

Quality and Reliability for Infosound



It may not look very glamorous, but the new equipment that Infosound now has in its audio production studio could not be more important to them.

As a small, independent charity producing information, in audio, for the roughly 2 million blind and partially-sighted people in Great Britain, where someone starts to lose their sight every 15 minutes, quality and reliability means a great deal in their book.

The studio is usually in operation seven days a week, but until the recent grant from the Parry Family Charitable Foundation, some of the core equipment they were using was old, unreliable and in danger of failing at any moment.

Some of their audio production equipment was replaced last Autumn, thanks to a previous grant from the Parry Family Charitable Foundation and this recent grant enabled the charity to tackle many of their remaining equipment reliability concerns.



As their Managing Editor, Rowland Myers, explains: *"Being such a small outfit, quality and reliability are everything to us. We need to be able to record interviews, edit audio and distribute it quickly and efficiently across all our delivery platforms. There simply isn't time for anything to fail. And if there is a problem, we need to have a back-up ready to function immediately, be it an item of audio equipment or a piece of computing*

kit". He adds: "this latest grant has gone a long way towards future-proofing our operation."

For over ten years, Infosound has been producing free and impartial news and information for vision-impaired people in Britain on any topic relevant to living with sight loss. This includes information about products that can help living with sight loss, news of support services, help with mobility, finance (including benefits) and independent living, leisure and social opportunities and the main

issues of the day affecting vision-impaired people. Telephone interviews with charity staff and vision-impaired people often form an important part of the audio features they produce and some of the equipment bought has improved the reliability of this part of the production process; the latest grant is also enabling the charity to start to provide the technology for blind and partially-sighted people to contribute to Infosound from anywhere in Great Britain. "Exciting times", says Rowland.

Infosound brings its information to vision-impaired people through a constantly-running "broadcast" and its associated on-demand service, which enables listeners to choose what subject they want to hear about and when they want to hear it.

Infosound can now be heard over any standard phone, with the vision-impaired listener being able to use the keys on their telephone to control the sound; it can be heard on Infosound's web site, using mainstream voice-controlled devices like the Amazon Echo and Amazon Dot and on specialist audio players and radios, developed

specifically for blind and partially-sighted people. As a podcast, Infosound can be automatically delivered to smart mobile phones and tablets, themselves now fitted with speech feedback so they can be operated by someone with little or no sight. And Infosound communicates via Social Media.

There are now over two thousand activities by listeners and visitors to their service every single day, which Rowland attributes to the variety of ways they are able to distribute their audio. "We've tried to make Infosound available to hear in as many different ways as possible so blind and partially-sighted people can choose what suits them best", Rowland explains. "Technology is fantastic and it can enable us to be heard far and wide; but", he adds, "it's that rather



Free and impartial information about living with sight loss – can be heard as a round-the-clock broadcast and individual features can be selected on-demand.

You can listen whenever you like:

- on any landline or mobile phone – call 03000 111 555
- online – www.infosound.org.uk/listen
- on Amazon and Google voice-controlled smart speakers
- on specialist radios, audio players and mobile devices

Full listening details can be found at www.infosound.org.uk/ways-to-listen

Web: www.infosound.org.uk Email: info@infosound.org.uk Phone: 03000 111 555

understated black equipment bay sitting on the studio floor, now containing new and reliable kit, which is actually where everything starts."