
Prime Circle invests in dot2: South Africa's famous rock band fell in love with MA's console



Photo (from left to right): Duncan Riley (DWR), Marco Gomes (bass guitarist and founder of Prime Circle), Vincent van Niekerk (lighting designer) and Ross Learmonth (lead singer of Prime Circle).

Highly successful South African rock band Prime Circle have invested in a dot2 core plus dot2 F-wing which will allow their lighting designer Vincent van Niekerk to be fully in control wherever they are playing, including international shows and tours, as the console is so ultimately portable as well as being extremely powerful.

The move was instigated by the band's bass player Marco Gomes who is involved in all aspects of their production, and was supplied by MA's South African distributor DWR, with whom Prime Circle has a long working relationship.

Founded in 2001, with six studio albums to date, several chart-topping singles and numerous awards, Prime Circle have toured increasingly in Europe in recent years. Their mid-2016 single "Ghosts" reached the top 150 in Germany's weekly airplay charts and their European popularity was boosted further by several show-stopping performances at high profile German events like Rock im Revier, Rockavaria, Rock auf dem Berg and the Hamburg Harley Days.

Van Niekerk had worked mainly on another brand of desk for the six years since he's been Prime Circle's LD, but when he started looking at the dot2 he was soon convinced it was the way to go. Their dot2 was delivered in July. The fact it came with the MA 3D visualiser software was a huge bonus recalls van Niekerk, making the entire package even more flexible and assisting him with using time efficiently to design shows and draw plots, etc.

In South Africa the band works with a variety of rental companies depending on the set up of the concert or tour. They play a full repertoire of events, from massive arena audiences of tens of thousands to more intimate site-specific gigs and now they have the continuity and self-sufficiency of their own console.

Van Niekerk found it incredibly easy to learn the dot2's basics. "I had an initial three hour training session with DWR's Gareth Chambers and then went straight out on a ten day tour which included headlining the main Rhodes Theatre venue at this year's Grahamestown Festival and I had only a couple of hours to create that show using 80 moving lights," recalls van Niekerk, who was extremely pleased with what he managed to achieve.

He adds, "That's when I fell in love with the console!"

He likes being able to apply movement across a group of fixtures quickly and accurately. He thinks the effects generator is extremely useful and the phasing and mirroring of fixtures is another cool feature, together with the amount of flash buttons and the fact that these can be assigned to different functions.

He also really likes the stylish contemporary design and appreciates details like not needing plug-ins like a desk lamp as everything is perfectly highlighted and integral. The dot2 was recently utilized to programme lights for a high profile entertainment industry party in Johannesburg where Prime Circle played to over 300 leading industry movers and shakers. They arrived a bit late, so van Niekerk only had 15 minutes in which to get a show in the dot2. "I was really delighted with how quickly everything came together," he declares.

Going forward, he will be using the dot2 to trigger their media server and run all the video visuals as well as the lightshow.

DWR's Duncan Riley commented, "Prime Circle, with their work ethic and their approach to production values, are quite unique in South Africa right now. They fully understand the importance of having the right tools for the job and that being able to produce the best looking and sounding shows can boost their live performance reputation. For us and for MA, it's really awesome to be associated with a top artist like this."