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# Welcome to... Just a minute!

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## **INTRODUCTION**

In April 2012 the Learning Resources department at University of Bedfordshire won a Silver Award at the HEIST Awards for Education Marketing with our *Just a minute* film series in the category 'Best Internal Communication Campaign'. The HEIST Awards celebrate excellence in marketing in the education sector and exist to recognise and celebrate the professionalism and innovation shown from the smallest regional college to global education brands. It was a jubilee-themed event for 2012, held at the Queens Hotel in Leeds, and our special guest speaker was – you've guessed it – Her Majesty herself... or at least her lookalike!

Our series of one-minute information films published on YouTube and the university's website provides students with bite-sized chunks of information about the services on offer in the learning resources centres (LRCs) and library. Since the series was launched in 2011, these videos have collectively received more than 20,900 views.

## **WHAT ARE THE VIDEOS?**

Our *Just a minute* series comprises 32 videos lasting exactly sixty seconds each and are hosted on the University of Bedfordshire library YouTube channel. They provide a lot of information in bite-sized chunks for students get to grips with the information they need about using aspects of the services at our five campus library / LRCs. Topics range from introductions to each campus library / LRC, using the library catalogue, self-service facilities, printing, ebooks, document supply, our Library Anywhere mobile app and other digital resources. The full range can be viewed at:

<http://lrweb.beds.ac.uk/libraryservices/whoweare/videos>

and

<http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLF206C9105E2702A0&feature=plcp>

#### **WHY DID WE MAKE THEM?**

All staff and students have access to the learning resources website ([lrweb.beds.ac.uk](http://lrweb.beds.ac.uk)). This is a large website with multiple contributors and needs to accommodate both home and international students across our campuses. We are also constantly striving to improve the digital services we provide for current students via the website. Although we had integrated our social media channels such as Twitter and Facebook across our site, on review we realised the website was particularly lacking in high-quality video content. With the implementation of a new content management system (Squiz Matrix) for the university we were now able to embed videos and playlists much more efficiently than before. We therefore decided to create and tailor a series of new videos to make it both easier and more accessible for users to get a quick, succinct guide to all aspects of library services. As our students are clearly embracing the use of digital media, it was important for us to make information about our services available to them in as many different, proven formats as possible. This would allow them to receive information in a timely and easily accessible manner and use the level of technology they were comfortable with to view them (e.g. laptop, desktop PC, tablet device, smartphone).

We are keen to present traditional library services in a new light and spotlight the ongoing developments in library service provision as part of our learning resources promotional campaigns. We also want to use these videos outside the website to raise the profile of the Learning Resources Centres in the university and to support the student induction process as much as possible. As the videos and our website are also accessible from outside the university, we have borne in mind that prospective students could find the videos useful when acquainting themselves with our services and getting acclimatised before beginning their studies with us.

We are aware that students interact with us in the context of a blended learning environment and it is important to give them the opportunity to do so and to learn through a variety of different media to suit their varied learning styles. We felt that to produce a series of videos would exploit the cur-

rent trend of mobile web use. We branded these videos as 'Just a minute – Library videos'.

#### **How do we do it?**

We use Google Analytics to monitor closely the most viewed sections and pages on our website, and by studying the results over the past few years we were able to determine which subjects students were keen to learn about. We used this information to prioritise certain videos.

Once we have selected a subject the library team member with the most knowledge on it writes a script. This is a really key process because without a good script the video would not work. If students are watching a video and looking for the answer to a particular problem, they want an answer to that question quickly and clearly.

The next step is to record the script; making sure it fits exactly to a minute can sometimes require some editing. We use an external microphone and import the sound file into the editing software (iMovie or Camtasia); we can then look at what shots we need to accompany the voice-over. If the video is showing students how to do something online, we typically capture the screen and match with the voice-over. To maintain pace and interest we mix the screenshot recordings with footage, which in some cases shows students what they need to do in the library: this could be how to take out books, how to use the rolling stack or a number of services that we have on offer in the library.

We film using a full HD camera to ensure the best quality possible as it is key that all the videos are consistent in quality.

Once the video has been created and we are satisfied that it meets our brand guidelines we upload it and begin promoting it. We make sure Google will find it by tagging it with the right keywords and making a text version available on the same page. In addition, we showcase and promote the videos through our well-established communications channels:

**YouTube:** We host all the videos on our YouTube channel. This allows us to embed them back into the site as well as to share the videos with interested parties.

**Facebook:** When adding a video to YouTube we also embed it on our Facebook fan page for additional exposure.

**Twitter:** Our Learning Resources Twitter feed is used to push out news to interested parties and is also embedded on the front page of our website. We tweet all our followers when a new video is added.

**QR Codes:** Posters with QR codes allow users to scan them on their smartphones and view the videos whilst standing next to the featured piece of equipment.

**Library blogs:** We run a number of subject-specific blogs aimed at current students. We embedded the videos into these blogs to target carefully specific student groups.

**Website banners:** These run to a scheduled calendar to promote the campaign.

**Screensavers on PCs in the library / LRCs:** These promote the initiative and we have set up a short-cut URL to make it easier to remember at a glance ([lrweb.beds.ac.uk/videos](http://lrweb.beds.ac.uk/videos)).

**Library handbook:** This is our flagship publication, which contains links and information on all the services we offer and is given to all new and returning students.

**Welcome back newsletter:** We promote the videos by featuring them in our learning-resources specific publication, which is distributed to students and staff during the academic year.

**Academic liaison librarians:** We used word of mouth to promote videos to both students and staff in induction talks and one-to-one interviews.

#### MEASURING THE UPTAKE

All our 'Just a minute' videos have been viewed; most popular so far are 'Referencing: an introduction to the academic way to reference your sources in assignments', 'The library catalogue' and 'Using the self-service machines'. To date the series has received more than 20,900 views.

#### GOING FOR IT – HEIST AWARDS

Fired with the 'Olympic year spirit', we decided to enter our *Just a minute* series in the 2012 HEIST awards in the 'Best Internal Communication Campaign' category. We were excited to learn that we had been shortlisted for this award and thrilled when we received a Silver Award at the awards ceremony hosted by HEIST at the Queens Hotel in Leeds. Needless to say a good time was had

by all as we celebrated our success accompanied by a Queen tribute band providing the evening's entertainment.

#### WHAT NEXT?

We regularly review the content of our videos to check that it is still relevant and accurate. If a topic has been superseded by a new service, a building interior has changed beyond recognition or a departmental name has changed completely then we consider whether we need to reshoot the visuals, amend part of the voice-over or start again. New topics have been identified for adding to the playlist as new services come on stream. We have attempted to future-proof the content to a certain extent in order to minimise the need to keep reshooting content. The positive responses and continued good use that these videos receive merit the effort we devote to keeping the series fresh. We have now further streamlined the production process in order to be able to update and create videos quickly whilst still maintaining high production values. In order to help with this, the skills and knowledge needed to produce these videos is now being cascaded to more members of the library team.

And of course we are looking ahead to the 2013 HEIST and other national awards and creating a submission detailing our latest new initiative to showcase developments in learning resources at the University of Bedfordshire!



Left to right 'Her Majesty'; Paul Fryer, Digital Marketing Manager; Jo Myhill, Head of Academic Liaison; Marcus Woolley, University Librarian and Deputy Director of Learning Resources and Student Services; HEIST awards compère; Sioned Kowalczyk, Head of LRSS Marketing and Communications