

### ITV News choose Planet PC to supply and support their new graphics workstations.

ITV News have several Graphics Workstations in each of their 12 regional offices. Custom graphics are an important part of ITV News output, making the stability and reliability of their Graphics Workstations essential.

Prior to obtaining their Graphics Workstations from Planet PC, ITV News had used several different hardware platforms but had been consistently disappointed by lack of stability, poor build quality, and unsatisfactory support. Having tested the HP XW8200, HP's superior build quality shone through and they decided to go with the latest model, the HP XW8400.

The twin dual core CPU Intel Xeon HP XW8400 Workstations were supplied with an internal disk array for Media, Adobe Production Suite, 3dStudio Max, Boris Continuum Complete AFX, Apple Quick time Pro and Red Giant Trap code plug ins.

Along with a new hardware platform, ITV News were also looking for a 'simple, but reliable capture and play out card' to plug straight into their SDI matrix. Again, bad experiences with poorly built cards and a lack of solid drivers frustrated them so, around 15 months ago, Gerard, Engineering Manager - ITV News and Regions, started his search for an alternative. They had happily been using AJA I/O boxes in conjunction with Met Office weather graphics systems and, after speaking with AJA at the IBC Show, they decided to test the Xena cards. Having subsequently purchased several Aja Xena LSe cards from Planet PC, they found them to be much more stable than anything that they had previously tried, and that they integrated with Adobe Production Suite perfectly.

The final solution was the twin dual core Intel Xeon HP XW8400 Workstations supplied with an internal disk array for Media, Adobe Production Suite, 3dStudio Max, Boris Continuum Complete AFX, Apple Quick time Pro, Red Giant Trap code plug ins and the AJA Xena LSe card.

ITV News had previously used 3D Studio Max and Adobe After Effects for their graphics production, but the new Adobe Production Suite offered a more comprehensive package at a very reasonable price. The Production Suite provided Adobe Illustrator for all their vector work, Adobe Encore DVD for authoring in-house DVDs, Adobe Premiere for small edits and, of course, Adobe Photoshop as when doing any design work, you just need it'. The comprehensive range of software included in the Production Suite, the seamless workflow when moving between the different products, and the solid integration of the AJA card makes the production suite a 'great value bundle'.

The final piece of the puzzle was to find a reliable vendor to produce and support the systems and deal with the complicated roll-out. It was important to find a video solutions specialist who could offer the full range of services, rather than a vendor that could simply provide the equipment. Planet PC had previously supplied ITV News with several AJA cards and they had been happy with the level of after sales support provided. After several meetings, Gerard was suitably impressed with Planet PC's understanding of the systems and their willingness to support the complete solution.

Four months after the initial roll-out, ITV News have 26 new Graphics Workstations supplied and supported by Planet PC, and their experience of Planet PC has been exceptional. 'Planet PC were very patient and professional, and have got us to the exact point we wanted to be'. The relationship between ITV News and Planet PC continues to blossom with the supply of more kit, and valued support.

**Gerard Jennings**, Engineering Manager - ITV News and Regions

