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Radio Caracas Television (RCTV)

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SITUATION

In a project that began nearly three years ago, Radio Caracas Television (RCTV) took possession of an abandoned bank building, and began construction on three new television studios. Overseeing the elaborate project was Edgardo Mosca, VP Engineer, who has worked with RCTV for over 15 years. Rolando H. Loewenstein, a director of photography with numerous credits to his resume and more than 20 years in the organization, was asked to take control over the entire lighting and lighting controls system of the new studios from conceptualization to finish.

"RCTV was looking for three new studios; one conventional permanent news studio, and two re-configurable studios," said Lowenstein. "Edgardo wanted all three studios to be equipped with an integrated lighting system and the best technology available. This is a facility that will serve the people of Venezuela for years to come, and I was proud to have been asked to be part of it."

In the brand new facility, Centro Nacional de Noticias RCTV, production on a number of different broadcasts will take place, including news and opinion programs plus all the morning talk shows. As the RCTV Board of Directors was looking for a state-of-the-art facility, Lowenstein began to research the most cost-effective manner in which to complete the lighting portion of the new studios. During his research, Lowenstein met Steve Mulkey, Redwood Media Group, who he then brought on as the systems integrator for the project.

"When I was first approached about the RCTV project, I knew that we would be able to provide a very cost-effective and permanent solution," stated Mulkey. "Redwood Media was very pleased to be a part of this project, and we sincerely enjoyed working with Rolando and his staff."

SOLUTION

Most of the lighting fixtures for the studios were to be fluorescent lighting utilizing Baselight 220, V-Beam 168, PowerKey 110, and Setlite 110 fluorescent studio fixtures which house their own DMX512 capabilities. But Lowenstein knew he would need direct tungsten lighting as well, therefore he chose the Dedolight 650W and 150W new generation fixtures with double aspheric technology that guarantees a great output and low energy consumption.

Lowenstein also knew that over the course of time the Dedolights would be used in a variety of positions and orientations, so a portable dimming solution was needed. It was then that Mulkey suggested using Bak Pak™ individual dimmers, by Entertainment Technology, on the Dedolights to control the dimming of each individual instrument.

"We found a very practical solution to control the dimming for the 2 re-configurable studios," emphasized Lowenstein. "The Bak Pak individual dimmers allow us to reposition any of the Dedolights to fit into the configuration that we need quickly and easily. Plus the Bak Pak emits no ambient interference which is perfect for a television studio where uncontrolled noise is not acceptable."

The Bak Pak individual dimmer is a compact and lightweight dimmer that easily attaches to conventional lighting fixtures, providing powerful and silent IGBT dimming capability instantly. Because the Bak Pak is an individual dimmer, it mounts wherever a need exists for



a "single" dimmer, eliminating the need for additional rack space. The Bak Pak, available in 750-watt or 1200-watt versions, can be quickly mounted, wired and tested. It operates from either a 120 or 240-volt power supply.

In the third studio the set was a permanent installation, therefore the lighting positions had no need to be reconfigured. In this application, a centralized and permanent dimming system was needed. Once again, upon Mulkey's suggestion, Lowenstein agreed to use an Entertainment Technology dimming solution, the Capiro™ Plus dimmer rack.

"Based upon his extensive field experience and our needs, Steve suggested the Capiro™ Plus," continued Lowenstein. "With the studio set-up the way that it was, it simply made more sense to go with a permanent installation, instead of placing the dimming adjacent to the lights. The Capiro Plus dimmer rack has worked out perfectly."

The Capiro Plus dimmer rack, by Entertainment Technology, is an excellent solution for entertainment and architectural rack dimming applications. Capiro Plus dimmer racks provide the performance and energy-efficient advantages of the patented IGBT dimming technology in an economical, lightweight, low-profile, high density rack, and allow for the even and equal distribution of lighting power throughout any size venue. Each dimmer incorporates a microprocessor that adjusts voltage and current in response to changes detected in the load and the electrical service. These adjustments suppress surges, protect against dead shorts, and extend lamp life.

Now that Lowenstein and Mulkey had decided upon the lighting instruments and the dimming solutions, their attention moved to the lighting controls. In their search for the ideal lighting control console, they wanted to make sure that the console would be completely compatible with the dimming equipment, easy to operate, and stay within the budget. They found all of these characteristics in the Marquee® lighting control console, also by Entertainment Technology.

"In the previous studios, we worked with Strand consoles, but this time we wanted to go with something different," said Lowenstein. "Steve mentioned that Entertainment Technology also made a lighting control console, and so we decided to go with the Marquee for continuity. Plus, compared to the other consoles on the market, we got a great price."

The key to Marquee lighting control console is the simplicity. With software designed by Horizon Control, Inc., the Marquee utilizes a fast and familiar Graphic User Interface (GUI), much like a personal computer, complete with Internet Explorer and Media Player. The display clearly and accurately displays what all the fixed and automated lighting fixtures are doing at all times. The Marquee is a true last-action tracking console that can run any live performance, operate as a conventional preset desk, and provide complete support for color palettes and other automated lighting functions. As lighting control needs change, so can the Marquee as new points of control may be added through hardware upgrades that are inexpensive and easy to install.

RESULT

Lowenstein concluded, "In the end, we wanted to go with one provider for all of our dimming and controls equipment in order to standardize the new facility. It simply makes life easier and everything has worked perfectly. Everyone, including the Board, is very happy. And the public has responded quite nicely."

On July 18, 2005, The Centro National de Noticias RCTV studios signaled the completion of the project with the inaugural broadcast of El Observador, a nationwide news program that was seen by over 1 million viewers.