



truenorth productions

A case study by Megan North and Lois Vernon



COMPANY PROFILE

PROFILES	2
LOCATION	3
COMPANY PROFILE/ASO	4
POST PRODUCTION	9
FILMOGRAPHY	10
HIGHLIGHTS	11
THE PROCESS	12
CLIENTS	13
CHANNEL 4 AND INTERNATIONAL	15
AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS	17
IN HOUSE STAFF	18
EMPLOYEE PROFILES	21
DIVERSITY	25
FINANCES	26
SALES	28
PR AND SOCIAL MEDIA	29
S.W.O.T	30
LETTER OF THANKS	33

PROFILES



Megan North 11357035

Megan has been interested in television since she was young when childhood favourites, such as *Doctor Who*, got her looking into behind-the-scenes. She took her own advice of working for what you love and studied Media Production and Film Studies at The Colchester Sixth Form. Looking for exceptional television production facilities, Megan began her three year course at the University of Lincoln where she worked as a camera operator, vision mixer and director in the university's TV studio. She also developed her skills in researching, screenwriting and designing as she is excited to create engaging content across platforms. She strives to work in television with the ultimate goal of directing exciting and thought provoking programmes. In her free time, Megan likes to watch new films and programmes as well as reading, writing and socialising.

Lois was originally interested in theatre and prop design, and realised the strong connection between the stage and screen after a talk at her sixth form by Red Productions founder Nicola Shindler. After not studying any form of media before university, she quickly learnt new skills both technical skills and transferable skills in roles such as director, producer and camera operator. After television production experience, Lois developed a fondness for documentary and factual television production, and loved learning about people's stories and experience. Lois' hobbies include going to the theatre, playing rugby and horse riding.



Lois Vernon 11313083

LOCATION

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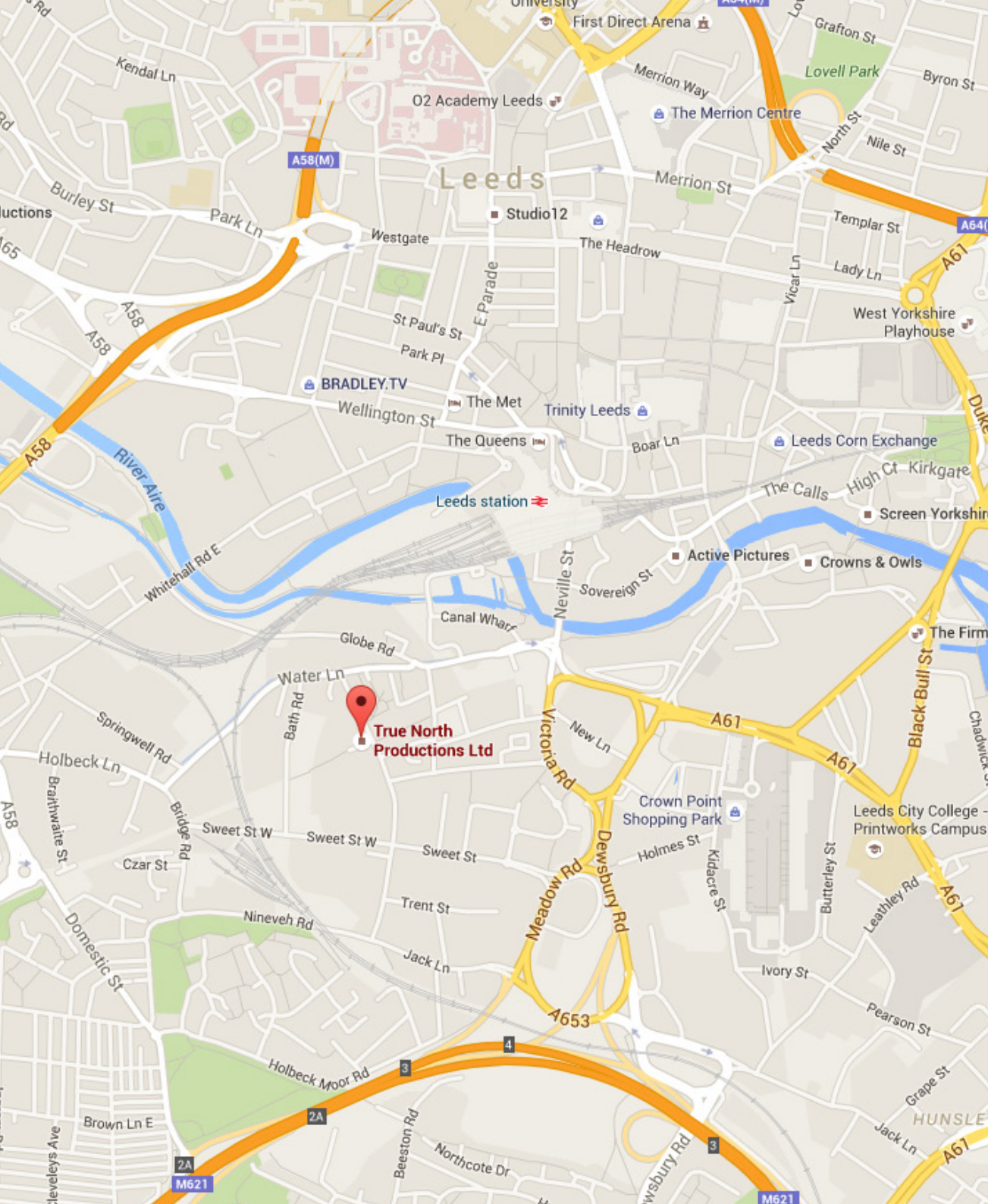
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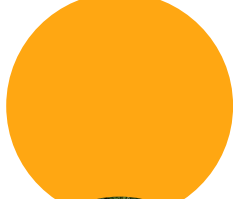
COMPANY PROFILE

