The Durban University of Technology move forward with LED

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The studio includes 14 Quartzcolor LED fresnels at DUT’s Department of Video Technology.

The Durban University of Technology (DUT), home to 33 000 students, has invested in 14 Quartzcolor LED fresnels from DWR Distribution to be used by the Department of Video Technology. DWR, working in collaboration with Prosound and The Install Crew, also rewired half of the existing dimmers to hot power in the television school’s studio.

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The university’s television school offers practical training in all aspects of television and video production and is the only school in South Africa whose graduates have won four Emmy awards, offers Outside Broadcast training and the only school to train marine videographers! The exciting programme is led by four full-time lecturers and one external support lecturer, all proficient in camera, lighting and editing to practically enhance the student experience over the three-year degree course.

“All the staff in our department share the experiences they have gained while working in the industry with our students to complement the curriculum,” said Louis de Waal, Senior Technician at DUT’s Department of Video Technology. “My personal knowledge comes from working at the South African Broadcasting Association for ten years where I received good technical and operational training in broadcasting while running both local and international productions.” Just focusing on outside broadcasting, Louis has worked on high profile international productions and tournaments from golf and rugby to the soccer World Cup.



Louis de Waal, Senior

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Technician at DUT’s
Department of Video
Technology.

Studio training forms part of the curriculum and students are required to produce game shows, variety and magazine shows during their first two years of training. With chroma key facilities available to them, they are able to shoot a multitude of productions including music videos, montages and short films. The studio itself, however, was in need of a lighting upgrade.

“Our tungsten 3200K lighting system was old and bulky and created a lot of heat, especially as the studio grid is only 4.2m high,” Louis explains. “The availability of the required bulbs became more difficult and expensive to replace. Furthermore, the old tungsten lights required more power, and we were not able to add more lighting due to the specifications and restrictions on our DB board.”

The department decided on 10 Studio LED X5 Plus and 4 Studio LED LX4 Plus daylight fixture fresnels. The high lumen density COB LED array allows true colour reproduction and a pure, bright and consistent white light. The Quartzcolor Studio LED X Series Plus product range ensures excellent beam control and precision lighting.

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Quartzcolor Studio LED X5 Plus

> “The Quartzcolor units are really great and enable us to use more lights with almost no heat, utilize much less power and have a longer life span,” says Louis. “The 5600K produce a good lighting look for various production scenes and the colour temperature does not change, even when fading the lights down slightly. The fresnels allow soft and hard focusing with a good pan and tilt function together with the barn doors for easy application of colour gels.”

The studio’s new LED infrastructure was completed by DWR’s Kevin Stannett, Michael Taylor-Broderick and the Install Crew’s Jacob Mogale and Freddy Mokwena. After hanging and focusing the fixtures the moment of truth arrived, we turned them on and WOW, Louis and I were blown away by the output and coverage the fixtures provided, recalls Michael.

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The install will equip students to work with a DMX system and better prepare them as they enter the workplace where most local broadcasters rely on LED technology.



“DWR Distribution were very helpful in finding the best way to integrate the new LED lighting fixtures with the current dimmer structure and grid,” said Louis. “We needed a turnkey solution with no complications regarding power and DMX control. It was well designed together with a seamless and quick installation and integration with our old Strand Lighting desk to control DMX LEDs together with tungsten dimmer-controlled lights. It was also a pleasure to work with the efficient Install Crew team.”

Photos couresty Michael Taylor-Broderick

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