

BIG SCREEN LEEDS



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- How does the Big Screen operate?
- What do you show?
- Do you carry sound?
- Does anyone make any money from the screen?
- How do I submit material?
- Can you broadcast our live event?
- How can I advertise...?
- How many people watch the screen?
- Are there any other BBC Big Screens?
- Where did it all begin?
- How far could the scheme extend?
- What kinds of sites are appropriate?
- Can people interact with the screen?
- Where can I see pictures of previous events?

How does the big Screen operate?

Each screen has its own dedicated schedule created, implemented and monitored by a BBC screen manager located at the nearest BBC centre. In Leeds, the screen manager works in close association with BBC Yorkshire, BBC Where I live Website and Leeds City Council. The screen manager oversees the editorial standards of all content, nurtures key partnerships and consults the other stakeholders in regular meetings. The screen and its supporting technology is constructed, installed and maintained by Philips.

Leeds City Council is a key content partner, mounting or licensing events. Leeds City Council manages the public viewing space in front of the screen (Millennium Square). Other stakeholders including community arts and media groups, local businesses and a range of neighbouring organisations make important contributions to the project.

What do you show?

Whilst local content is a top priority for each screen, the BBC underpins this with a schedule of live television programmes from its wide range of channels, focusing on major events, local and national news, sport, the arts, music and entertainment. The video content is accompanied by a high quality audio feed, except overnight when the sound is muted. For much of the time, the screen is split via a number of dynamic templates. Whilst video runs on most of the screen, there is also a text box, which supports localised information. There's a local weather forecast, a clock/date display and information "ticker" runs along the base of the screen with news, sport and information.

In addition, local events are relayed onto the screens and sometimes integrate with major national and broadcast events such as Wimbledon, The Eurovision Song Contest, Proms in the Park, VE Day, World Cup Football and an annual series of exclusive relays from the Royal Opera House. Many of these events and major broadcasts can attract audiences of up to several thousand people. The technology is now being rolled out to allow daily interaction between the public and their screen, from simple texting of messages to sophisticated video games between teams in different cities in the UK and abroad. The BBC Screen is both

BIG SCREEN LEEDS



a giant digital canvas connected to a high quality global super-highway and community notice board for the twenty-first century.

Do you carry sound?

Yes. A computer controlled sound system allows not just automatic volume and quality settings, but also for the sound to be accurately targeted to different parts of the viewing area. When the screen is in “ambient” mode, the sound is set to be fully audible within a predefined area and to minimise any sound spillage outside the zone. The same PA, however, can be automatically re-set to provide a full event sound system for crowds of up to several thousand people. A number of intermediate settings can take account of different local conditions and requirements. Facilities are also available for a presenter to host events in the square via a cordless microphone link utilising the built-in speakers in Millennium Square.

Does anyone make any money?

The BBC Big Screens are a public service project and operate on a not-for-profit basis. The BBC provides its content free of charge and augments this with the services of a Screen Manager. **The Screens do not run commercial advertisements.**

The Screen Manager must view all external content prior to transmission to ensure it corresponds to BBC guidelines, particularly those affecting issues of impartiality. Genuine sponsor credits are allowable if a video project, community event or live activity of clear public interest is involved, but where extensive association with commercial products and/or services is concerned, the Screen Manager will be able to investigate further on your behalf.

How do I submit material to the screen?

Please download the separate document **How to Submit**, available for download at the BBC Where I live website http://www.bbc.co.uk/leeds/features/big_screen/ or by emailing your request to bigscreenleeds@bbc.co.uk

Here in Leeds artistic digital video and short film submissions can range from 1 minute through to 30 minutes in length. However other lengths will also be considered. Please see the above document for further information.

Also of use and available for download/request is a document offering advice on **Content Guidelines** (including important information on music copyright), and a **Contributor Consent Form** that must be completed for each item submitted for use.

Can you broadcast our live event on the screen?

Recorded events, edited to suit and copyright clearance sought and approved, can be shown repeatedly on the Big Screen to provide a showcase, promote an upcoming festival, reach a wider audience following a live performance and offer a unique broadcast opportunity able to reach a diverse audience.

Facilities currently exist to beam live events taking place within Millennium Square itself live to the Screen and additional access points to enable live feeds are under discussion for key places within the City. All such facilities utilise underground cabling to provide a direct link to the Big Screen.

BIG SCREEN LEEDS



The live broadcast of events that do not take place in Millennium Square can be difficult and not usually possible. This is because a direct link - be it cable, microwave or satellite - is required. Microwave link, using wireless technology, is possible only over a short range at considerable cost, with reduced quality and only patchy sound. Satellite link provides astonishing clarity but is prohibitively expensive, suited to big-budget productions only such as our annual transmissions of live performances from the Royal Opera House in London.

How can I advertise my product/venue/concert/event?

Commercial advertisements are not accepted. Text-only listings for gigs, concerts, events, exhibitions and general 'what's on' information can be submitted for inclusion in the on-screen city diary which is ran by Dig Yorkshire. To have your event shown through the text based service in the What's On Diary, please register your event at www.digyorkshire.com and click on 'Add Event'. Consideration will be given towards promotional videos and trails for up and coming events in Leeds, so please send all videos in on Mini DV or DV Cam to Chris Nriapia (Please see address below). We can accept DVD but sometimes there is compression problems so the other two formats are preferred.

