



“NETGEAR’s new M4250 AV Line switches proved to be the ideal solution for our network switching needs at Epsom College.”

Adam Broom, Project and Installations Manager,
Autograph Sound

Company:

Epsom College

Industry:

Education

Website:

epsomcollege.org.uk

Location:

Surrey, UK

AV Line switching range from NETGEAR provides a robust and manageable backbone for Epsom Colleges new state-of-the-art auditoria.

SUMMARY

With the expert assistance of AV specialist Autograph Sound, Epsom College now has a fully integrated, state-of-the-art AV system spanning two auditoria and a chapel, supporting the needs of pupils, staff, and third parties who also use the facilities. Critical to the AV system’s smooth running are multiple network switches from NETGEAR, providing a robust, easy-to-deploy and manageable framework. Furthermore, the design of the M4250 switches means that the college requires fewer of them, helping to optimise its AV budget.

BACKGROUND

Based in Surrey, UK, Epsom College has been referred to by national media as the county’s top-performing co-ed day and boarding school. According to the Department of Education, it is in the top 1 per cent of all schools in England and Wales. Founded in 1853, the college caters for students ranging from 11 to 18 years. The college has a long-established reputation for academic excellence with alumni including notable physicians, scientists, politicians, actors, sportspeople, artists, business people, and well-known journalists. Its pupils are also renowned for their prowess on the sports field.

Like many educational establishments, AV has become increasingly critical for Epsom College to provide students with a superior learning experience and enable effective collaboration. Three locations require enhanced AV, including Big School, which is the college’s main auditorium, primarily used for assembly, concerts, musicals, and other events.

The Main Hall is a smaller venue, also used for assemblies, large meetings and parent events. Both venues can be hired outside the school term, and Big School is also made accessible to other local schools for some of their events. The third venue, the Chapel, is being used for increasingly diverse purposes and is available to alumni for weddings, funerals and christenings.

CHALLENGE

In early 2021, Epsom College called in the services of AV specialist Autograph to review and advise on its evolving AV requirements. Autograph, which had previously worked with the college, supplies end-to-end audio and video solutions to a wide range of customers, including UK theatres, sporting events, and of course, education.



