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AG Production Services and The Activity Light Up Hoover Dam in Dazzling Patriotic Display with Elation Fixtures

AG Production Services and The Activity teamed up on an extraordinary project at Hoover Dam for America's 250th Anniversary celebrations, turning to Elation lighting to bring the landmark to life with a visually powerful lighting display that highlights the scale and magnificence of the dam and canyon while evoking a powerful sense of national pride.

Hoover Dam was lit up in red, white, and blue for Memorial Day weekend with a massive 150 x 300 ft American flag draped across the landmark ahead of the America 250 celebration. The installation coincided with a Memorial Day ceremony honoring the sacrifices of fallen service members while also launching Southern Nevada's summer celebration leading into America's 250th birthday. The patriotic display will shine nightly through July 4.



Visually Monumental

AG Production Services was contacted by the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority to create a patriotic lighting display for the Hoover Dam, with Andrew Gumper asked whether the company could illuminate it to deliver a true “wow” impact. Within hours, Gumper was on-site conducting a site assessment and by the following morning, the project was confirmed.

With just six days' notice before load-in, Gumper immediately brought in The Activity to support design and execution. “It was clear from the start this had to be approached with precision and speed,” said Gumper. “Once I saw the scale of the dam in person, I knew we needed a lighting



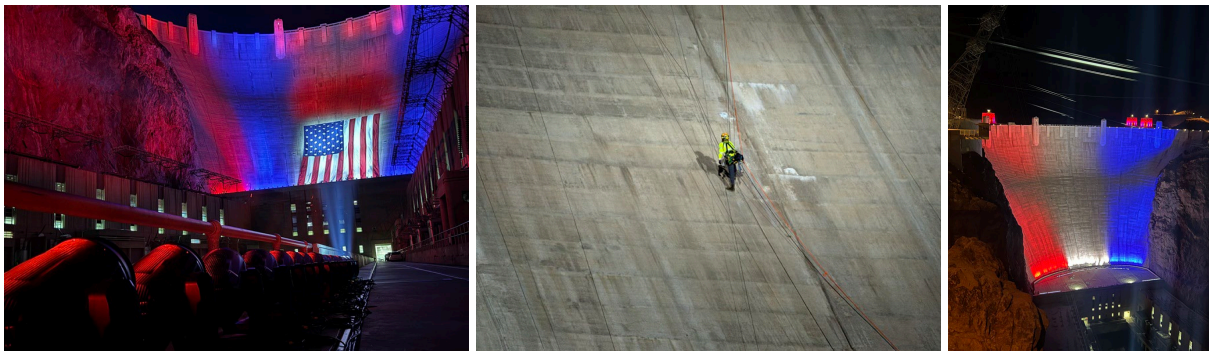
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strategy that was both technically accurate and visually monumental. Patrick and The Activity were the obvious call.”

The Activity and AG Production Services

The Activity’s Patrick Dierson led initial design support, lighting direction, and onsite programming services. Upon confirmation, The Activity rapidly produced 3D scans of the dam and surrounding topography, which were imported into Vectorworks for design development and ultimately into Synchronorm Depence R4 for proof-of-concept rendering and design alterations. Dierson oversaw onsite implementation directly.

AG Production Services handled the bulk of the design, which leaned on traditional photometric math. “There was a toolset from which we could pull equipment, and the best photometry won the day,” Dierson said. “We needed high-output brightness to be emitted from a very specific array of distances in order to pull this off appropriately.”



500+ Lighting Fixtures

AG drew from its extensive inventory of Elation lighting, selecting 72 [Paladin](#), 84 [Proteus Excalibur](#), 36 [Proteus Maximus](#), and 84 [SixPar 200 IP](#) fixtures, alongside beam lights and Hydro Spot 2 fixtures from Elation’s sister company ADJ.

Over 500 lighting fixtures were transported and installed across the site within two days, moving through tunnels, stairwells, elevators, and restricted access pathways. Rigging presented significant challenges, including technicians rappelling down the dam face and suspending truss systems to support the oversized American flag.

Gumper notes, “None of this would have been possible without the support of Hoover Dam personnel. Their cooperation with access, power infrastructure, personnel, and on-site coordination was essential to making a project of this scale happen safely and efficiently.”

