

Christmas Gold Lotto City Hall Light Spectacular

Case Study



Photo courtesy of Brisbane Marketing

The Electric Canvas counts on Christie to create an enchanting Christmas projection mapping show

Christmas has always been a magical experience for Brisbanites with a myriad of exciting events taking place throughout the City and South Bank. The annual "Christmas in the City" campaign is the largest free Christmas program in Australia, with the area around the Queen Street Mall and King George Square receiving around 70,000 pedestrian visitors each day.

The much-loved Christmas parade winds its way through the streets of the Brisbane central business district and culminates with a traditional pantomime in King George Square, home to the magnificent Brisbane City Hall. Since 2013, Christie's valued Australian partner, The Electric Canvas, has created a fun

and engaging "son et lumière" show featuring projection mapped content onto the façade and clock tower of City Hall. Known as the Gold Lotto City Hall Light Spectacular, it is a shining jewel in the crown of the Christmas program.

The event is the brainchild of Brisbane Marketing - the economic development board of Brisbane City Council - aimed at developing a new spectacular element for the City's Christmas celebrations by way of a projection mapping show onto the façade of Brisbane City Hall. The Electric Canvas, well known for its experience and expertise in large scale events, was tasked with the creation and delivery of this significant event for three consecutive years.

Customer:
Brisbane Marketing

Location:
Brisbane, Australia

Industry/Market:
Large-scale live event

Requirements:

- Superior projection mapping quality
- Rich, dynamic and detailed imaging
- High flexibility and efficiency

Summary:
The Electric Canvas was commissioned by Brisbane Marketing to create and deliver a projection mapping show onto the façade of Brisbane City Hall for two weeks during the Christmas season. A total of 16 Christie Roadster S+20K projectors were deployed for this event.

Products:

- Christie Roadster S+20K (16)

Results:
The reliability of the Christie Roadster Series projectors was a key element in the success of these shows. Both the client and The Electric Canvas were extremely pleased with the performance of the Christie products, noting that the brightness and clarity of the projection was excellent.



“Although we had previously projected onto the central portico of Brisbane City Hall, we had always aspired to project onto the entire façade of the monument,” shares Peter Milne, Managing Director, The Electric Canvas. “It was therefore a great honor to be entrusted with bringing Brisbane’s ‘grande dame’ to life.”

“As with almost all of our architectural mapping projects, we commenced with a preliminary survey of King George Square using our 3D laser total-station,” explains Milne. “A rudimentary but accurate CAD model of the site was developed for the preparation of a projection study and overlay, devised to maximize coverage of the façade and minimize site obstruction.”

After confirming the general equipment and infrastructure layout, The Electric Canvas team conducted a detailed architectural survey to accurately capture the intricacies of the façade and allow the creation of templates for content development. They eventually decided to divide the projection array amongst four separate compact structures clad with marine-grade structural plywood.

The projection towers were designed to provide flexible and quick access options for servicing the equipment housed within. Hot air exhaust, ventilation and cooling considerations were also incorporated into the structures. A 1,000-litre water tank built into the base of each tower provided the ballast necessary to render the structures mechanically stable and safe.

“From a creative point of view, we worked closely with Brisbane Marketing to develop a concept and script that closely aligned with the key messages and themes of the City’s Christmas program. Our focus was to present Christmas through the eyes of children and the world of toys,” Milne explains.

“We created an adaptation of the classic Nutcracker story featuring some of the main characters from the ballet with a custom soundtrack that echoed themes from the original Tchaikovsky score. Each Christmas, our heroes were to return in a new and exciting chapter of an overarching narrative throughout the three years of the project,” he adds. The 2015 show is the culmination of the beloved Nutcracker trilogy that began in 2013.

In a move to create more excitement for the event, a holding state was created to illuminate the building before and between shows, incorporating elements of animation. These included cameo appearances by characters from the main show as well as messages and show times.

Christie projectors to the forefront

Describing Brisbane City Hall as a “challenging building to map”, Milne highlights the majestic colonnades spanning its façade and an iconic clock tower reaching some 90 metres high. In order to cover the entire building and two sides of the clock tower, 16 Christie Roadster S+20K 3DLP® projectors were deployed, which covered a total projection area of 2,000 square metres.

“Our meticulous attention to detail in the maintenance and preparation of our equipment, coupled with the reliability of the Christie projectors, minimizes the risk of unforeseen technical problems. In addition, pre-emptive daily system checks allow us to perform any necessary on-site maintenance to ensure a smooth running show every night,” says Milne.

“Apart from challenges out of our control, like adverse weather conditions, we generally experience very few unforeseen problems during set up. Our ‘measure twice, cut once’ philosophy allows us to pre-empt as many potential on site setbacks as possible.”

The King George Square site, however, wasn’t without its challenges. The Square is the culmination point of the Christmas Parade and the site of the pantomime stage. It is also the site of the City’s 20-metre tall Christmas tree and Christmas twilight markets.



▲ Christie Roadster S+20K 3DLP projector

In view of this, Milne remarks how the projection layout needed to take all of these other structures into account and ensure that they would not obstruct the projection in any way.

“The four compact projection towers were strategically placed around the Square and a combination of cable trays, catenaries and underground cabling using storm water drains were planned to keep the site extremely neat and safe for the public. I’m pleased to note that the reliability of our Christie Roadster fleet is a key element in the success of these shows and, in general, we are extremely pleased with the performance of Christie’s products,” he says.

“We and our sponsor, Gold Lotto, were extremely happy with the results provided by The Electric Canvas,” says Andrew Hopkins, Precinct Development Events Manager, Brisbane Marketing, while

adding: “The brightness and clarity of the projection was excellent, as was the animation and soundtrack.”

In fact, Brisbane Marketing was so pleased with the results and overwhelming turnout for the Gold Lotto City Hall Light Spectacular that they decided to engage The Electric Canvas to plan and deliver the Christmas projections in 2016 as well.

The accolade is a huge morale boost and brought great satisfaction to the team. “We are delighted with the outcome. It is always rewarding for us to produce shows that not only satisfy our clients and their objectives, but also give the public an unforgettable experience that allows them to view their city in a different way. With every project we undertake, we come away with a little more experience and knowledge at the end of each one. Whether technical, logistical or creative,

every member of our team learns something with each production, allowing us to constantly evolve and improve our craft,” says Milne.

Congratulating The Electric Canvas team for a job well done, Michael Bosworth, General Manager, Christie Australia, comments: “Peter and his team are well-known for deploying a variety of projection technologies carefully chosen for the specific application and challenges. We are very pleased that they have chosen our rugged and reliable Roadster Series projectors for this major project over the past three years, and are thrilled that our projectors have constantly delivered bright and vivid images that add excitement and festive cheer to Brisbane during the Christmas period.”

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