TV Game Show Catchphrase Airs Curved-Canvas Video and Live Visual Triggers with Hippotizer

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The popular British TV game show *Catchphrase* returned for a new series this fall with a 30-meter curved LED wall, integrated lighting and video control, and real-time gameplay triggers. At the core of the video system were Hippotizer Media Servers from Green Hippo, an ACT Entertainment brand.



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The format was brought to life by celebrated TV lighting and video designer Bill Peachment, who brought together lighting and video using a ChamSys MagicQ MQ500 lighting console that sent Art-Net to the Hippotizer Media Servers, connecting media playback with the wider lighting-control environment.

“For a TV production, where the visual presentation must support the action and work consistently through the cameras, coordination between these elements is particularly important,” says Peachment. “Lighting and screen content contribute to the same overall image, making their relationship a central consideration in the design and operation of the studio.

“With the MagicQ MQ500 providing the lighting-control interface and Hippotizer handling playback to the curved LED wall, the arrangement connected the two disciplines within a practical studio workflow.”

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The setup brought together screen playback, lighting control, and gameplay triggers, helping to coordinate the technical elements behind the program’s on-screen presentation.

At the heart of the visual environment at Maidstone Studios was a curved LED wall measuring approximately 30 meters wide and five meters high. Extending around the rear of the camera shots, the display provided a substantial visual backdrop for the action, with a subtle frost in front of the LED surface softening the image for television.

With an area of approximately 150 square meters, the curved LED wall formed a major

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component of the *Catchphrase* set. Constructed from standard LED tiles clipped together to create the curved surface, it offered an expansive canvas for the program's visual presentation.



"Getting a large LED display to work effectively on camera involves more than simply filling a screen with content," Peachment continues. "Its appearance must complement the set and lighting design, while diffusion and camera exposure influence how the finished image translates to television."

The subtle frost in front of the LEDs helped soften the display, allowing it to sit within the wider studio environment. With the screen occupying such a prominent position in the set, reliable media playback was also essential throughout recording.

"With Hippotizer providing the playback platform for the display, it proved to be a reliable system at the center of the studio's visual workflow," he says.

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The system also incorporated DMX triggers from the gameplay computer into the ChamSys MQ500. This connection brought real-time cues into the lighting desk, alongside its Art-Net output to the Hippotizer Media Servers. The resulting arrangement linked the gameplay computer, lighting console, and media playback system through a combination of control protocols.



“On a game show, timing and coordination are fundamental to the production,” explains Peachment. “Visual elements must support the action as it unfolds, while the technical workflow needs to accommodate the demands of studio recording.”

By bringing the gameplay triggers into the lighting desk, Peachment integrated this element into the same operating environment as the lighting and media systems. The approach provided a clear connection between the different technical components supporting the program’s visual presentation.

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“Any interruption to the key visual elements can have major implications for the recording schedule and the wider studio operation,” he says, “so we needed a system that would simply work in real time.”

One Hippotizer Media Server handled playback to the curved LED wall, with the second server providing a backup alongside the main system. This arrangement supported the production’s approach to dependable media playback, keeping the screen infrastructure ready for the demands of recording.

The Hippotizer Media Servers were supplied by Naked Eye Lighting.

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