



Industry news:

White LEDs fail to match hype

In a January 26, 2009 letter to the editor of LEDs Magazine, lighting designer and specifier, Frazer Monks explained why he has stopped using LEDs.

“As an exhibition designer and lighting specifier I have been a keen advocate of white LED lighting in exhibitions, but recently I have had to reconsider this decision. . . High failure rates and very rapid phosphor degradation has made manufacturers claims of 50,000-hour lifetimes seem, at best, grossly exaggerated hyperbole and, at worst, deliberate deception. . .”

A recent surveyed exhibition, containing 48 GU10-base lamps, revealed that in 2500 hours of operation, light output had fallen by between 82 and 87%, while 12% of the lamps had failed electronically. . . Given that the purpose of a lamp is to provide useful light, while the LED emitters themselves may well function for the 50,000 hours claimed, the actual life of the lamp is determined by the useful phosphor life, which does not even begin to approach this figure. . . I have been forced to replace whole lighting systems at my cost and consequently I have had to take the decision to not specify white LED lighting until such time as I can be confident in the specifications and lamp life.

Unless the true performance of white LEDs can be dramatically improved or costs substantially reduced then this technology may prove to be a dead man walking.”

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