



PHILIPS



Outdoor lighting

Architecture and Landscape

Case Study

Democratization of
lighting for a **UNESCO**
world heritage site

Place du Château Strasbourg, France



Customer
Strasbourg Municipality

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Architecture &
Landscape



Palais des Rohan

Background

Place du Château is an iconic square of major historical and geographical importance and is a direct reflection of the history of both Strasbourg Cathedral and the other buildings which have been added across the centuries. Together they represent a magnificent collection of architecture from different periods. Until recently, the square was one of the city's car parks and was not one of its more attractive features. The project set out to turn the square into an outstanding feature of the Grande-Ile part of Strasbourg, a UNESCO World Heritage site.

The Project

The objectives of the redevelopment were set out following a 12-month consultation period with local inhabitants, including conferences, guided visits, workshops, questionnaires, meetings with the Youth

Council, a picnic on the square, public meetings, etc. In 2010, the square was turned into a pedestrianized zone, which opened it up to new activities and uses throughout the day and year.

Each part of the new layout was designed to highlight the monuments and make the square more user-friendly. These objectives are also reflected in the signage, whereby, for example, the sandstone block which people sit around is also used to give indications and provide information on the square and its monuments. It offers a strong echo of the skills of those who built the Cathedral.

Tribute to the masons who carved and cut the stone is paid in the form of a chimera, a work of art commissioned by the Fondation de l'Oeuvre Notre-Dame. The work comprises six sandstone blocks and illustrates the journey taken by the stone from

quarrying through to its final form. Life is breathed into the stone with the man-like chimera rising out of the quarry, looking upwards towards the top of the Cathedral, which in 2015 will be celebrating the millennium of the laying of its foundations.

Lighting to enrich contemplation and facilitate the walking experience

The lighting was included within the overall redevelopment project for the square, with the same objectives. A harmonious, integrated lighting concept was chosen in order to preserve the calm and serenity of the square and its surroundings. Lighting levels are maintained within strict boundaries, while large

areas of shadow and contrasting light effects have been included to create an enjoyable nocturnal atmosphere. The decision was taken to use only white light, in various degrees of intensity, to bring out the different architectural styles of the buildings surrounding the square and also the rich variety of stonework used in the façades, which also shows the different construction periods.

The Palais des Rohan, for example, features two wings, higher than the center and with more powerful lighting, while the central part is set slightly back and is illuminated with light of lower intensity and a slightly different hue (about 200K). The lighting is designed to provide a pleasantly gradual transition between the ground and the facades of the buildings.



The four large bespoke lamps reflect the architectural elements of the Cathedral and give out a soft, regular light across the whole of the square, while leaving selected areas of attractive shadow. The building façades are highlighted with specially-designed artistic and architectural lighting. The overall lighting effect is completed by ground-based lights providing a contrasting cold white light illuminating the fountain and the leaves on the trees.

The idea behind the façade lighting is to highlight the features of the buildings. The process involved considering the buildings as a whole and coming up with a lighting design to bring out the architectural structure and emphasize the stone, the architectural features and details that make each of these buildings so remarkable. The lighting of the façades is an exercise in subtlety and understatement which sets out to enrich contemplation and facilitate the walking experience around the square.

In daytime, the lighting units go almost unnoticed. The elements are pared down to minimum size, while the paintwork is tailored to the textures and the

colors of the surrounding buildings. This unobtrusive integration means daytime viewing of the historical monuments around the square remains unobstructed and public access to the Rohan and Oeuvre Notre Dame museums unaffected.

Light pollution guidelines were factored into the lighting design, in keeping with the day and night cycle. Lighting illuminating the square is switched off at midnight, while the remaining lighting aims to provide an appropriate, well-balanced illumination of the surrounding buildings.

The project as a whole placed significant emphasis on energy-saving features and easy maintenance.

The lighting intensity can be modified, and dynamic LED lighting technologies have been used throughout the project, the first time this has been done in lighting projects for the City of Strasbourg.

A global-cost approach was factored into the project right from the design stage, through to the implementation of the lighting, thereby keeping future operating costs down to a minimum.

Benefits

It is hard to believe that this beautiful place was recently just a car park. The new night-time ambience brings out all the quality of the urban environment and its architecture. It encourages people to walk around, appreciate and occupy what comes across as newly-revealed part of the city. The square is a meeting point attracting locals, tourists and students alike.

There has been considerable feedback through social networks as to the quality of the nocturnal ambience, while the use of the square until the early hours by groups of people from very different social backgrounds is a particular source of satisfaction for the city.

The square currently accommodates five museums, an international lycée and the Cathedral, the most visited monument in the city. There are hotels near the square, but not located directly on it and they benefit from the added appeal of the square.

The redevelopment has created an area facilitating the flow of pedestrians and cyclists and provides a new focus of appeal for the city center. A museum cafe should soon be opening in the building at 5 Place du Château.

The development opens up new possibilities for all kinds of events, such as the Christmas market and activities in summer. Other events such as Heritage days and the Brewers' festival are also set to be held in the square.

The use of the latest LED technology facilitates the highlighting of individual elements, offering more efficient lighting at lower cost. The material used has a very long life cycle, needs little maintenance and facilitates management when the illuminations are switched on. The use of new technologies in lighting projects helps the city achieve the twin aim of embellishing its night-time environment, while keeping down energy costs.



