



INTERVIEW WITH KEYBOARD LIGHT GURU LEWIS GERSCHWITZ

by Karim Lahlou December 3, 2014 Hardware 0 Comments

Last week, we published an article showing the wonderful creations of Lewis Gerschwitz, a keyboard enthusiast who creates custom lighting profiles for the Corsair Vengeance K70 RGB keyboard. Wanting to know more about Gerschwitz and his design process, we decided to interview him.

Well Lewis, why don't you introduce yourself.

I'm Lewis Gerschwitz. I just graduated from the University of South Australia two weeks ago with a bachelor's in game and entertainment design. Now I'm just doing a bit of freelance work on the side while trying to find a job.

So how did you get into creating custom lighting designs?

Well, I originally saw the keyboard when it got demoed by linustechtips back in January of this year, and the keyboard really intrigued me, I had never seen anything quite like it. The level of customization astonished me back then. At the time I had a Logitech G19, which you could set static colors for, but nothing that would do effects or anything like that. So I planned at that point to get this keyboard when it came out. Once the keyboard got here, I had a little spare time during that week so I spent a lot of time tinkering with it, learning its limitations.



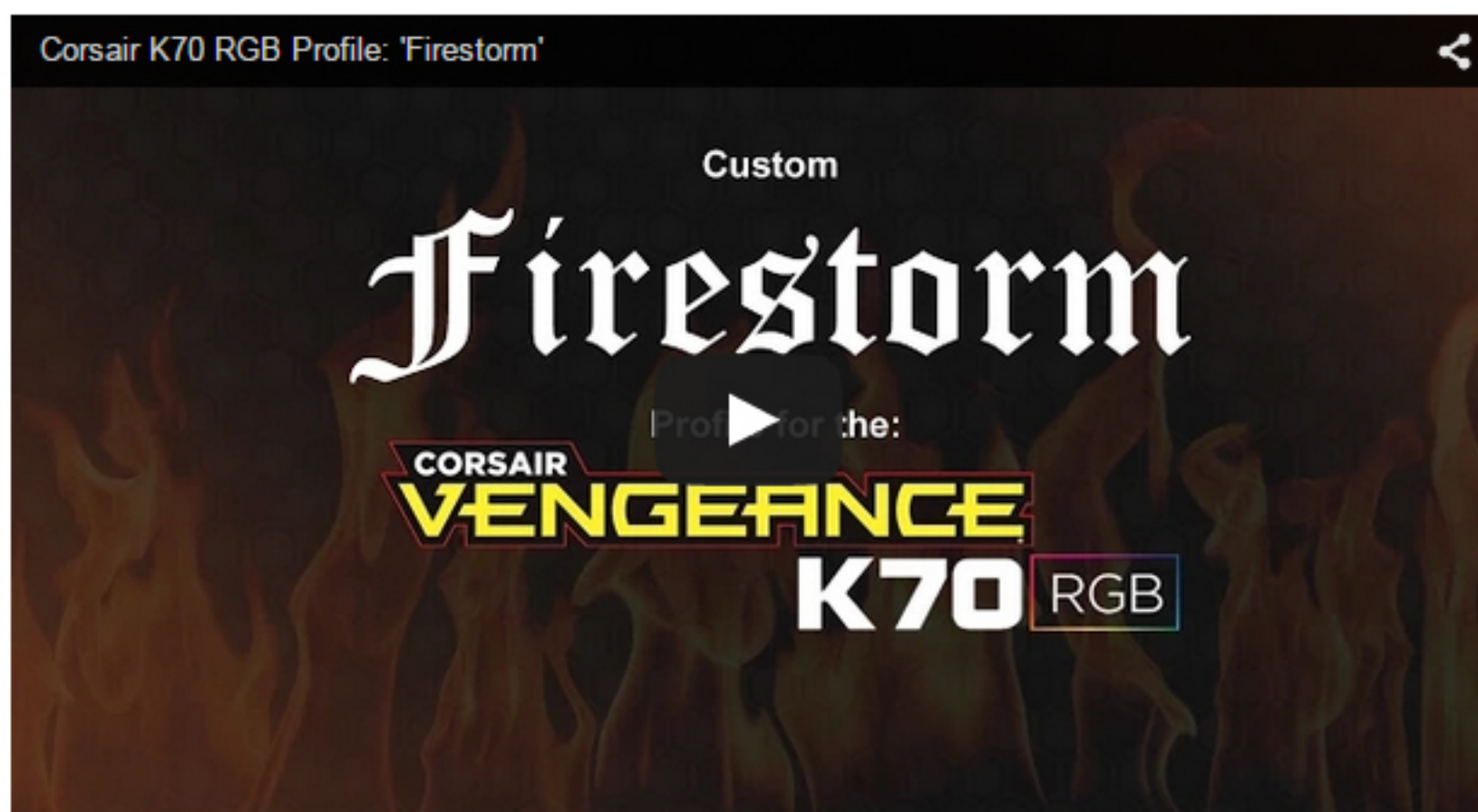
Lewis Gerschwitz, 22, hails from Adelaide, Australia

