The University was moving to a modern purpose-built campus in a year filled with students who were born in the 21st Century.

The University needed to create spaces on campus that fit the expectations of their modern students utilising technology and employing modern teaching methods designed to keep students engaged.

With trends leaning towards flexible learning and highly reconfigurable open plan teaching spaces, the University made the decision they wanted to move their technology out of the classroom and use end points in open spaces to deliver their lessons. The team had to deal with the problem of how to integrate and position their technology in these spaces.

The University came to TOP-TEC with a number of different requirements. They needed a large quantity of brackets that could fit a range of screens for both general presentation purposes and digital signage, a way to utilise screens and deliver lessons in open plan areas throughout the campus and a secure, tamper proof and aesthetically pleasing housing for hardware that would drive their state of the art wayfinding system.

TOP-TEC Solutions

Wayfinder Kiosks

For their new campus, the University wanted to embrace digitally integration. To get their staff and students onboard and used to using the technology available they decided they would implement a custom wayfinding system for visitors and students unfamiliar with the campus to learn the layout and find specific locations with ease.

Because the wayfinding system would be implemented into public areas they required a secure, tamper proof and aesthetically pleasing housing for the screen and the hardware required to run it. TOP-TEC designed a custom housing that would give the University the confidence to leave their valuable equipment in high traffic areas.
The unit was designed to fit the modern look of the space with two variations emerging to suit different applications while maintaining the same style choices.

Customised Spire Trolleys
Teaching spaces have been reduced from 200 down to 116 but now have a larger number of supporting spaces in which teaching is delivered via trolleys with screens mounted to them. The trolleys were designed around a 65" screen and needed to house a Network receiver and digital media player to serve its dual purpose of being both teaching aid and digital signage. Ease of use is very important, everything should be easily moved around and connected where required with minimal set up for non-technical personnel. Considering the investment, the technology needed to be usable in spite of any network outages meaning that alongside the wireless connectivity features, cables had to be housed within the trolley’s mast enabling the screen to be connected to and deliver lessons in any circumstance. Speed of setup is also increasingly important; the University teaches from 09:00 - 18:00 with something always being taught in every room, making downtime extremely impactful on student learning.

Digital signage stands
The university wanted several digital signage points in the foyer to their students Union which was an old Grade II listed building TOP-TEC provided the freestanding dual sided DS Stand so that the University could deploy the large screens, without the need to alter the buildings structure or provide unsightly support.

Jupiter brackets
Simplicity, reliability and security were key requirements for the University of Northampton when deciding which Bracketry to deploy for their on-site digital signage, they have historically used TOP-TEC’s bracketry and knew the Jupiter range of brackets could offer them the flexibility to quickly mount and deploy digital signage screens across the campus. Should the need come to change the screens or adjust the technology attached at the back the brackets are quickly removed using suited keys.
Feedback

Although it has taken a lot to convince people that building a new campus from scratch, radically changing the way teaching spaces are laid out, the way people teach and how lessons are delivered the feedback has been very positive with staff and students already using the new systems in ways that hadn’t been anticipated; Individuals using a single screen across the entire campus delivering the same presentation ad hoc to various groups or using the entire suit of trolleys to present training to 200 staff in one space. The response to the new wayfinding kiosks has been fantastic with staff being enthusiastic about the new facility that saves time and confusion.

Why TOP-TEC?

A huge consideration for Northampton was TOP-TEC’s ability to customise a suite of products that fit their specific requirements with a company that was able to reliably reproduce each product consistently. The university has been using TOP-TEC products for a long time, preferring to use steel lecterns over wooden varieties because of their durability and reliability. The University has tried to stick to an aesthetic and being able to customise the branding of their lecterns is a big advantage that enables them to bring every product in line with their brand identity.

Working with a British manufacturer who is able to supply their products but also services that add value to the relationship such as warranty call outs and site visits.

“Building a new campus from scratch, radically changing the way your buildings are laid out and altering the way you teach has been complex...If you can find a supplier who is willing to give you the level of service, customisation and the amount of engagement we have received from TOP-TEC it really takes a lot of the pressure off...”

Andrew Taylor
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