

ProCon panels aids "anytime anywhere learning" for Stroud High School

Stroud High School in Gloucestershire is a vibrant selective secondary school for girls, which has foundation status and specialises in science. The school has over 800 pupils and its slogan is Valuing People and their Achievements



John Headley, ICT Manager, has been responsible for driving forward a progressive strategy, using the latest technology to help achieve the school's stated aim of "any time, anywhere learning". This has resulted in a push to equip all classrooms with the latest in full multi media facilities, including an interactive SMART board, projector, video, DVD and sound system.

However, whilst the technology was welcomed with open arms, a real bugbear for the users was the amount of remote controls needed in each room. In fully equipped rooms, this meant a minimum of three remotes, and John's team was regularly getting phone calls to say a remote was missing or the batteries were dead.

"At best, this was annoying" says John "at worst, really disruptive to teaching. We were supplying the latest tools for our teachers, and once a facility is made available, people come to rely on it. If a teacher walks into a room with a prepared lesson and then can't use the projector because the remote is missing and it's fixed to the ceiling, then it causes problems."



The solution

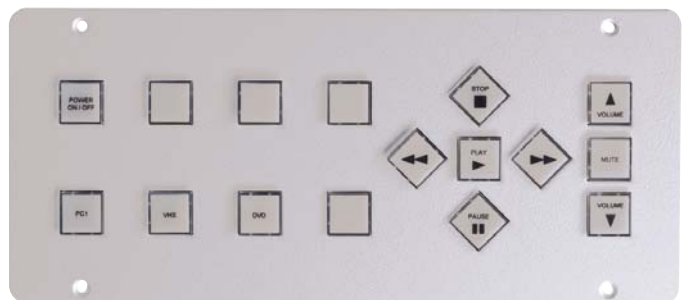
John decided the solution was to look at room control facilities that operate multiple pieces of equipment at the touch of a button. His chosen solution was the ProCon 16 button

room control panels. He chose these panels for a number of reasons. They are extremely easy to use, with a logical layout and colour coded backlit buttons. Crucially, they replace all existing remote handsets, giving central control from one wall mounted panel of all the room's equipment. This gives the ability for teachers to walk into a classroom, press a button marked 'PLAY' and get on with the lesson.

Greater control plus benefits

But it is not just greater control that ProCon has brought to the school. John explains "The panels have the facility to automatically switch off projectors at a set time. This used to be a real headache for me, where a lesson would finish and the teacher would forget to turn off the projector. If it happened on a Friday night, that would be around 60 hours used up of the lamp life. And with projector lamps costing £200 upwards it was a large financial cost."

Another benefit appreciated by the school is the ability to manually switch between inputs. John explained the benefit of this facility. "It means that full use can be made of all the equipment available, in a slick, professional manner. It gives teachers confidence to be able to just press a button and have a video clip cut in, and then switch seamlessly back to the computer, for example."



John was so impressed with the ProCon panels that he pushed his budget to the limit to kit out as many rooms as possible. 16 rooms are now fully fitted and another one about to be ordered, and a roll out programme planned across the remaining rooms,

As ICT Manager, John's view of the ProCon panels is extremely positive. But as he says, the real proof of the pudding is in the reaction from the users where the panels have been given a unanimous thumbs up. "The panels are a massive hit. They give teachers confidence in the technology and makes it accessible to anybody using the rooms"

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