

Pro Tools Course Report

Introduction

Pro Tools is a popular software used to compose, record, edit and mix sound. People use it in anything from small home studios, to large recording facilities. It is owned by *Digidesign*. With it being such a popular choice of music software worldwide, many music courses teach music production using Pro Tools, so this course was aimed at A-Level and BTEC National Diploma/Certificate/Award Music tutors in local Colleges and Universities. Pro Tools 101 is the first certificated course in the Digidesign programme.

A 2-day Pro Tools 101 course took place on Thursday 2nd and Friday 3rd April. It was held in JMG040 and taught by Jon Wills, of the Faculty of Media, Arts and Society. The price for each person on the course was £124 (£99 for the course including exam and one re-take, and £25 for the Pro Tools text book.)

Background

As a result of LLN liaison work, and with FMAS having recently acquired the *Digidesign* accreditation, we found a need for such training in colleges. Some research was done before organising the course to see exactly what interest there would be, and how feasible it would be to run it, taking into account that most colleges were unlikely to pay out the market rate of £350. It was agreed that the first two courses run here did not have to take on the full economic costing for running such a course at the University as the LLN budget had already supplied overhead costs of such activities, to the faculty. This allowed for the price to be lowered considerably. This was treated as a benefit to partner colleges.

Analysis of Course Questionnaire - refer to attached spreadsheet.

1. All 8 respondents found the pre-course administration to be very good/good.
2. All 8 respondents found the course highly stimulating/stimulating.
2b. No suggestions made.
3. Six of the 8 respondents found the length of the course to be just right, but 2 of the 8, thought that the course was too short.

Comments added: 'Could be perhaps a little longer (2.5 days or 3 days).'

4. All the college tutors who responded thought facilities and modes of learning to be very suitable.
5. All of the 8 respondents were either very satisfied or satisfied with the course delivery.

Comments added: 'Need time for practical usage.'

'It's quite dry, not much time to play around with software and try things out, but that is the nature of covering all the information in the time available.'

6. Everyone who responded said they would recommend this course to other colleagues.
7. All of the college tutors who responded also said they would be interested in returning here for further Pro Tools courses.
 - 7b. Five out of the 8 respondents were confident that their college would support them doing a further Pro Tools course. Three were unsure.

Any further comments:

‘Really impressed! Jon was very knowledgeable, and I learnt a lot in a very relaxed and enjoyable way.’

‘Thanks, I really enjoyed the course and have learned a lot. Thanks Jon.’

‘An excellent course, delivered expertly and with enthusiasm by Jon Wills. A thoroughly informative and enjoyable two days.’

‘It would be good to do more practical work, but the course would have to be longer.’

Conclusion

Looking at the results of the questionnaire completed by the college tutors, this course was a real success.

For some of the tutors on this course, Pro Tools was new to them, for others however it was a very familiar software. All 10 of the participants however greatly expanded their knowledge of Pro Tools, to take back and use at their colleges for teaching. They also gained a recognised qualification, showing that their particular college is up-skilling their staff.

The maximum number of entrants for this course was 10. We had a great response from tutors from different partner colleges and soon filled those spaces. There were 2 people on the list of reserves, and another few people who wanted to do the course, but the dates weren’t convenient for them.

Recommendations

It is recommended that another Pro Tools course is arranged for other tutors to benefit from the same tuition, and to gain a qualification. An ideal time would be before colleges break up for the summer, when SSU’s resources are available.