Rivers Church Uses Yamaha PM7



Rivers Church is one of the fastest-growing congregations in South Africa. Starting with a humble attendance of only 70 people in 1992, Ps Andre and Wilma Olivier have grown the church into a faith of thousands, with multiple campuses located in Sandton, Kyalami, Centurion, Durban North and Ballito. Self-described as a ‘dynamic church’, Rivers offers inspirational messages and community to all age groups, with their online streaming service further widening their reach, particularly amidst the pandemic.

The church certainly is dynamic in terms of adapting and integrating cutting-edge audio-visual technology to enrich their services, resource sharing between campuses and streaming online. “We started working with Stage Audio Works (SAW) in 2011 at the most basic level, but they are now our principal supplier and integrator for audio and video,” explains Andrew Illgner, Head of Audio at Rivers Church. “We’ve worked with a lot of suppliers over the years but SAW goes the extra mile as they bring knowledge and expertise that we don’t have. The service is amazing – it goes much further than simply supplying the product. They have an extremely knowledgeable team; for example, it was Nathan [Ihlenfeldt, SAW

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Technical Director] who got us on the path of digital audio networking." For the most recent project, SAW specified and supplied two flagship Yamaha RIVAGE PM7s to replace four existing CL-series mixing consoles at Rivers' main campus in Sandton.

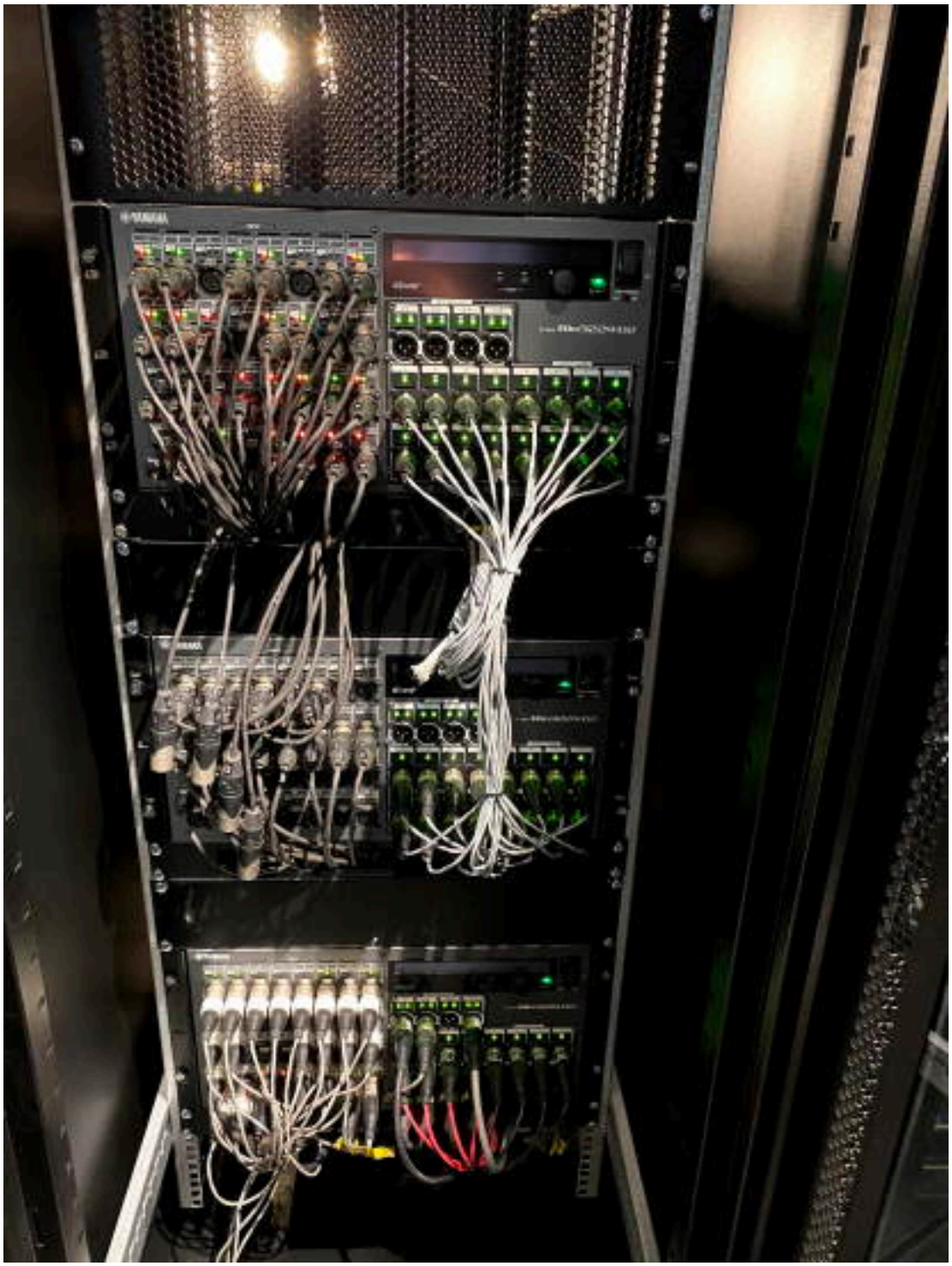
Two Yamaha PM7s will now serve as the primary mixing consoles in the Sandton campus, covering the main auditorium, which hosts a maximum capacity of 3,000. One controls the Front of House (FOH), and the other is dedicated to the monitors. These new consoles replace the CL-series system that SAW previously supplied in 2015, consisting of a CL5 and a CL1 that handled the FOH, and two further CL5s that oversaw the monitors. These were repurposed and put to good use, breathing new life into the second auditorium and youth venue, which can hold up to 1,500 attendees, as well as other campuses across South Africa, enabling upgrades in five different venues!

