



Warrington Collegiate



Vision Commercial Kitchens

Case Study
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Bridget Floyd
Project Manager

Instead of refurbishing their faded 1960s tower block, Warrington Collegiate decided to totally modernise the campus within a £27M project. A striking three-storey building featuring a Business School, theatre, training restaurant and a major construction skills centre has been built next to the site of the old tower which has now been demolished. Bridget Floyd inherited the project management role part way through the development in difficult circumstances

Can you describe your role and the situation when you began?

My role as facilities manager was to keep the old college running whilst moving people and closing buildings down. I coordinated this as well as the project management of the new build when the project manager was tragically killed in an accident 12 months ago; I just had to pick it up and run with it. It's a completely new campus consisting of seven buildings but only one building was occupied when I took over, the others were under construction and were occupied in phases; we continued to work in the old buildings whilst moving into the new ones.

Who was responsible for the selection of the contractor and the kitchen suppliers?

We're independent so the selection of the contractors was done by ourselves, but I wasn't involved at that stage. The kitchen fit out was outside the contract and we looked at a number of kitchen contractors before selecting Vision who were recommended by Kendal College, a centre of catering vocational excellence.

Had they already used Vision?

Yes, and that decided it really. We didn't have the expertise within the college to design kitchens so we bought in that skill from Vision and then worked with them on the design and purchase of the equipment. We obviously already had kitchens and we had a limited budget, so we asked Vision to do an assessment of the present catering equipment with a view to reusing as much as possible in the new kitchens. So some of the kitchens are a mixture of new equipment and reused equipment - we even rescued things like the electric fly killers!

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How feasible was integrating new and existing equipment?

One kitchen is completely new, the others are about 40% reused equipment, some of which was fairly new anyway. Vision managed to create designs using the existing equipment where possible. We have a commercial kitchen for students and we have two catering curriculum kitchens, in other words kitchens used for the training of students. These two are both different, one is a student training kitchen, the other is a chefs training kitchen with a restaurant for 50 people where tables can be reserved for lunch or dinner.

Were there any other other issues Vision had to deal with?

There were some issues involving decisions made before they became involved, for example we were restricted with the servery positions because the drains were already in place. There was another problem - when kitchens were changed, extraction had to be changed and gas supplies etc. These areas had to involve another subcontractor so that the warranty of the systems were maintained. This made Vision's job even more difficult. I guess Vision should have been appointed earlier, at the time of planning, however they adapted well to the situation. For them it was more like refurbishing an old building, they had to design around these issues and constantly revise the plans. I suppose the delays we had with the contractor helped Vision – it gave them more time to resolve some of our problems.

So was Vision's input helpful?

Yes, we knew what the three areas were going to be, it was getting the flow correct within the set space. Although it would have been lovely to have a bigger servery area it wasn't possible and one of the issues was how we were going to stock these areas with drinks etc. which is

why we have the back bar. We wanted to utilise staff better but equally be able to cope with different pressures at different times of day. The canteen seats 373 people. There are three service points and the beauty of this system is that during the peak times we can open them all. The deli area, where everything is made to order, is the most popular. When it's quieter, like in the afternoons, we can pull everything into the middle and reduce the staffing accordingly. We serve until about 7pm so again we can pull everything into the middle as it's a bit quieter then.

What were Vision like to deal with?

We prolonged the project and didn't give it enough attention at times so consequently there were small issues towards the end which we lost track of. We've built beauty salons, hairdressing salons, theatre and a library all using the knowledge of each subject's manager so you are totally dependent on that manager knowing what they are doing but we found that because they work in the industry doesn't necessarily mean they can design. I've learnt that not many people have spatial awareness and they find it difficult to visualise plans. It's at that planning stage when the experts should be brought in. I think it would be fair to say that the catering staff sometimes found it difficult to picture what they wanted but Vision helped us through the process. From sales, to design and on to project management we were very happy with everything Vision did - they were provided with a testing task and this culminated in them surpassing expectations.

So you're happy with the end result?

Very happy. The servery works extremely well and the three areas have fulfilled our requirements. We have to be very aware, as every college does, of what we are serving to our students. The infrastructure issues were resolved and Vision adapted very well, taking

into account the budget. They surveyed all the kitchens and reused equipment where they could for example a piece of equipment which used to be in the old commercial kitchen didn't necessarily end up in the new commercial kitchen – everything was pooled and placed where it worked best, saving us quite a lot of money. I'd be more than happy to go with Vision again - but I'd get them involved sooner.

www.visionck.co.uk

Vision Commercial Kitchens provides a full service to a growing number of clients throughout the UK from its base in Manchester. The company is one of the few in the industry to have gained ISO9001:2000 accreditation.

Vision has proven capability covering:

- Full AutoCAD design and planning service
- Equipment specification, sourcing and supply
- Project management and installation
- Full after sales service and warranty management

Vision's capabilities are demonstrable across a wide range of completed projects including restaurants, hotels, bars, schools, colleges, nursing homes, hospitals and the MOD. Clients include many of the leading names in the industry such as Malmaison, Hotel du Vin, Leon and various local authorities as well as numerous main contractors working in both the private and public sector. The company was formed by its four founding directors who have over 60 years combined business experience predominantly in the commercial kitchen industry.

Vision is a member of CEDA, The Catering Equipment Distributors Association, the industry's representative body. All members work to the highest standards as defined within CEDA's 'code of good practice'.

Kitchen Know-How

Vision recommends using kitchen equipment from Aga Foodservice Equipment - the know-how experts.

Falcon Foodservice, Eloma and Williams Refrigeration utilise cross-group innovation and technology to deliver the very best integrated solutions for customers around the world in prime cooking, refrigeration combi-ovens and bakery. This capability delivers superb results for customers, alongside the reassurance that new products are driven by energy efficiency, emission reduction and health & safety requirements.

 **AGA** FOODSERVICE EQUIPMENT







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Turning ideas into reality

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