

Case Study information

November 2010

UCLan and Flashbang Science



After 25 years of working her way up in the chemical industry, from chemical engineer to Vice President, Claire Holt decided she wanted something more, after 18 months of hard work and determination Flashbang Science was launched in Feb 2010.

Flashbang Science is a mobile science lab service for schools, children's centres and parties, covering predominately the Lancashire area. Claire aims to put the fun back into science and hopefully help inspire a new generation of science, engineering and technology entrepreneurs.

By linking in with the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan), Claire has been able to develop the website side of her business further. MA games design students; Daniel Startin and Harry Prestige have been working with Claire and the team to make the website more interactive and more appealing for the younger generation.



Referred by Business Link North West, Claire was introduced to one of UCLan's business advisers, John Hunter, who was able to help fund Daniel and Harry to work in Claire's business. Claire commented on the support, *"Daniel and Harry came to us in July and have really injected creativity into the organisation, as well as integrating well into the established team"* Claire adds, *"we really understand the benefits of linking with a university and we hope through projects like this we can understand, and work with the sector more."*

Harry is thoroughly enjoying his short-term paid placement with Flashbang Science and is realising that the skills taught at University can be transferred into different careers and business sectors. Harry said, *"I have always wanted to be a games designer, I get such a buzz out of seeing people enjoy something that I have developed. However by working on this project with Flash Bang Science it has opened my eyes to other roles that I can use my skills in."*

Daniel added, "working in a smaller organisation has enabled to me to be even more creative and think outside the box, as I have to develop games that not only have a fun element but also an education one. This challenge is both rewarding and a great confidence boost and has resulted in me pushing myself harder and therefore enjoying the experience a whole lot more."

Clare has seen Harry and Daniel's confidence grow as a result of the placement opportunity and comments, *"they have very good commercial awareness and do understand client needs, I have noticed personal development in terms of time management and working in a team. We are lucky being a small organisation in that we can shape the company's structure around the skills of the team."*

Claire would recommend any small business link in with a university such as UCLan, as small projects can very easily develop into bigger mutually beneficial relationships. After winning the Innovation Award at the 2010 VAW Rossendale Business Awards in October, next year Clare hopes to win the Best Website Award!

Visit: www.flashbangscience.co.uk

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Notes to Editor:

The University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) has developed an enviable reputation as an institution that innovates, evolving its course portfolio to over 500 undergraduate programmes and 180 postgraduate courses. The University has an established research reputation within the areas of Business, Health, Humanities and Science. In the recent Research Assessment Exercise, all 17 subject areas submitted were rated as containing research of international excellence, while 11 areas were assessed to be undertaking research which is world-leading. With approximately 32,000 students, the University indirectly contributes close to £250 million into the

regional economy every year. UCLan is currently in the process of spending more than £120 million on new buildings and facilities to support teaching, learning and leisure activities.

Flashbang Science is a fantastic bright mobile lab which pulls up right outside your front door. Whether it is a school, birthday party, scout or guide hut, the experience is the same... fun! "hands on" practical science experimentation for children aged 8-11.

Handled and managed by professional scientists (fully CRB checked). Flashbang focuses on a mix of chemistry and physics, teaching children in an exciting and enlightening way.