

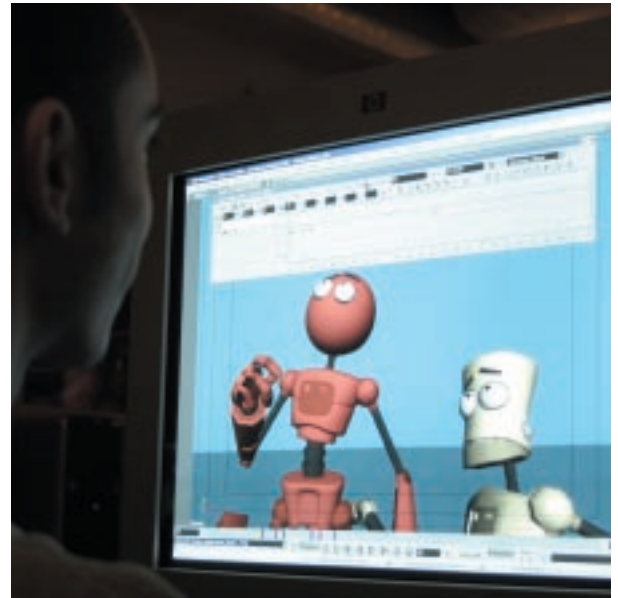
# HP workstations help Vancouver Film School train tomorrow's storytellers



"The partnership with HP works for us because HP people are problem solvers. They're quick to provide solutions and ideas. It's the same way throughout the organization, from the educational side to the financial side. I sum it up as consistency. We know we can count on getting the right product and solution delivered on time."

— Marty Hasselbach, Managing Director,  
Vancouver Film School

The VFS logo is written in a large, bold, black, sans-serif font. A small 'TM' trademark symbol is located at the top right of the 'S'. The logo is positioned on a white background with an orange horizontal bar above it.





Name your favorite recently released major film, TV series or animated game, and chances are good that a graduate of Vancouver Film School (VFS) worked on it. With 14 disciplines and more than 1,000 full-time students, VFS is recognized worldwide as one of the premier training grounds for filmmakers, digital animators, game designers and entertainment specialists of all kinds.

The VFS difference? "We function more as a studio that teaches than as a university or an academic environment," says Marty Hasselbach, managing director. "Students collaborate and work together, which truly emulates the real world." In fact, students produce close to 1,000 projects a year and have deadlines that, in many cases, rival those at professional studios.

Meeting tight deadlines and enabling student creativity are two reasons that VFS has equipped its campuses with more than 400 HP workstations and why Hasselbach calls HP the school's "technology partner." Explains Hasselbach, "We view technology as an important tool to storytelling, just like a good brush is to a painter or a good instrument is to a musician. HP understands that. They actually think about us as a unique business and not just as a certain number of cartons out the door at the end of the month."

#### **More creativity time with HP workstations**

HP xw8200 Workstations are used for high-end 3D animation, digital graphics, game design and nonlinear editing. Typical applications are XSI and Maya, Avid editing technologies and graphics software from Adobe and Macromedia. Recently, VFS developed groundbreaking new programs using the HP workstations to certify students on Houdini and Nuke special effects software.

"The HP xw8200 Workstation is an incredibly powerful machine that's dramatically reduced screen redraws and rendering time," Hasselbach says. "As a result of having more computing power and better software integration, we've seen the quality of work go up significantly as students have more time to fine-tune their work and try new things. An example of this is students in our film department working with 3D students to create visual effects shots. There are very few schools in the world attempting that at the student level."

That higher quality is being noticed in the industry, Hasselbach states. "At SIGGRAPH recently, there was a comment from some industry leaders on our advisory board about the quality of our students' 3D animation continually improving. A lot of that is the result of students having more time to focus on the creative and

less time waiting for the machines to catch up to their ideas.”

**Reliability, standardization, leasing add value**

Reliability is another important VFS workstation requirement, Hasselbach explains. “We run 24 hours a day, but we don’t have IT people around all night. We want workstations that perform well, never get in the way of student creativity and do exactly what’s expected of them. HP workstations are a reliable and consistent platform.”

VFS also enjoys more flexibility with HP workstations than with the proprietary workstations it used to own. HP xw8200 Workstations, for example, come loaded with both Microsoft® Windows® XP Professional and Red Hat Enterprise Linux operating systems. “We can use the same workstations to teach Houdini on Windows, then switch over to teach Nuke on Linux,” Hasselbach states.

Then there’s what Hasselbach calls the school’s “downstreaming” program. “HP workstations function across a wide range of our programs, which makes them a good investment.” When it’s time to upgrade the high-end workstations used in a 3D animation class, they can be used by students in other programs that don’t require a computer with the latest processing power or graphics performance.

“Standardizing on HP also has taken a big load off of our

IT group,” Hasselbach explains. “There’s no more ‘those computers won’t work here’ and ‘they’re not on the recommended list.’”

VFS avoids another potential costly headache with HP, Hasselbach says. By leasing the majority of its HP hardware from HP Financial Services, the school steers clear of large cash outlays every few years. Leasing helps VFS keep its technology current and its budget in check. Leasing and related services from HP Financial Services are integral parts of VFS’s downstreaming program.

**Partnership at multiple levels**

“HP Financial Services is an important part of the partnership we have with HP,” Hasselbach explains. “The partnership with HP works for us because HP people are problem solvers. They’re quick to provide solutions and ideas. It’s the same way throughout the organization, from the educational side to the financial side. I sum it up as consistency. We know we can count on getting the right product or solution delivered on time.”

That consistency and workstation reliability aren’t lost on students, Hasselbach concludes. “When students sit in front of an HP workstation for 18 hours a day and know how it works, they gain a comfort level that they will carry with them when they leave the school. In most cases, they will purchase an HP computer because that’s what they have worked on, and they haven’t experienced any problems.”



## At a glance

- **Organization:** Vancouver Film School
- **Location:** Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada
- **Founded:** 1987
- **Employees:** 400
- **URL:** <http://www.vfs.com>
- **Primary business:** Privately owned filmmaking, animation and design school offering programs in Foundation Visual Art & Design, Acting Essentials, 3D Animation & Visual Effects, Acting for Film & Television, Certification in Houdini and Nuke software, Digital Character Animation, Digital Design, Entertainment Business Management, Film Production, Game Design, Makeup for Film & Television, Sound Design for Visual Media, Writing for Film and Television.

Contact the HP Customer Reference Program, 281-514-5755, for more information.

## Challenge

- Provide best learning experience for students by providing professional-level computing technology

## Solution

- HP xw8200 Workstations
- HP TFT flat-panel monitors
- Leasing from HP Financial Services

## Results

- Workstation performance enables students to test creative options and improve work quality
- Hardware reliability requires less IT support and keeps students focused on work output, not technology
- Hardware standardization promotes widespread use throughout VFS and improves return on hardware investment
- Leasing from HP Financial Services reduces capital outlays while maintaining latest technology to meet high-end requirements
- Relationship with HP promotes quick short-term issue resolutions and better long-term technology planning

For more information on how working with HP can benefit you, contact your local HP service representative, or visit us at [www.hp.com](http://www.hp.com).

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