The new PM7s join the ranks of Rivers Church's twenty strong collection of Yamaha mixing consoles. Notably, all consoles in use by Rivers Church are produced by Yamaha, and this has been the case since their adoption of the brand in 2009. The fact that they are still all in use is a true testament to both the quality and ease of use of Yamaha consoles

"Due to the large scale of our operation, we often have to rely on the generosity of volunteers when it comes to operating equipment," Ed Helliwell, Technical Manager at Rivers Church explains. "Thanks to Yamaha's intuitive, and standardised console design across generations, these volunteers can easily slot in and very quickly feel at home on the interface, even on a console they've never seen before."

Interoperability is likewise an essential requirement when it comes to networking capability. To this end, all campuses utilise the flexibility of a Dante ecosystem; "We have a complex environment that is always changing – church on Sundays, conferences and other activities during the week etc.," notes Illgner. "Dante makes it very easy to change scenarios quickly." A Q-SYS solution allows wider transport between the Rivers' campuses.

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“In 12 years, we’ve had almost no downtime due to technical faults,” he continues, acknowledging the importance of the specification and commissioning of quality gear: “Stability and reliability is excellent. On top of this, the round-the-clock service SAW provides is amazing - everything needs to work on a Sunday!”

Over the course of their relationship, SAW have specified and supplied a vast array of audio-visual equipment for Rivers Church. All campuses are equipped with d&b

loudspeaker systems, Sennheiser microphones and IEM systems. On the visual side, SAW have provided numerous Pixel Plus screens, switching gear, as well as Black Magic cameras to enhance Rivers' broadcasting capabilities.

Nathan Ihlenfeldt, CTO of SAW is heartened to oversee another successful collaboration with Rivers Church: "Our relationship is fortified by another upgrade to their Yamaha mixing consoles. Working with them over the years has been a pleasure. We're looking forward to seeing what the next step will bring, and how we can help realise it."

Illgner summates the partnership nicely: "We at Rivers know what we want and SAW makes it happen. Since SAW have been on board things have really moved forward in the AV space - and it's thanks to them. There is sufficient trust between us that they even use us as a testing ground sometimes – and that's a good place to be."

www.stageaudioworks.com
www.rivers.church

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