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It was all hands-on deck, and the team running at 88 miles per hour, for South African-based DWR Distribution which hosted its very first mini-exhibition at its offices in Johannesburg on 29 and 30 July. The idea was to create an experience people would remember, where industry professionals, system integrators, and students could meet with international suppliers, see the latest technology, and most importantly, network!

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When DWR initially sent out invitations to suppliers to gauge interest, the feedback was *1.21 Gigawatts!* Exhibitors quickly responded with a positive yes. Exhibitors included: Barco, Chainmaster, DigiCo, Doughty, DSpecialists, Fenix Stage, L-Acoustics, Layher, MA Lighting, Neutrik Group, Prolyte, Quest Engineering, RCF, Robe Lighting, Sennheiser Electronic SA, Sharp NEC, Theatrixx, RAM Mountaineering, Special Industrial Suppliers, and Visual Productions.



A new warehouse at DWR, recently secured as the new home for the DWR Workshop and Manufacturing, was already empty and quickly transformed into a venue to host the expo.

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Visitors could attend daily workshops, see demonstrations and new gear.



“Like a phoenix rising out of the ashes, we wanted to celebrate the live events industry coming back to life after the Covid-19 pandemic,” said Bruce Riley of DWR. “And Great Scott, what a time we had!”

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It's one thing building a stand for an expo, and quite another hosting an entire exhibition space! The company's Robert Izzett adds, "The project became a team-building effort and it was just incredible to watch everyone jump in and help! We built stands, and bars, and liaised with our fantastic suppliers who were incredible, and everything worked out well. Thank you to everyone."



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The exhibition also coincided with DWR's Duncan Riley's 50th birthday featuring a fun "Back to the Future" theme. DWR was privileged to once again welcome Ross Learmonth to the stage, and this time Luis Almeida joined him. Thank you for making this extra special.



"I was hoping we could create an event where people could get together again, and that's exactly what happened," said Duncan Riley. "I was blown away by our international suppliers and a few local ones too, who joined us and were willing to be part of the expo. Somehow, this industry always feels more like a family! Thank you to everyone who joined us, and I also want to thank

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my team. The main project was led by Debbie Buchanan and Jade Manicom, and with August being Women's Month, they were just remarkable! Every person played a pivotal role, and I can't thank them enough."



The international suppliers also praised the event. Jeroen van Aalst from Robe felt the event was well organized. "We met a lot of nice customers and friends, and we hope to continue our relationship for many more happy years."



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MA Lighting's Bunty Raj, Technical Support Asia Pacific comments, "It was such a pleasure being part of such a great event. I love South Africa and would like to thank you for everything that DWR has done. I met some great people, some who have been in the industry since the beginning of the entertainment industry!"



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Added Kirs Hill from Theatrixx, “Tremendous amount of effort and meticulous planning went into orchestrating such a remarkable expo. DWR team’s dedication and attention to detail did not go unnoticed, and I am certain that all attendees left with a positive impression.”



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A word of thanks to everyone who made this possible, from vendors to suppliers. This included amongst others MGG who provided the technical and support crew, Lucidity, Gearhouse with their registration system, and the team at Eyethu Events.



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The future looks great. "Roads? Where We're Going, We Don't Need Roads."