

Discover

our Business Services



Case Study

Cyclone Technology finds perfect research partner for computer network management product development

**Award-Winning
Innovative
Responsive**

Summary Facts

- Cyclone Technology sought research partner with in-depth computer network management experience, for its netPrefect software.
- As one of Cisco's elite international super-centre academies, Birmingham City University offered in-depth expertise in managing market-leading computer networks.
- Talented graduates recruited to carry out research projects through Advantage West Midlands (AWM) funded Knowledge, Innovation, Technology Transfer Schemes (KITTS).
- A series of successful research outcomes led to successful product launch and ongoing collaborative relationship.
- Resulting Cyclone netPrefect software becomes integral part of Birmingham City University's Computer Network Design and Management degree modules.

About the University

Birmingham City University offers a comprehensive range of services to help businesses meet the challenges ahead. With over 23,000 students and 2,600 staff, the University's breadth of expertise has already benefitted over 5,000 West Midlands-based SMEs. It also works closely with major companies including Microsoft, Cisco, BBC, Marks & Spencer, Sky, PTC and Technosoft and collaborates with international academic and business partners.

About the Company

Cyclone Technology designs and supplies software solutions to enable detailed management of IT infrastructure. During the development of its netPrefect software, Cyclone sought to ensure the product's compatibility with advanced computer networks when offered as a comprehensive network management tool, both for businesses and independent service providers.

The Challenge

To meet the need for 'extreme' product testing, Cyclone sought a research partner with in-depth Cisco Systems' experience.

Birmingham City University's reputation as an elite international Cisco super-centre academy offered Cyclone a research organisation with relevant in-depth expertise in managing leading-edge computer networks.

Cyclone asked the University's technology faculty to explore the software's resilience in withstanding the most extreme stress to which any customer might subject it. The success of this initial research led to further practical research into technologically-advanced methods by which to market netPrefect successfully.

Cyclone Technology MD, Maria Baxter says:

“Birmingham City University's extensive experience as a foundation international Cisco academy was vital. We needed a research organisation with in-depth knowledge of the market-leading network provider. The Faculty of Technology, Innovation and Development is highly respected in advanced computer networking education. Its own use of netPrefect and help to develop a joint technical white-paper also shows confidence in our software.”

Discovering us is just the beginning...





The Collaboration

Two talented graduates were chosen to carry out Knowledge, Innovation, Technology Transfer Schemes (KITTS) - sponsored by Advantage West Midlands. Craig Wilson, with a first class degree in Computer Networks and Security, and Jacob Richardson, with a 2:1 in Information and Communications Technology, tackled parallel programmes aimed at meeting Cyclone's research parameters.

Using leading-edge Cisco equipment, available in the University's Faculty of Technology, Innovation and Development, the pair worked closely with Cyclone's Dr Jeremy Stone, to build a large network which was then put under netPrefect's management. Subjected to up to 40,000 challenging events an hour, the network resisted the most extreme possible disruption. Resulting observations under the scheme suggested technical adjustments that then enabled netPrefect to be refined in readiness for market launch.

Having achieved a successful result from the initial research, Craig Wilson carried out a further KITTS programme aimed at creating technical marketing tools for netPrefect. This initially involved creating a limited-life netPrefect program on a USB stick that could be left with customers to confidentially 'test-drive' the software, subsequent to a Cyclone demonstration. The final research task involved developing a means of creating a visual network map, with all components identified, to help system managers troubleshoot the source and knock-on effects of problems. This added facet of netPrefect will enable network managers to direct an engineer's efforts quickly and precisely.

Benefits & Results

- Cyclone Technology's netPrefect product was successfully launched, despite tough market conditions in a period of recession.
- An innovative portable USB marketing tool was created and welcomed by potential customers, enabling them to test the software in their own time, on their own confidential information and data, following a demonstration by Cyclone technologists.
- A market-leading visual approach to mapping complex computer networks has been devised as an adjunct to netPrefect software. It will offer computer network managers a highly-advanced troubleshooting resource when marketed.
- Collaboration has enabled netPrefect to become the software foundation of the Network Design and Management module of Birmingham City University's courses in computer networks and ICT systems.
- An authoritative 'Technical Whitepaper' has been jointly produced by Cyclone and the University, offering dedicated network managers and independent managed service providers understanding of computer system architecture to assist more effective network management.



Award-Winning Innovative Responsive

Birmingham City University's Course Director for Computer Network Design and Management, Ron Austin says:

“Graduates Craig and Jacob did a fine job whilst gaining real-world experience of network management, giving Cyclone's development capability an extra dimension. We use netPrefect to help students build and maintain a network in a structured way, whilst understanding how the intricacies of network design can affect performance.”

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