How many people watch the screen?

Unlike television viewing figures, which are estimated by the British Audience Research Board (BARB: see www.barb.co.uk) on the habits of pre-selected homes installed with an automated monitoring device attached to a phoneline, no such information is available for who should stop to view the screen, how long they stay, or what ethnic/gender/ward breakdown they should fall into. As Millennium Square is public space, many people sit here for their lunch, to read or just take 5 out of their day. Not everyone stops for a significant amount of time, but many take a seat and look up, and if they like what they see will pause to observe further. Lunchtimes, early evenings, live events and transmissions of local and national significance attract many more.

Are there any other BBC Big Screens?

Permanent screen sites currently include Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Hull and Rotherham. A large number of towns and cities have expressed their interest in the project and it is hoped that the current network of six screens will be augmented by others across the UK, including Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. In the summer of 2005 the BBC's truck-mounted touring screen was on the road again. In 2004 it visited over 20 cities and was seen by more than five million people. It combined local events and relays of major national and international broadcast events, and augmented many BBC live broadcasts. The touring screen was a response to the exceptional summer of major events and also gave more cities a flavour of the PSB: Public Space Broadcasting screen concept.

Where did it all begin?

The rapid development of giant day-light video technology has spawned a wide variety of screen applications. From sports grounds to entertainment venues, and from shopping centres to motorway service stations, giant video screens have rapidly established themselves as an accompaniment to modern life. Most screens however, rely on advertising and few have been nourished by regular high quality content. The PSB Screen project, however, has different origins.

BIG SCREEN LEEDS



The BBC was the catalyst, having explored the linkage of major events, multiple audiences and live broadcasts on projects such as Proms in the Park, the 2002 World Cup and at the Manchester Commonwealth Games. For the Queen's Golden Jubilee, the Corporation installed ten temporary screens in major cities around the UK, relaying the Buckingham Palace concerts and ceremonial events, but also working with each city to create local events that integrated with the screen relays. The relationship was often two-way, with cameras at the screen sites to capture the crowd's participation. The screens drew very large crowds and underlined the enduring urge for many of us to gather together in public to share in great moments of sport, music or world events.

The package proved popular, so in partnership with Philips, Manchester City Council and The Triangle Shopping Centre in Exchange Square, the first Public Space Broadcasting Screen was installed in May 2003.

How far could the scheme extend?

The project is still in relatively early days, but the response so far suggests that, as the technology continues to mature, the use of PSB: Public Space Broadcasting screens could become an increasingly popular civic facility. As the range of public information, events, entertainment and interactive services continue to develop it is possible to envisage a world in which a public space broadcasting screen, operated in the interests of the public, becomes a standard part of the urban infrastructure. A network of screens could interact with each other, sharing content and experiences. Creating a new urban focal point, a new gathering place and a new events arena, it is already being suggested that PSB screens may have a key role to play in the regeneration of UK urban life.

What kinds of sites are appropriate?

The PSB screens will operate to best effect in the heart of UK cities as part of a programme of city centre animation and regeneration. Investment in the screen is maximised by a busy site with strong regular footfall. The location also needs sufficient space for larger numbers to gather for major events and street furniture to encourage casual viewing. Retail and other business districts are usually more appropriate than residential areas. And events spaces are also a good setting. Planning permission and technical infrastructure can also be key factors in deciding upon screen locations.

Can people interact with the screen?

Big Screen Leeds continues to leap from strength to strength. Both the BBC's and Leeds City Council's live events programme continues to bulge at the seams during the summer months, with a particularly busy schedule over the Summer period. One of our most exciting developments means that in the coming year there will be frequent opportunities to play any of a range of groundbreaking new games developed only for the BBC Big Screen network by ICDC Interactive Centre for Digital Content) based at John Moore's University. The games are based on movement recognition. A camera suspended over the screen picks up and shows people interacting in the square, then projects objects on the screen that respond with people's actions. Part of our regular programming includes daily slots in which the same camera offers a giant mirror upon which passers-by can view themselves, while our game technology will also be including voting opportunities and the option of choosing audio/video from a jukebox by simply waving a hand in the air. Visit the Big Screen index at http://www.bbc.co.uk/leeds/features/big_screen/ for news of forthcoming opportunities.

BIG SCREEN LEEDS



Where can I see pictures of previous events?

Visit the BBC Leeds Where I live website at www.bbc.co.uk/leeds and select Big Screen from the index menu, or head over to www.bbc.co.uk/bigscreens to peruse a photo book of the entire Big Screen family.

Contact

All screen enquiries

Chris Nriapia
Big Screen Manager Leeds
BBC Big Screen, Broadcasting Centre,
2 St Peter's Square, Leeds, LS9 8AH

Email: chris.nriapia@bbc.co.uk
Tel: 0113 224 7168

For text based listings, please visit www.digyorkshire.com and register your event there.

Available documents for download on the BBC Leeds Where I live website or by email:

- Big Screen Leeds: Frequently Asked Questions
- How To Submit
- Content Guidelines
- Contributor Consent form

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