



A LESSON IN AV TECHNOLOGY AT UTRECHT UNIVERSITY

THE UNIVERSITY OF UTRECHT INSTALLS PANASONIC
DISPLAYS, INCLUDING 4K VIDEOWALL





In the new Victor J. Koningsberger-building at Utrecht University, which houses Natural Sciences, Engineering, Earth Sciences and Medical Sciences faculties, audio-visual firm JNV has installed a 4K videowall.

The videowall, hung at the top of the stairs at the large main entrance, comprises 16 TH-55LFV5W displays and is approximately 2.8 by 5 metres.

Informal auditorium

The biggest challenge was to provide a videowall with 4K image quality for both digital signage as well as presentations. This was especially difficult as the University needed the ability to show images from a 4K laptop onto the videowall. This resulted in one of the first videowalls of this size with 4K image quality in the Netherlands.

"Opposite the screen there is a wide stairwell leading to the second floor, giving the impression of an auditorium. This was a conscious choice by the architect." said Peter Janssens, AV domain specialist at Utrecht University.

"We often use the videowall to show television or videos. The space for the videowall and the staircase then mainly function as an auditorium, but in a much more informal atmosphere.

"Next to the videowall there is a small cabinet used for connecting a notebook for presentations. Usually, the content on the videowall is directed centrally. The screen then also functions as a giant information panel, on which information about the University, the various faculties, and current activities are being shown on a continuous basis."

Digital notice board

In addition to the videowall, JNV has installed a series of 55LFV5W displays on the first floor. These displays are used as a digital notice board. They show general news, University news, information on public transport and the University's twitter feed.

The student societies manage the content, along with the communication department. The communication department is also responsible for the corporate design as the information screens and videowall are seen as important tools for the branding of the University for its students and employees.

"The videowall is divided in four quadrants on four screens", explains Daniel Kerkhof, Regional Manager of Crestron Benelux, which creates operating systems for AV applications.

"Our DM-hardware is our operating force behind this. This assigns a specific piece of information to each individual quadrant on the screens, so that it is displayed accordingly. In fact, we use four separate videowalls to provide the complete image."

"these images connect and complement each other seamlessly to provide a perfect viewing experience"

"Because of the excellent image quality of the Panasonic displays and their thin bezel, these images connect and complement each other seamlessly to provide a perfect viewing experience. When this system was delivered, this was the only possible solution to create a 4K videowall."

4K image quality

"4K image quality was our most important requirement" said Peter Janssens. "It is definitely not the case that, because we are an AV-department, we automatically want the newest technology. However, we regard this system as the type of signage that will be the template for the future for all of our 40 University buildings."

"We like to communicate with our students. A part of that is 'push-information', which we offer at waiting areas, such as the canteen, the halls or elevators.

"A number of years ago all AV-services were organised per faculty, which has now merged into one central AV-service, which provides a service for the entire University. As an AV-service, we now have more influence. We are also more involved in the design, construction and accommodation of new buildings or spaces. This results in the use of standardised equipment, which has a significant cost reduction due to the central purchase and a more efficient way for maintenance and management."

Remote access

JNV has been collaborating with the University since 2004 and has fitted more than 200 rooms.

"The Victor J. Koningsberger building is an example of the very latest IT-infrastructure" says Jan Zwanenberg, digital architect at JNV.

"We regard this as the template for all of our University buildings."

"So to make sure that there will be enough network bandwidth in the future, all AV-equipment in the building is connected to a framework, so that remote monitoring of the equipment and support of the users is possible.

"In all spaces a touchscreen has been installed so that when users encounter problems they are helped by a self-service menu. Reality has shown that 90% of the problems with AV-equipment are caused by user errors. The AV service can also report on lighting times, user intensity and technical problems, in order to optimise the maintenance."