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5 March 2020

## Audio-Visual Project for Steyning Museum using Blackbox-AV products

Steyning Museum in West Sussex is a small museum run by a number of enthusiastic local residents. Income comes from member subscriptions, visitor donations and grants. Following a successful bid for grant money from the museum's local authority, Horsham District Council, the project was initiated to improve visitor experience through the use of audio and visual systems. Given the limited financial constraints the decision was taken to buy the components required for the project from Blackbox-AV and use in-house expertise and local craftsmen to design and build the required units. The completed project consists of 4 units - two video and two audio.



**19 inch Mediascreen Schedule**

The first and simplest part of the project consisted of installing a 19 inch Mediascreen Schedule unit in the entrance to the museum. The screen greets visitors to the museum detailing opening times, highlights, photographs of selected exhibits and current and future exhibitions. The positioning of the screen means it can be read by passers-by when the museum is closed. The in-built scheduler switches the screen off overnight and on again in the morning before the museum opens. The screen switches between two sets of text and images reflecting whether the museum is open or closed.



**'Railway' Listening Post**

The second part of the project was to implement two 'listening posts'. Volunteers are busily interviewing long-time local residents to capture their memories for posterity. The recorded material is kept in the museum archive and has also been transcribed. It was felt that extracts from the recordings would be of great interest to museum visitors. Two AudioFrame 15s each equipped with two handsets were purchased. The ability to move the listening posts to different parts of the museum was required so a local carpenter was employed to construct two wooden units to house the AudioFrame 15s and handsets. The project team mocked-up a listening post from cardboard to get a feel for what the final unit would look like and the carpenter brought the idea into reality! One of the listening posts is dedicated to stories relating to the local railway station and branch line that fell victim to the Beeching axe in 1966. It is anticipated that the audio on the the second post will be changed once or twice a year and has initially been set up with material relevant to our Farming exhibit. The design of our listening post and use of the AudioFrame 15 means that updating the audio recordings and the associated button template can be done relatively easily.

The final part of the project was to make our archive of photographs more accessible to our visitors. The museum holds a large number of images of local street scenes, notable buildings, people, etc. Due to space limitations the photographs spend most of their time hidden away in boxes in our



**'Farming' Listening Post - AudioFrame 15**

storeroom. Using a VideoClip HD6 we are able to show digital copies of our photographs on a 27 inch screen in the exhibition area. The VideoClip HD6 and buttons are mounted in a customised box situated below the screen. Visitors can use the illuminated buttons to select a set of photographs to view. When a set is not being displayed an 'attractor' displays a rolling sample of photographs and invites the visitor to 'press a button'. As the unit can also play video and audio we have a handset for future use. Because the screen is switched on for relatively short periods each day and not every day, the decision was taken to buy a Samsung computer screen to use with the VideoClip rather than one of the more expensive 'commercial grade' screens from Blackbox-AV.



**Picture Archive Viewer - VideoClip HD6**

Comments from visitors and volunteers alike have been very favourable and we feel that Steyning Museum has taken a firm step forward into the 21st. century!

**Steyning Museum <http://steyningmuseum.org.uk>**

**Blackbox-AV <https://www.blackboxav.co.uk>**