, and ten minutes later, my dad would pick me up, and I’d spend the day working with him. He’d send me out with his technicians to various job sites. Because I always knew this was my calling.” Even though Keagan was a deputy head boy at school, as soon as he matriculated, he joined his dad who had relocated to KwaZulu Natal and reopened the original AV Company in Durban.”

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For Craig, this journey holds a special place. He reflects, “When you’re family, you truly understand each other, and Keagan’s desires and needs align perfectly with mine. Because Keagan has been immersed in this field since childhood, it has greatly enriched his comprehension of the company. The investment in the L-Acoustics system is substantial, and I admit, it still makes me a bit apprehensive. However, we are determined to make it work. At the end of the day, we always lean towards brands that provide reliable support. There are many great brands out there, but not all of them offer the same level of backup. Our current equipment has served us well and generated significant revenue, but it lacks support when issues or failures arise. Waiting indefinitely for spare parts to be flown in can be frustrating, and in a technical business like ours, problems are inevitable, especially with the inconsistent power supply in this country. It’s a given that you’ll encounter issues. If you don’t have the support to address them, having these sophisticated systems is of little use when they’re sitting in your facility awaiting repairs. That’s a significant concern.”

AV Company crew are also proud to be working on a platform that takes audio to an entirely new level.” I’ve recently returned from Dubai, and you can spot L-Acoustics almost everywhere – in restaurants, and venues, and it’s consistently mentioned on technical riders,” Craig adds. ” It’s a

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top-tier choice, always in demand. When competing with other companies on pricing and providing the technical requirements specified in riders, we have a competitive edge. While Durban may not be as large as Johannesburg, we supply technical services to companies from Johannesburg, and having this equipment here means they don't have to transport it down to Durban. This is a major advantage for us."

Keagan had previously attended L-Acoustics System Fundamental Training with DWR's Richard Smith. "When I logged into Soundvision to set it up and draw it, it took me about three hours to try to dust off the cobwebs, but I sent the files to Richard before using the system for the corporate event we were working on, and I was about 96% accurate and he just had to do a couple of tweaks," says Keagan. "When we stood in the centre of the room, we could hear the balance, hear every single frequency and hear the clarity that came through the boxes."

L-Acoustics sound systems can be heard around the globe in venues like the Hollywood Bowl and the Philharmonie de Paris, at the world's top-grossing festivals such as Coachella and Tomorrowland, international special events like the World Expo 2020 and World Cup 2022, and on tour with world-class artists such as Billie Eilish, Post Malone, Arctic Monkeys, and Jacky Cheung, and in the Las Vegas residencies of Katy Perry, Adele and more.