



FLASHBUZZ

It's Lights, Camera, Action for one of Oxfordshires most exciting video production companies, FlashBuzz, as they inch their way closer to appearing on the big screen.

Since 2018 Flashbuzz has been partnering with ambitious businesses and big name brands to create stunning video content. Flashbuzz has now taken the plunge into writing their very own screenplay which is now gaining interest from major broadcasters and film festivals around the world.

Rob Hutt, Flashbuzz's founder, shares his exciting story with us. "I've always loved films and I studied filmmaking and video production in college. It wasn't, however, until I won a film bursary and a large innovation competition, whilst working in the public sector, that I realised I could do this for a living. I was always a storyteller and I found the camera to be the perfect companion to tell a story and the best way to evoke an emotional reaction from an audience.

I went out and invested in my own equipment and suddenly a couple of years on, I found myself working with household names like John Lewis and Smyths Toys. This was really cool, I was blessed to be able to do what I loved doing, working with amazing people, telling incredible stories and running my own business making videos. But more recently, when I hit 40, I asked myself 'What is my dream job? I know, I'd love to be a movie director!' And that's what I set about achieving – making movies!"

Hitting the big screen

Rob reveals how movie making became a reality for him "I'd never written a screenplay before. I'd written scripts, but the screenplay is very different. I gave it a go. I partnered up with a TV producer who offered to help me co-fund the first film. It was around this time I received an email from OxLEP. I'd connected with them the year before when I enquired about funding. The timing wasn't right then, but when they got in touch this time, the timing was perfect. They informed me about the Cherwell Business Adaptation Fund, which OxLEP deliver, and that I was eligible to apply. So, I applied for the grant to allow me to purchase a Netflix approved camera and some cinema lenses. This was literally about 2 weeks before we were about to start filming in London. The OxLEP team turned it around really quickly and I got my equipment in time for the shoot.

Rob continues "We've entered some film festivals and we're winning awards for the film that was shot on the Netflix approved camera that OxLEP helped us to purchase. It's currently being shown at film festivals in Amsterdam, California, Los Angeles, Sydney Australia and India, to name a few.

I also pitched it to a major UK broadcaster. I received an email the day after from their broadcast commissioner for drama and they said they really like it and told me they needed me to go away and write the first 60 minute pilot episode and then they'll be able to give me a final decision on whether it will be made into a 10 part drama series. It's all so crazy."



OxLEP Business play a part in the show

Rob expresses how crucial OxLEP's part was in his success story "The short film really is capturing people's imagination. I've had hundreds of tapes from actors in London wanting to be part of it. One of them was like 'I'm currently filming with Idris Elba at the moment'. How brilliant is that?"

This really has kicked off a whole new opportunity for me, on an international scale. And it's not only due to the screenplay and the way I shot it, it's because I've been able to show the level of quality that I'm capable of operating at using this new industry leading equipment. And I wouldn't have that equipment if it wasn't for OxLEP's funding support. The fact that they personally reached out to me and told me about the funding was amazing. I was able to coordinate with them on a one-to-one level. They showed genuine interest in my film and wanted to watch the trailer. They wanted to know about me as well. That personal service is a really nice touch.



You can easily sit there and look at words on paper and think that you're not going to qualify. But having spoken to the OxLEP team and being reassured and understanding the process it became much more realistic. It's always someone else's story, It's always someone else's success. But this has taught me it can be me. And it can be you too. I would say to anyone with a business in Oxfordshire get in touch with OxLEP and see what support opportunities there are for you. It might change everything for you. It is for me. I can now say I am an international award winning film director. Wow!"



FOR MORE INFORMATION
VISIT: flashbuzz.co.uk

If you are looking for support for your business get in touch with us to find out how our team of specialists at OxLEP Business can help you.

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