What would these limitations be?

There are certain effects that are impossible to do at the moment. You can't have it react to sound without writing a script or a program to do that, for example. While there are people who can do that sort of stuff, I'm primarily focused on what you can get out of the keyboard right out of the box.

What is your design process for creating themes?

In terms of ideas, they happen fairly sporadically. One of my most popular ones, The Thunderstorm, came about when I was listening to Riders on the Storm by The Doors, and I was inspired by the sound effects behind that. Knight Rider was a fairly easy one—an easy one to come up with but not an easy one to make. I also get inspiration from the forums, I'll see someone make a theme and think of ways of doing it better, like I did with Firestorm, someone made a theme with red and orange profile and I knew there was a better way of representing fire.



What lighting theme do you use yourself?

I have a main profile that I use with 11 modes in it. So I cycle through them. I've got a static one in there, Thunderstorm is the default because it's my favorite. I also have my gaming profiles there for FPS, MOBA, and MMORPG games. There are also a few other themes. So I guess I use a vast mix, but generally I'll use the theme that I'm currently working on to get a feel if people are going to like using it or not. That's a good indicator if the theme is viable or not, if I can stand the keyboard flashing every few seconds, then other people are likely to as well.

Have you always been interested in mechanical keyboards?

The Corsair K70 RGB is the first mechanical keyboard I've gotten, though I've been interested in them for quite a while.

What features do you wish the software or keyboard would have?

To be honest there isn't a whole heap more I expect out of the box, it's very versatile as it is. The small things that I would change would be the type lighting, I would move that to per-mode as opposed to per-profile, which means you would get a lot more customization out of your profiles. Also I'd like to see the ability to set up different zones for different type lighting, so you could actually be able to set up type lighting as an add-on effect as opposed to a profile setting. I guess it's pretty nitpicky, so unless you're really using the software you might not be able to notice it.



How did you get engaged in the custom lighting community?

It was slow-going when I first started. It's certainly growing right now. I spent a lot of time googling how to do certain things when I first got the keyboard, and eventually I found the Corsair forums, which also hosted weekly custom lighting competitions. I decided to enter these competitions, and I was able to win a mouse pad, which was nice. I started making videos, and I was surprised how quickly I was able to get traffic onto my YouTube channel.

What other projects are you working on?

I'm kind of a jack of all trades, master of none when it comes to digital stuff. I do freelance website design, graphic and logo design, social media packages for pages. Nothing major, a lot of times it's for family or friends. I've been looking for work outside of that.

So, should Corsair hire you?

Actually, before your article went up, Corsair got into contact with me for doing feature projects. I can't talk too much about it at the moment, but it's very exciting.

Finally, what games are you playing right now?

League of Legends, ArcheAge, RoboCraft, and I've been getting back into Age of Empires 2.

You can look at more custom lighting profiles by visiting Gerschwitz's YouTube channel.

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