Lighting Positions

The hydro-power generated from the dam provided an ample power supply, but lighting positions were somewhat limited. At the base of the dam, a row of Elation Paladin fixtures delivered broad and bright uplighting in blue and red across the lower 100 feet. They were coupled with a

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complement of Proteus Maximus units that primarily handled cross-coverage to hit the high, curved corners of the dam and surrounding natural rock formations.

Slightly farther away, ADJ Hydro fixtures expanded color washes across the rock faces, moving outward through the dam's valley. Much farther out, along the roofs of the dam's turbine stations, were a double feature of more ADJ Hydros to continue the rock face toning alongside Proteus Excaliburs.



Dynamic Lighting Adjustments

The dam's scale—726 feet tall and spanning up to 1,244 feet across at the top—combined with its curved, three-dimensional concrete surface introduced unique challenges in achieving even illumination. Subtle surface variations, including concave geometry and natural staining, required careful balancing of output and beam placement.

“With the flag of the United States being the star of this show, the Excaliburs arguably became the workhorse of the project in handling the majority of the dam's color wash while still allowing us to maintain isolation control,” said Dierson. “By that, I mean that we were able to break up the grid of wash in a way that allowed us to quickly roll with the unexpected changes that came about from the flag. With the riggers facing so many challenges such as solid debris on the dam's face, increasing wind speeds, etc., we were put in a position of having to relight the flag appropriately at a moment's notice on the day of the event as well as needing to update that at a later date when the flag was removed and ultimately re-rigged at a different vertical location on the dam.” Lighting control was managed across three networked console positions, enabling coordinated real-time adjustments throughout the installation.

There are many specific rules when it comes to U.S. flag etiquette and one of the most important is to ensure that the flag is lit cleanly in white with no color changing or patterns projected over it. “The Excaliburs gave us both the precision to make any necessary alterations rapidly as well as having the punch to make both the flag majestically bold and the surrounding dam walls pop in rich colors.”



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Awe-Inspiring Result

Despite the massive scale of the project, the tricky structural composition of the dam itself, and environmental challenges including wind, dust, insects, and complex rigging conditions, the result is striking. The client, the governors of Nevada and Arizona, and other dignitaries are reportedly thrilled with the outcome. Not least, the public reaction has been fantastic.

“The initial concept rendering at the start of the project was inspirational,” Dierson shares, “but what was achieved on site exceeded expectations. Seeing the Stars and Stripes draped across one of America’s most iconic and ambitious achievements of infrastructure, and then flanked with rich stripes of red and blue, is an absolutely awe-inspiring vista.”

Dierson concludes, “The flag carries different meanings for different people, but for many of us who have had to salute it, wave it, handle it in an official capacity, and have even had to witness friends, colleagues, and loved ones draped with it as we’ve said our final goodbyes, it represents unity and our shared identity. My hope is that this project brings Americans together to remember that before any differences or opinions between us, we are Americans united together under that magnificent flag.”

Designer / Project Manager: Andrew Gumper
Lighting Director / Programmer: Patrick Dierson
Programmer / Network Tech: Jason Buckley
Lighting System Tech: Shawn Davila
Lighting System Tech: Patrick Hartung
Lighting System Tech: Ken Johnson
Lighting System Tech: Mark Broedling
Lighting System Tech: Anthony Geoffroy
Lighting System Tech: Nikolaus Samana
Lighting System Tech: Jade Reynolds
Lighting System Tech: Dan Orletski
Truck Driver: Cornell Booker
Lighting System provider: AG Production Services
Flag Sewing: Zach Purciful
Riggers: Rockforce Rigging
Stagehands: Rockforce Labor
Crane: Dielco Crane Services
Heavy Machinery: United Rentals

About Elation

At Elation, we collaborate with leading professionals in the lighting industry to help bring extraordinary experiences to life. As a designer and manufacturer of a wide range of high-performance entertainment lighting products, we’re proud to be a trusted partner to top lighting professionals and production/rental houses around the world. Our commitment to quality, innovation, and creative solutions has made us a go-to resource in the industry. We also offer an advanced line of lighting control products through Obsidian Control Systems, and a full range of



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dependable specialty effects called Magmatic. Elation serves clients worldwide through offices in Los Angeles, Mexico City, Canada, and the Netherlands. We invite you to take a closer look at elationlighting.com

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