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UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

Connectivity infrastructure to rival the world's best

THE CLIENT

Based in the heart of London, University College London (UCL) is a multidisciplinary university founded in 1826. The university employs over 16,000 staff and 50,000 students enrolled on their courses. In 2023, UCL opened a brand-new state-of-the-art campus on the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

UCL East will eventually span across a 180,000sqm between six sites. Phase one will cover 50,000sqm of this and is comprised of two sites Pool Street West and Marshgate, it will accommodate over 4,000 students and 260 staff across the 2 buildings.

THE CHALLENGE

The new campus will offer some new and exciting courses never seen before, and to accommodate this it requires some of the most advanced telecoms, IT and AV technology in the world. The new and immersive courses being offered at UCL involve some ground-breaking and expensive technology, demanding technical expertise that is hard to come by for such large- scale installations.

Along with the usual requirements of Wi-Fi, printers and telephony, UCL East will include new technology, like drone technology, advanced robotics and AI, requiring bespoke and cutting-edge connectivity solutions. The site will also include a cinema, wet labs, a brewery, bat radars and podcast studio, along with the usual lecture halls and study areas.

As an educational setting, UCL has a high turnover of users, especially students. With this high level of users coming and going comes several potential security risks, including the fact that all students bring their own devices with them.

Key to any educational installation is creating the best environment for learners in a sustainable manner. With such a large IT infrastructure investment, it is important that it is done right first time, and that it will work for learners of the present and future.

THE SOLUTION

Recognising the importance of the connectivity infrastructure in these new developments, the UCL East programme team used a dedicated project manager to focus solely on the specification, deployment, and delivery of all the telecoms, IT and AV systems and services across the phase one sites. As established and trusted telecoms and connectivity experts, in August 2016, Immervox were drafted into Project Manage the design, procurement, installation and commissioning of all telecoms, IT and AV infrastructure and equipment.

Working alongside the UCL Estates Team, UCL Information Services Division, multiple UCL faculties and departments, and two Principal Contractors, a multi-million pound budget was allocated for the development of the site, with a budget of in excess of £10 million allocated specifically for the IT and AV of the phase one sites.

In their role as Project Manager, the Immervox Team were responsible for coordinating the project, identifying what was required from all stakeholders, assuring that the budget was aligned with the technical specifications set out by the stakeholders, and then delivering the project on time, on budget and to the agreed specification.

The new IT infrastructure was designed and installed in a way that not only supports this plethora of devices from high student turnover but supports them in a secure and cyber-safe way using market-leading tools and technology. As a university that welcomes overseas students, it was vital that the IT infrastructure was secure, to keep staff and students, and their personal information, safe online across the world.

A project of this magnitude is not without challenges. However, ensuring the right experts are involved at the relevant stages enabled a culture of collaboration and problem-solving to overcome challenges without delay. As experienced Project Managers, identifying these challenges was the first step taken by Immervox to manage and mitigate any associated risks impacting the programme.

While many Universities struggle with ageing IT infrastructure, at Immervox we understand that a strong foundation creates the best eco system for learning, growth, and development and this was fundamental to the installation at UCL.

As one of the country's most trusted communications providers, Immervox were able to provide project engineers with the expertise and range of knowledge to ensure the scale and level of precision can be accurately met.

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WHAT THE CLIENT SAID

"Immervox is a highly trusted provider of exceptional project management services and unparalleled technical expertise. Their unwavering dedication and hard work were instrumental in the successful completion of one of UCL's flagship projects, the establishment of the 'UCL East' campus. This ambitious project aimed to expand UCL's education and research capabilities, creating a state-of-the-art campus that fosters innovation and collaboration.

Immervox's role in the 'UCL East project involved comprehensive planning, meticulous coordination, and the integration of cutting-edge technology solutions. They managed the project from its initial conception through to its final implementation, ensuring every phase was executed with precision and efficiency. Their expertise in handling complex logistical challenges and their ability to foresee and mitigate potential issues were key factors in keeping the project on track and within budget.

One of the standout contributions of Immervox was their ability to streamline communication and collaboration among various stakeholders, including architects, engineers, contractors, and university officials. This cohesive approach facilitated smooth progress and allowed for timely decision-making, which was crucial for a project of such scale and importance.

Furthermore, Immervox's technical prowess ensured that the 'UCL East campus was equipped with advanced infrastructure capable of supporting cutting-edge research and innovative teaching methods. Their implementation of robust IT systems, state-of-the-art laboratories, and flexible learning environments has positioned the campus as a leader in educational excellence.

The success of the 'UCL East project is a testament to Immervox's commitment to delivering outstanding results. Their work not only met but exceeded the expectations of UCL, setting a new standard for future projects. The partnership between Immervox and UCL highlights the significant impact that expert project management and technical proficiency can have on large-scale educational initiatives, ultimately contributing to the advancement of knowledge and innovation."

www.immervox.com
0333 014 6220
consultants@immervox.com