

NEC Display Solutions Client Installation **Education**

UNIVERSITY OF SUNDERLAND



CREATING COLLABORATIVE LEARNING ZONES

The theme throughout the recent refurbishment of David Goldman Informatics Centre located on the St Peters Campus and the Murray Library located on City Campus has been collaborative learning through technology. Through innovative AV concepts, students at the University of Sunderland are now benefiting from interactive group learning techniques using NEC ultra-short throw projection combined with SMART interactive whiteboards.



Taking great pride in its holistic approach to student learning, under graduates of the University of Sunderland not only benefit from high standards of teaching but also gain the work experience, skills and confidence required to thrive in the world beyond University. Former UK Education Secretary, Estelle Morris recognized the University's success through 'its ability to adapt and change both culturally and technologically.' An innovative and forward-thinking University, it enjoys considerable investment to ensure its facilities match the quality of its courses. Recent developments centred on two key refurbishment programmes – the David Goldman Informatics Centre (DGIC) and The Murray Library Phase 3.

THE CHALLENGE

DGIC is home to the Faculty of Applied Sciences, predominantly its department of computing, engineering and technology. The building is an open plan area with seven PC 'cells' in the heart of the building. The faculty delivers lectures and course content across these cells which are heavily used but

had previously offered a distinct lack of AV provision. In bringing these cells up to a suitable standard, Dave Hartis, IT buyer at the University and his team were looking to redevelop the cells into what has become the Learning Lab, a unique group learning environment, and a focal point at the entrance known as The Triangle with a multifunctional design.



The Murray Library located at the heart of the city campus delivers a diverse provision of service to a large number of students. The final phase of a three year refurbishment project continues the theme of collaborative learning and was envisaged to offer a range of flexible and innovative learning spaces.

From the outset, Dave Hartis was keen to take the lead and investigate the potential solutions. 'We

looked at a number of products from a vast range of manufacturers and realised that we had to get the right blend of IT/AV equipment, from the projector, to the furniture to the interactive media' commented Hartis. Driven by their own research, the University selected a number of key partners to work with directly including Team Mate, SMART and NEC with Roche AV for integration.

THE SOLUTION

'WE HAVE BROUGHT THREE MARKET LEADERS TOGETHER TO DELIVER AN EXCELLENT LEARNING AID'

Within the DGIC, each of the seven cells of PCs for lecturer driven sessions and general open access have been equipped with a portable SMART multi-touch projection facility utilising an NEC ultra short throw U260W projector. The Learning Lab is a multifunctional area where learning is driven by individual sessions and larger group sessions utilising the seven fixed installations creating a unique environment where content can be shared

across all whiteboards.

The reception area, known as the Triangle, is positioned at the main entrance to the building. Whilst this has a multifunctional use, being in a prominent position, the aesthetics of the construction was crucial. An NEC U260W is set up to implement rear projection to create a large projection area for demonstrations and lecturer driven content.

Within the Murray Library, the Design Suite has become a dedicated suite containing high end Mac and desktop PCs delivering the latest in Adobe and Apple Software. It includes a portable SMART multi-touch projection facility utilising an NEC U260W projector. The two new syndicate rooms offer two additional group working spaces for students, again with an U260W in combination with a SMART whiteboard.

Hartis commented 'aesthetically we felt the NEC solution was head and shoulders above the rest of the market leaders in the ultra-short throw range. The environmental features also played a key role in our product selection and will contribute towards our green IT agenda and carbon reduction targets.' With innovative ECO features including a carbon meter, NEC offers products and tools to help quantify and reduce carbon emissions to help organisation meet their Green targets.

Hartis and his team were confident that the NEC projectors offered longevity, he commented that they

were 'future proofed for IT developments in the 3D arena and backed by an international company who are very visible in our market place.' Hartis continued 'NEC's projection solutions fit perfectly with our furniture and interactive whiteboard solutions and as a result, we have brought three market leaders together to deliver an excellent learning aid.'



THE RESULT

'ACADEMIC STAFF HAVE EMBRACED THE TECHNOLOGY AND WE HAVE SEEN A HIGH LEVEL OF USAGE.'

The new developments within the DGIC and the Murray library were completed on time and on budget, delivering innovative functionality with future proof technology conforming comfortably to the University's 5 year replacement programme. Bookings are high for the new areas which are in great demand from students and staff. Hartis commented 'academic staff have embraced the technology and we have seen a high level of usage.' Since the summer, an additional two portable projection units have been installed due to high

popularity, one within the sports facility and another in an open access area in the science complex.

'NEC and Roche Audio Visual, our integrator, have both played a crucial role in the success of this work, in terms of availability, flexibility and more importantly product knowledge' confirmed Hartis. 'Our NEC account manager has developed a strong relationship with the University and has been involved in some key discussions with the IT/AV procurement team and our executive team within Student and Learning Support.' Speaking with great pride in their accomplishments, Hartis commented 'I like to think we guided ourselves in these projects, but they would not have been possible without dedicated account management from each organisation who shared our vision, accepted our knowledge and requirements and delivered.'

Only through continual investment can organisations maintain their competitive advantage and this is certainly true of Universities. More so now than ever before, when funding is reduced and budgets are tight, universities must attract fee paying students from home and abroad. Today's students are very familiar with technology and they expect to see it and use it in all aspects of their lives. Students at the University of Sunderland will greatly benefit from its innovative, forward thinking approach where the technology used to enhance their learning will be used to similar effect in the meeting rooms of their future careers.

INSTALLATION INFORMATION

SITE INFORMATION

SECTOR

Education, University

CLIENT LOCATION INFORMATION

The University of Sunderland, Unit 1, Technology Park Chester Road, Sunderland
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INTEGRATION PARTNER

Roche Audio Visual www.roccheav.co.uk

EQUIPMENT AND BENEFITS

20 x Ultra short throw projection

solutions including U250X and U260W

**in combination with SMART interactive
whiteboards utilising TEAM MATE**

VariHite stands

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