

Hippotizer-driven projections add winter magic to historic Art Deco hotel

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Leeds, UK - Dark winter nights in the northern English city of Leeds were brightened by a series of 'magical' animations recently, when stunning visuals were projected onto the façade of The Queens Hotel driven by tvONE's Green Hippo brand of Hippotizer Media Servers.



The elegant architecture of the historic hotel - which has hosted notable guests including Princess Grace of Monaco, Cary Grant and Nelson Mandela - served as a huge canvas for the projections, which were designed to give audiences a tantalising glimpse through the doors of the hotel during the winter season. The project, entitled 'Magical Night at The Queens', was initiated by Leeds Business Improvement District in collaboration with the renowned Barcelona-based creative studio Onionlab. Pro Audio Systems (PAS) was commissioned to co-ordinate and supply every technical aspect of the installation. Every evening at 30-minute rotations over four hours, passers by were treated to seasonal graphic displays with a voiceover by Olivier Award-winning English actor Celia Imrie.



Projection mapping experts at Motion Mapping supplied four Hippotizer Karst+ MK2 Media Servers - two active and two used as backups - to PAS for the installation. "The Hippotizers were sourced due to their compact size and flexibility with their deployment, as there was limited space available in the on-site control cabin," says Chris Beardwell from PAS, who worked on the technical aspects of the projection. "The Karst+ servers provided more than enough power and outputs for this installation."

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The Karst+ MK2 Media Servers drove seven Panasonic projectors (six PT-RQ50K and one PT-RQ35K, with two projectors connected on-site as backups in the event of a failure) which were positioned in two 7.5-metre tall towers constructed in Leeds's City Square, in front of the hotel building.

PAS oversaw the specification, supply and installation of all the projectors, networking, playback and control, as well as a substantial audio system. Its team was central to designing the video systems to ensure that the content was seamlessly projected onto the 'canvas' of The Queens Hotel to achieve complete coverage with optimal brightness.



"We needed to laser map every feature of the building's façade and engaged the services of laser mapping specialists Autoplot to laser scan the building to give us an accurate model of The Queens Hotel, which could be passed on to the content creators to enable optimal design of the content," adds Beardwell. "Using the provided laser scan, and the subsequently produced model, we were able to use Green Hippo's SHAPE software to accurately predict the projectors' positioning, coverage and blend areas before we got to site, in order to prevent unwanted things like shadowing."

Moving to site, the Motion Mapping team aligned all the projectors utilizing SHAPE. "SHAPE allowed us to align the projectors to the hotel accurately and its flexibility allowed us to overcome any potential issues with the model, projector placement or any unforeseen last-minute changes using its advanced feature set," explains Beardwell. "Between myself and Motion Mapping we programmed the servers to playback the content via various presets and to accept external show control triggers using Multicontroller.



"Throughout the entire installation, I can't question the reliability of the Karst+ Media Servers. They were powered on and operating 24/7 for the duration and they needed to be as flexible as possible with their deployment, whilst also being reliable throughout. The servers ticked all the

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boxes and didn't skip a beat."

Dave Simpson, Business Development Director at PAS comments: "The public's response to the shows was incredibly positive - people were wowed by the quality of the installation, which created a huge draw, increasing footfall to businesses in the area and creating a tremendous festive atmosphere in the city centre. LeedsBID recognised the impact that art and technology can make, and through the collaborative efforts of all the stakeholders involved, succeeded in delivering a spectacular show. We're very proud to have played a major part in bringing their ambition to life."