



A new logo to herald a new era

Regent Lighting has a new logo. The company is part of Wahl Industries and what began as a desire to develop lighting for domestic homes in the early 1990s has evolved into a multi-disciplinary lighting company.

In the early stages of the business, the lighting division employed two staff members who assembled lanterns in the corner of the tool room. As a manufacturer of agricultural irrigation products and supplier of castings to the engineering sector, the first marketing attempts were to lighting manufacturers in the hope of selling castings they could assemble and sell. Fortunately, as it turns out, Regent's castings were rejected by existing market participants, hence the decision to assemble and sell the lanterns directly to lighting retailers.

The first two lanterns, Capri and Classic, were originally advertised by hand-drawn pamphlets under the Wahl Irrigation name. This was successful and another four lanterns were developed in 1993, with a decorative pole to complement the range. The fledgling lighting company acquired its own identity, Regent Lighting. By year end, 10 additional members of staff had been employed in various areas of production. Regent Lighting Solutions soon rented its own 800 m² factory over the road from the main factory to accommodate its increase in work load.

A shift in marketing approach occurred in 1995 when Regent Lighting Projects was created to target commercial building projects. This proved to be invaluable as the company began dealing directly with specifiers and consultants and was able to develop products for specific requirements. With changes in architectural style away from Tuscan façades, traditional lanterns were losing their appeal and more contemporary lighting products had to be created; Challenger and the Apollo bollard (1996) being the first.

In 1996, the company doubled its factory space to target larger projects. By developing specific products for the Westcliff Hotel (Westcliff) and Riverside Mall

(Jupiter) the range expanded continually. The company became convinced this was the correct approach and, to this day, Westcliff and MiniWestcliff lanterns are sold across the world.

Regent's first foray into interior lighting was in 1998 with the Delta indirect range, developed to substitute costly imported technical fittings from Europe; it was also the company's first use of electronic control gear and new lamp technologies.

The Grand Classic fitting and decorative pole, Tuscan post top and Copenhagen were created during the late 1990s to accommodate the flood of casinos being built. In 2000, the entire Wahl operation moved to premises in Longdale. This site (10 000 m² factory and 1100 m²) allowed the group to expand and Regent was able to capitalise on particular opportunities, including the growth of Dubai and the local build-up to the 2010 World Cup.

The single most important event for Regent has been advent of LED as a mainstream light source. The company was able to develop products for applications it would never before have contemplated and, to remain viable as a lighting manufacturer, its design department grew substantially to redevelop existing – and design new – products.

LED allowed Regent to move into the interior lighting market, beginning with its Linear range and complementing it with other LED downlighters and panel lights. Today, the company employs over 200 staff members and has branches throughout South Africa. It continually reinvests to improve its service and product offering.

Says managing director, Randal Wahl: "We are an African Lighting Solutions company equipped with the right people with the correct values to create value for our clients. The rebrand of our traditional Regent logo symbolises our future intent without discarding our past history."

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