

LSC brings power assurance to North West University

Posted on September 18, 2024



Sanlam Auditorium – photo courtesy NWU

One of South Africa's leading educational institutions, North West University (NWU), has chosen power solutions from LSC Control Systems at the core of the recent technical upgrade of its largest performance space, the Sanlam Auditorium. The APS (Advanced Power Systems) units were provided and installed by LSC's South African representative, DWR Distribution.



LSC brings power assurance to North West University

Sited at NWU's campus in the city of Potchefstroom, around 120km (75 miles) to the southwest of Johannesburg, the 957-capacity Sanlam Auditorium is the hub of NWU's cultural life, hosting a varied program of theatre, conferences, film screenings, dance, musical performances, lectures and ceremonial functions.

Recently, the time had come for the venue to undertake a complete upgrade of its ageing lighting system, which included fixtures approaching 40 years of service. Glenn Cunniff, Section Head for NWU Arts on the Potchefstroom Campus, explains: "With the theatre technical landscape and the needs of clients rapidly changing, and the problems we face with South Africa's energy crisis, as well as other challenges with maintenance and repairs, it was time to do a complete overhaul."

With its ageing rig, the Sanlam faced all the same technical challenges as theatres everywhere, but also the added difficulties of rolling blackouts resulting from the country's load shedding measures. "Our electricity supply is almost never guaranteed," says Cunniff. "With the availability of new LED lighting fixtures, we wanted to ensure protection from 'dirty' power surges to enhance the lifespan of our equipment."

Happily, the answer was at hand. NWU's long-standing and trusted service provider, DWR Distribution, as the distributor for LSC Control Systems in South Africa, were able to recommend the APS power management solution from LSC. Cunniff says, "We were impressed by the features of the system, seeing as we came from old dimmers and all the issues that come with them!"

The whole process of upgrading the lighting system from dimmer circuits to APS, including the addition of new LED lighting fixtures and rewiring where needed, was carried out by DWR's team in just six weeks. The new rig includes ETC ColorSource Spot V profiles, ROBE Robin 300 Washes, Claypaky Axcor 400 profiles.



As well as having this new, versatile and low-energy lighting rig at their disposal, the team at NWU have been well pleased by the additional peace of mind that the APS system provides. “We especially like the sequential soft start of individual circuits that eliminates the inrush and earth leakage currents,” says Cunniff.

What’s more, the team have also enjoyed the relative ease of control. “It has certainly changed our start-up sequence, not having to walk to the ‘ends of the earth’ to manually switch on dimmers in the dimmer room!” says Cunniff. “Since the installation, it’s been smooth sailing.”

Cunniff and his team have been equally delighted with the service provided by DWR, the quality of the equipment, and the results it has delivered. “This is a huge and exciting step forward for us,” he says. “We’ve already received numerous compliments about the new lighting system



LSC brings power assurance to North West University

from clients and colleagues, and we're looking forward to hosting the Aardklop National Arts Festival in September, where some of the most prominent artists and productions will be gathered in our facilities. I'm sure that we will impress even more."