

# Creating a benchmark for excellence.

## SONY



'Competition to attract new students has always been fierce, but in the last few years it has really intensified. We are totally committed to being the number one centre for media-related learning in the UK, and that's not just about providing access to the best lecturers, but also access to the best equipment, which is why we selected to work with Sony. Our courses are designed to give students a solid platform from which they can go from strength to strength in the workplace, and the studio is a key part of that.'

**Stephen Jukes, Dean of the Media School at Bournemouth University**



As the broadcast community continues to migrate to high-definition (HD) production, Bournemouth University wanted to ensure it was at the forefront of this growing trend and embarked on an ambitious project to build an HD TV studio that could emulate a real-life production environment. Developing the education of its existing students and enticing new undergraduates, the HD facility is the first of its kind to be designed for a UK media school.

## Background

The Media School at Bournemouth University is the largest centre of Higher Education for the media and communications industries in the UK. It offers courses such as Media Production, Journalism and Communication, Computer Animation and Corporate & Marketing Communications. Currently the school has around 1,850 undergraduate and 250 postgraduate students. The Media School is the UK's only Centre for Excellence in Media Practice (as designated by the Higher Education Funding Council for England) and is also an accredited Skillset Screen and Media Academy.

## Customer challenge

Bournemouth University was keen to set a nationwide benchmark for educational excellence by integrating the latest and most advanced professional solutions into its Media School and giving students an authentic experience of the typical workflow found in industry.

Despite many similarities between the technologies used in industry studios and the equipment specified for the University's new HD facility, Sony's Professional Services team of designers, systems architects, project managers and engineers had to overcome some unprecedented challenges, including: adapting the workflow of modern TV production practice for a large number of students at each operator position; training teachers and staff from an operational and educational perspective; meeting health and safety regulations; and ensuring industry standard sound quality in an elliptical space. Furthermore, the build had to be completed in just nine weeks during the summer holiday period – it had to be up and running for the start of the new academic year.

In addition to transforming both the teaching and the learning experience, the facility also had to generate new revenue streams in order to offset some of the significant financial investment that was initially required.

Jonathan Auckland, a Senior Lecturer at Bournemouth University, who helped secure approval for the HD Studio and is now largely responsible for its running, commented:

'We wanted to work with Sony because the team was prepared to take the time to really understand and meet the requirements that we needed for the HD studio and because Sony's HD studio cameras, XDCAM range and post-production equipment have become the industry standard. Giving students access to excellent facilities has helped drive an air of professionalism within the Media School that has really raised the standard of work among our students.'



## Sony solution

In July 2007, the Media School made the decision to expand and strengthen its existing facilities with a fully equipped, professional HD studio. The studio enables the students to get a much greater understanding of how real-life production facilities work. It also enables them to work simultaneously on editing, searching and managing the content that is stored after it has been produced.

## The implementation

The team at Bournemouth University had no experience in designing an HD production environment, which meant Sony's Professional Services division naturally took a highly consultative approach. Understanding how students and the University would interact with the studio throughout the year was key. This meant looking at the issue from several different perspectives – from applicants first visiting the University to students learning their skills as part of their coursework; from graduates moving into industry to teachers engaging with their students, new kit and content.

Sony's bespoke design has empowered students and the University with a rapid, centralised and collaborative file-based workflow.

The studio features powerful HDC-1500 systems cameras, XDCAM HD Professional Disc recorders and decks, and a range of LMD flat-panel production monitors.

Sony's media management device, HDXchange, is at the heart of the Media School's post-production environment and enables students to produce content for a wide range of playout platforms – from conventional broadcast, tape and DVD to web, IPTV and mobile devices.

## The results

Bournemouth University aims to attract many new students and academics from both the UK and abroad, as access to cutting-edge production technologies is helping to make graduates even more employable.

As well as benefiting students and teachers, the HDTV studio has attracted commercial interest and generated critical new revenue streams. Beyond hiring out its leading facilities for commercial use, the HD studio is also proving a decisive factor in the Media School's ability to secure training and consulting contracts. JCC, an Al Jazeera Children's Channel, selected Bournemouth University to provide a theoretical and practical four-month course designed to provide its employees with a better

understanding of the nature of making children's television programmes. The team spent a full day each week in the studio getting to grips with production and post-production techniques and mastering the workflow process.

Finally, the new HD studio has helped Bournemouth to retain its high levels of industry recognition and remain at the forefront of professional-led education. Although the facility is used primarily by the undergraduate programme, Bournemouth University is introducing a new Masters in Director Digital Film and Television and the Media School is working closely with Sony to continue to develop facilities that fulfil the demands of different courses.

## Why Sony was selected

Bournemouth University Media School chose the HD solution proposed by Sony's Professional Services team, not only because it featured the latest equipment found in many of the UK's leading studios, such as the BBC and BSkyB, but also because it included post-project support. Sony's decades of experience and technology leadership ensured the country's first campus-based professional HD TV studio features some of industry's most cutting-edge HD and file-based solutions.

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