



Canada Life Beacon

VISO Goes to Great Heights with the Canada Life Beacon

The Canada Life Beacon, located atop the Canada Life Building in downtown Toronto, has gotten a new facelift and VISO is proud to have played a part in upgrading this iconic structure.

Location:

Toronto, ON

Client:

Mulvey & Banani Lighting Inc.

Photographer:

Year:



Brief

VISO was selected by Toronto-based engineering consulting firm Mulvey & Banani International Inc. (MBII) to design and manufacture all the outdoor lighting upgrades for the Canada Life Beacon. This is the first major update since the weather beacon was installed almost 60 years ago in 1951. "Our goal was to replicate the original look of the beacon but bring it into the modern era," said Brooks A. Munroe, Senior Operations Manager of VISO.



Client Need

Standing nearly 100 meters above University Avenue, the weather beacon is the oldest one in Canada. The beacon, being outdoors, needed to be weather proof and allow DMX controls to communicate specific messages. As well, the original design and look of the beacon was required to stay intact.



Challenges

Mother nature became the biggest challenge during the installation for this project. The design and manufacture of the outdoor fixtures were completed in the late fall and installation started in late November. As every Torontonians knows, the weather is not forgiving during this time of the year and as a result, VISO's installation team faced high winds, rain, snow and sub-zero temperatures. The team pushed through and was able to complete the project by the second week of December.

Alan McIntosh of Mulvey & Banani Lighting Inc.: "Tasked with changing out the lighting for the country's oldest weather beacon without having it look like anything had changed is not as easy as it sounds. Looking at all the custom lighting applications, my first call was to Filipe. For me, getting VISO involved early in the process was a no brainer. The details and the thought that needed to go into each and every aspect of the lighting needed to be carefully planned and constructed to ensure the new installation out-lives its predecessor. Not only did VISO deliver; their team's dedication to ensuring the installation met everyone's expectations went above and beyond their role as manufacturer. Thanks to VISO, the beacon continues to shine brightly and will do so for a very long time.



Solutions:

VISO upgraded outdoor lighting on the tower, replacing 1,004 lamps with stainless steel enclosures and switching to energy-efficient integral LEDs with polycarbonate spheres. The top lightbox, once adorned with old-fashioned Christmas lights, now features 27 RGB-controlled LED strips totaling 2,160 watts, enclosed in a galvanized steel structure with acrylic panels.

Dimensions:

Length: 65"/1651mm

Width: 59.44"/1510mm

Height: 430.87"/10945mm



Solutions:

The modernization of the lighting is in sync to reflect weather forecasts. Using a DMX protocol - a standard for digital communication networks commonly used for lighting effects - VISO pre-programmed lighting patterns into a digital system, allowing for ease of use.

Dimensions:

Length: 65"/1651mm

Width: 59.44"/1510mm

Height: 430.87"/10945mm



Solutions:

The beacon light on top indicates sky conditions: Solid green calls for clear skies, solid red forecasts a cloudy day, and flashing red warns of rain ahead.

The beacon tower lights convey temperature: Lights shooting up is a sign of warmer weather ahead, lights shooting down signals cool weather in our horizon, and lights steady means steady temperature.

Weather is updated four times a day: 7am, 11am, 3pm and 7pm.

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