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Mr. Light Solutions Pushes NETRON Gear in Harsh Canadian Winter

Mr. Light Solutions, a full-service production company based in Toronto and led by founder Matthew Reicker, recently deployed a robust lighting data distribution system built around Obsidian Control Systems' **NETRON** product line for season one of a yet-to-be-announced streaming series. Filmed in both studio and outdoor locations around Toronto, the winter-themed series faced some of the harshest weather conditions in recent memory—including temperatures dipping below -20°C, heavy snowfall, and freezing rain.

Reicker has worked on many different types of productions in his nearly 15 years in the entertainment lighting industry—theatre, corporate events, concerts, and film—and in many capacities from lighting designer and programmer to crew chief and production manager. A member of IATSE Local 873, he launched Mr. Light Solutions in 2011 and since the pandemic has helped to update networked data distribution in film lighting.



“When I transitioned into film during the pandemic, I saw a lot of antiquated data setups—running multiple DMX lines and opto-splitters without taking advantage of Ethernet and nodes,” said Reicker. “Working with the NETRON nodes, I feel like I’ve helped bring the industry into the 21st century.”

NETRON Nodes in the Field

When the show’s rigging gaffer Chris Tackas initially requested NETRON EN12s and EN4s, and wanted to protect them with waterproof cases, Reicker suggested the **EN6IP**, an award-winning 6-port EtherDMX node with IP66 protection, as a better fit for outdoor use. After testing a unit from Mr. Light’s rental stock, Tackas agreed—and purchased a full complement of EN12s, EN4s and EN6IPs for studio and exterior locations.

The EN6IPs, along with NS8IP switches (supplied by Reicker), were deployed outdoors, exposed to extreme winter weather for 10 straight weeks without additional protection—no cases, no bags, no failures.

“We kicked the crap out of them all winter long and we had a very hard winter,” Reicker added. “The NETRON nodes got buried in snow, caked in mud, soaked with freezing rain—and the entire system remained flawless. We had lights fail, but not the network. It's a great product line. I'm very happy with it and my customers are too.”

A total of six EN6IP nodes and six NS8IP switches were used outdoors, while EN12s and EN4s powered the indoor studio, running 24/7 for up to 16 weeks.

Redundant Power, Seamless Mobility

To ensure system resilience, the NETRON nodes were set up with redundant power, using both Power over Ethernet (PoE) and True1 connectors tied to separate breakers. This dual-source approach provided both a main and a redundant power supply for uninterrupted operation.

“One thing I really like, especially with the NS8 switches, is that all the ports are powered over Ethernet, which is incredibly useful in film because all the transmitters in film are PoE as well. It makes it very handy and easy when we have to move gear around quickly.”

NETRON Across Multiple Productions

Reicker began using NETRON products in 2021 and hasn't looked back. As one of the first anywhere to stock NS8 switches, he has deployed NETRON gear across multiple productions, including other TV shows, and he continues to be an advocate.

“One of the original EN4s I bought has over 3,500 hours on it and it still runs perfectly,” he said. “It's a great price point, but more importantly, the durability and quality are top-tier. I wouldn't invest in a fleet if I didn't trust the product.”

Mr. Light Solutions' relationship with Illumix, the Canadian distributor for Elation and Obsidian Control Systems, has helped the company stay ahead of the curve. Reicker acknowledges that the strong support and dependable assistance provided by sales rep Justin Gauthier have played a key role in the company's success.

Reicker concluded by saying, “This product line sells itself. That's a real credit to Matthias [Hinrichs] and the entire R&D team at Obsidian. We've definitely beat them up on this show—and they survived.”

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About Obsidian Control Systems

Obsidian Control Systems is an accessible line of advanced yet intuitive lighting control products for professionals. Refined by passion, Obsidian Control Systems combines over 30 years of experience developing professional entertainment lighting control solutions for automated and theatrical lighting fixtures. Obsidian lighting control software and hardware are easy to use and accessible to every level of user, whether a novice programmer or a designer at the highest level. All Obsidian lighting control systems run innovative ONYXTM lighting control software, a powerful yet easy-to-learn platform for hardware consoles and PC systems. Obsidian Control Systems also offers a complete line of NETRONTM data distribution products. Obsidian products are distributed exclusively by Elation worldwide and are available in various sizes to accommodate any scale and budget. Visit the Obsidian Control Systems website at www.obsidiancontrol.com to learn more.

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