

# USER STORY

## Macmillan Academy

Middlesbrough

Contact: Iain Mckeown - Multimedia Manager

Macmillan Academy was re-designated in 2005 having been a City Technology College (CTC) since 1989. The Academy has been designated as a "Leading Edge School" and received an 'Outstanding' Ofsted report in the recent inspection in December 2007.

Leading Edge status is awarded by the DCSF in recognition of consistent high performance and an innovative approach to education. Macmillan Academy collaborates closely with the Schools and Academies Trust and has specialisms in Science, Vocational and Outdoor Learning. As a result of Macmillan's achievements, the Academy has been selected by the DCSF and the Schools and Academies Trust to be one of the country's first 26 pioneering specialist vocational centres.

Iain and his team have cross curricular responsibilities and their remit is to ensure that both staff and students are well supported and have access to effective use of media technology across the site. Iain identified the need for easy access to media resources from the classroom and recognised that an 'on demand' model would be an obvious choice. Macmillan traditionally had analogue systems in their classrooms and their resources were scattered, the vision was to create a central repository.

Macmillan's original solution was written in-house and comprised a media server with a basic search facility storing approximately 1,500 media resources delivered to the classrooms via the Academy's intranet. This solution was pioneering and served the Academy well, but Iain and the ICT team were well aware that their system lacked administrative functionality and security and was quite time consuming to manage.

Iain's initial contact with Planet was with regard to an ongoing project to upgrade their analogue TV Studio to Digital and during our visit to the Academy, Planet eStream was presented and demonstrated as a potential successor to their in-house solution.

Iain felt that eStream had been developed with all of the needs of an educational client base in mind and was particularly impressed by its intuitive interface, effective set of features and tight integration. Having had time to appraise and discuss the solution, Iain felt that eStream "ticked all of the boxes" and had potential for saving vast amounts of both development and management time.

Planet then set about customising eStream to accommodate Macmillan Academy's large existing library of photos and once this development work was concluded, Macmillan invested in a Core eStream solution with two Media Encoders, Active Directory and Freeview Modules which were installed in March 2008.

Since installation Macmillan have used their solution intensively, they are averaging 40 - 50 scheduled recordings per week with their Freeview module alone and Iain explained that what used to be a labour intensive and laborious task is now much more time efficient. The solution has been used across the curriculum with ICT, English, Geography and RS acting as a test bed for the technology which will soon be rolled out across all departments. Twice weekly news broadcasts are recorded in the TV Studio and then broadcast as part of a tutorial programme then archived and linked to the website all via eStream.

As part of their coursework elements, ICT students at Macmillan have had to do 'Talking Heads' work which is recorded taking a feed from the studio and digitised onto the eStream database for archive and distribution.

Iain and his colleagues at Macmillan stated that they made a decision to invest in eStream based on people, product and company and have been very happy with their choice. Iain described the support that he had received from Planet as 'brilliant' and looks forward to an ongoing mutually beneficial relationship.

