

Case Study

Digital Signage in a Multi-Site Environment

Bridging the Gap in Communication



ONELAN's Net-Top-Box helped Northumbria University retain their culture and identity overcoming physical barriers.

Expansion plans at the Northumbria University required a new £136 Million development at its Newcastle site, with the construction of a new East Campus. There was just one snag: Newcastle's Central Motorway, which runs through the middle of the site. Clearly considerable thought and creative ideas were required to ensure that the existing and new campuses did not become separated and divided. Physically, the problem was solved with the construction of a stunning, landmark footbridge, erected during a single weekend.

Setting High Standards

The IT team at Northumbria University is very forward thinking having already been voted "UK's most IT-Enabled Organisation 2006" by Computing Magazine. The existing campus had successfully implemented wireless technology designed to benefit both student life and subject involvement, with the introduction of a network that allows students and staff to connect their personal laptops to any one of 130 wireless hotspots. Currently this is the most extensive network in the Higher Education sector.

Expanding the Network

With such high standards already set, the challenge for the facilities team was to be equally successful. As with the physical separation where a bridge was the stylish and practical solution, there was an equally simple communications answer. For some while, the West Campus had been successfully using ONELAN Net-Top-Boxes (NTB) and 42" plasma screens, to deliver messages of local, regional, and national interest, connected to the university network and controlled centrally. The obvious and effective approach decided upon was to extend the DS network to cover the new East Campus, sure in the knowledge that it would be compatible with the existing IT infrastructure being installed. Scotia UK plc, the University's Specialist Supplier of Audio Visual Equipment, who had previously installed the ONELAN NTBs into the West Campus, were able to support this next stage of network expansion with pre-sales support, post-sale training and the complete install.

Providing visibility

In September 2007, 9000 students transferred to two new five storey buildings in the East Campus, the School of Design in one and the Schools of Law and Business in the other. The successful combination of these is seen as vital to the future development of the university, therefore the DS needed to be of an exceptionally high standard, as it provides the first and most visible point of contact for students, visitors, staff and security. Accordingly, Scotia UK plc and Northumbria University worked closely to develop a DS infrastructure and installation comprising fourteen ONELAN NTB units, to enhance the local DS in the new faculty areas. Consequently, 42" plasma displays plus NTBs have been positioned in the various student learning hubs and common areas such as reception and cafeterias where wireless hot spots are most prevalent.

Controlling Content

Each plasma display is positioned to maximise the viewing area, and the system is set up with local content control operated by authorised personnel in the school areas. On-screen areas, controlled by IT services, display corporate content and local area information such as events, traffic or weather.

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Installed by: **Scotia UK plc** 
Professional presentations every time

“The ONELAN NTBs and associated plasma screens blend well with the glass and steel structure of the buildings themselves, giving a positive aesthetic. The dynamic screen displays attract the eye and it is clear that messages are being received by the audience, which is the prime objective.”

Joe Evans, Technical Services Manager at Northumbria University

For further details

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