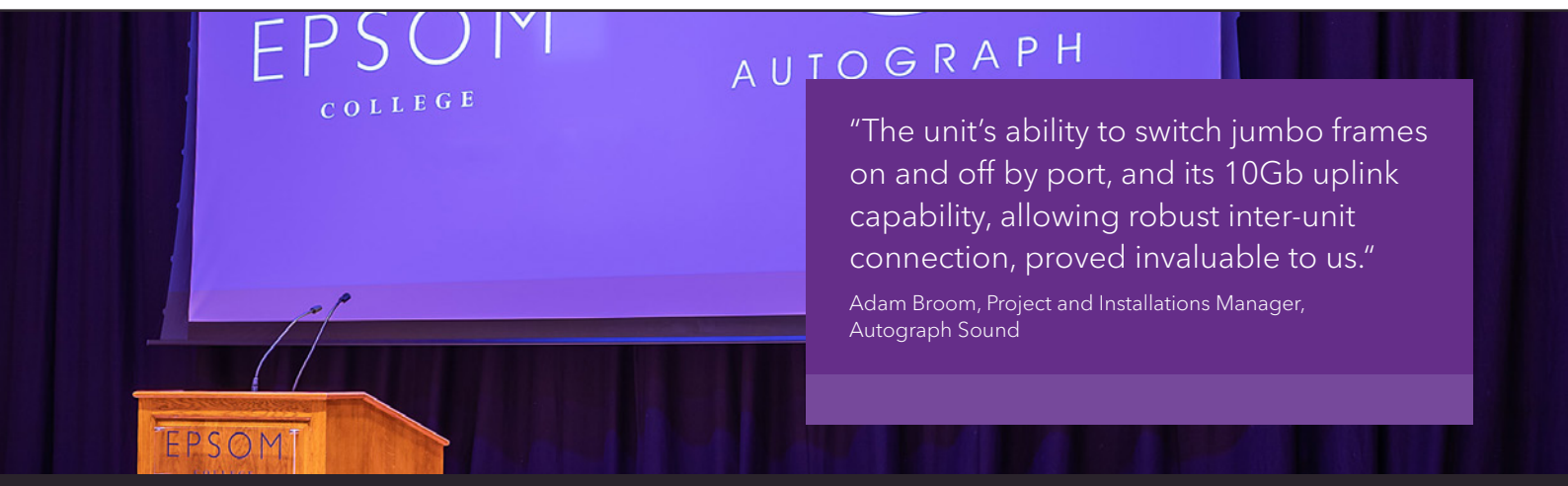
A U T O G R A P H



www.netgear.com

NETGEAR
AV Line

epsomcollege.org.uk



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First, it became clear that a centralised AV control and integration system was required to manage the three sites. Second, both 'college' and 'performance' modes were needed to support different uses. In addition, the Main Hall needed a new PA system, and the Chapel, which only had a PA system at that time, needed full AV facilities.

Above all, the college needed a comprehensive AV environment able to keep pace with the college's requirements while also being easy to manage by non-technical staff and providing 100 percent reliability.

SOLUTION

Autograph introduced and demonstrated numerous new technologies to the client during the consultation process and brought a fresh technological perspective of what was possible with modern equipment. Once all decisions had been made, Autograph created, installed and commissioned a bespoke, site-wide networked audio-visual system based on QSC's Q-SYS controllers and customisable touch-screens. School staff can operate these from any location and frees up the college's full-time AV team to focus on other matters, such as live streaming events. There is a QSC unit in each room, all linked by a fibre network using NETGEAR switches.

Autograph also supplied eight channels of Shure's latest SLX-D digital wireless microphone systems for use in all three locations and eight Panasonic screens spread throughout the Chapel. These screens are mounted on motorised, automated arms that hold them flat to the walls or extendable so that even a full-capacity audience can clearly see a screen in 4K resolution.

BACKBONE NETWORK

Essential to the efficient performance of the entire AV environment is the network switches connecting the QSC units in each room via fibre. Says Richard Jonker, VP Business Development, AV over IP, EMEA "The nature of the project – with discrete AV systems in three separate locations needing to be networked together for centralised control, plus the amount of data handling that involved – made the selection of switches vital to the operation."

Autograph turned to NETGEAR, with which it has a strategic partnership focused on delivering efficient, state-of-the-art AV and pure-audio deployments. From NETGEAR's AV Line, Autograph specified one M4300 10Gb switch, plus five M4250s switches (two in Big School and Main Hall, and one in the Chapel).

These highly cost-effective switches have been specifically designed for customers such as colleges and are optimised for a wide range of 1Gb AV applications. Features include effortless deployment, plus built-in integrations with other vendor equipment and industry standards. The switch is also highly customisable, with a cleanly designed chassis and multiple mounting options, so it blends flexibly and visually seamlessly into any environment.

RESULTS

For Epsom College, the M4250s proved to be the perfect choice. "NETGEAR's new M4250 AV Line switches proved to be the ideal solution for our network switching needs at Epsom College. The assignable ports, controlled via a simple GUI, and the ability to integrate AV over IP protocols in one switch, made things considerably easier for us." Says Adam Broom.

"The unit's ability to switch jumbo frames on and off by port, and its 10Gb uplink capability, allowing robust inter-unit connection, proved invaluable to us. Ultimately, the NETGEAR unit also provided a cost-effective solution as overall we needed fewer of them."

A service available to all AV customers, NETGEAR's dedicated ProAV Engineering Design team was on hand to answer any questions, offer advice on models and solutions to help Autograph fulfil the project's requirements.

CONCLUSION

"With the help of NETGEAR switches, we were able to install a fully-integrated, centrally-controlled networked system that is perfect for a contemporary education facility." Says Adam. Together with the other elements, plus Autograph's excellent expertise and experience, Epsom College can now be confident it has a sophisticated yet highly manageable AV system for years to come.