

Case Study: Birkbeck, University of London

The Superior Series projector featuring Casio's best ever image and collaborative One-Click Connect feature is part of Birkbeck's forward-thinking campus-wide AV strategy.

As the institution's AV strategy shifts in response to changing demands from students and staff, Birkbeck, University of London has been faced with the task of ensuring its multi-purpose spaces meet with these demands. A key part of its strategy is the installation of equipment that accommodates new ways of interacting and teaching. Selecting Casio XJ-S400 UN projectors, part of the Superior Series, Birkbeck now offers wireless bring-your-own-device (BYOD) connectivity as well as extensive traditional connectivity options throughout its campus.

Alex Horsburgh, Birkbeck's AV manager explained the thinking behind the strategy: *"The spaces here in the Clore Management Centre, as well as in the main building, are used mainly for teaching - both in the daytime and evening classes"*. Evening classes are a crucial stream of revenue for the university, so when rooms are vacant, the university hires the spaces out commercially. Therefore, equipment needs to be flexible and easy to use for those using the space on a one-off basis.

Key features

- Lamp-free
- Up to 4,000 ANSI lumens
- WUXGA or WXGA resolution
- Quick start and stop
- Casio's best ever image quality
- WLAN connectivity
- One-Click Connect
- Low power consumption



 **LampFree**
CASIO Green Technology

"Lumen count is certainly important, and we've found that 4,000 lumens is perfect for a room of 25 to 30 people." However, Alex explains that it's not just about brightness. *"Laser and LED technology is important to us now as it provides additional benefits such as low maintenance costs, quick startup time, reliability and a long lifespan. We also look for legacy support as there is still demand for VGA connectivity and Casio ticks these boxes"*.

Birkbeck also selected the XJ-S400 UN as it encourages several users to connect at the same time wirelessly with classroom equipment. *"One of the reasons we chose Casio was for its BYOD option which allows users to connect with their phones, tablets and laptops without having to use the lectern. Being able to walk around the classroom and engage with students without having to stand at the front of the space is something we've noticed as an emerging trend, and we're trying to facilitate that with this technology"*.

This shift in methods of engagement means Alex and the rest of the AV team need to future-proof the university's teaching spaces: *"Going forward, we're looking at repurposing existing rooms into flexible, collaborative learning spaces and considering the types of technology"*



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Alex Horsburgh, Birkbeck's AV manager



we can deploy into those areas to enable that. We're moving towards seamless, wireless options and creating spaces not necessarily fitted with lecterns as we have historically, for less cabling and less fuff.”

Backed by the university's internal surveys, Birkbeck's approach to technology is driven by both internal and industry factors. The surveys revealed common issues staff have with classroom equipment, one being lack of connectivity options for older devices. To resolve this, staff are encouraged to use the dedicated classroom PC which is hardwired to the projector, however that could change.

For easier access and control over wireless devices, Birkbeck is now developing a new standard to create consistency across every room on campus, this includes a touchscreen Extron panel and more BYOD options, encouraging usage of the technology such as the Casio projectors.

Student expectations are also changing: *“Now that students are faced with higher fees, there's a greater expectation to provide more of a service. Upgrading our AV is part of what*



it will take to meet that demand. Our surveys have shown that students want to engage more with the material and by interacting with the technology, it's an effective way of involving the whole class.”

“The One-Click Connect feature allows students to cast material directly to the screen, rather than sending it to the lecturer in advance, which saves time and makes the lesson more fluid for the lecturer.”

When it comes to timesaving, Alex is a fan of Casio's rapid start-up time. *“With our lamp-based projectors in the main building, it can take up to two minutes for the lamp to warm up and that's before logging in. The instant on-off power function saves yourself crucial minutes at the start of the lesson.”*

Birkbeck has installed eight XJ-S400 UN units across the site, with additional units to be installed. Alex concludes: *“We've got around one hundred classrooms, most of which need switching to lamp free and going forward, we'll hopefully be deploying more Casio projectors throughout our classrooms to replace our old lamp-based models.”*

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