Established in 2002, True North is an independently owned television company based in Leeds, with an additional base in MediaCity UK in Salford. It holds the title of the fastest growing indie outside of London and has created well known productions watched across 220 countries around the world. The company was founded by directors and producers, Jess Fowle, Glyn Middleton and Andrew Sheldon who named the company True North to establish their pride for its northern roots.



True North produce many programmes from factual, factual-entertainment, features to children's and reality. Their diverse range of genres have been aired on BBC One, Channel 4, Channel 5, MTV, National Geographic, CBBC, UKTV and Crime and Investigation Network, creating a strong portfolio for the company as it continues to reach new heights by targeting hard-hitting topics and entering diverse markets.

Producing their Youtube channel, China Icons, the company's success across platforms is ever growing. With the addition of their new base in Manchester, True North are expanding their reach and offer in-house post-production. True North are not only creating new and engaging content but delivering outstanding quality projects sought out by high profile companies such as ITV and the BBC.



AIMS:

True North aims to create first-class content nationally and internationally, targeting a wide range of genres that reach their diverse audiences across the world. They strive to produce varied content for programmes, from hard-hitting dramas and reality shows to children's entertainment.

STRATEGIES:

With a partnership with Channel 4, True North has a strong mentor relationship with the company. Their in house post-production means True North are able to dedicate their skills from start to end. Named the fastest growing indie outside of London, their developing and impressive portfolio has given them excellent relationships with commissioners.

OBJECTIVES:

True North strive to seek out exciting and diverse stories, continuing to prove their hard-earned reputation. They look to continue producing excellent content and deliver long running and returnable series for their audiences.

TIMELINE

Founded by Andrew Sheldon, Jess Fowle and Glyn Middleton.

2002

Children's programme *Henry's Wives*, part of the *Horrible Histories* series, was commissioned.

2005

Channel 4 commissioned twenty episodes of *Animal 24:7*.

ITV commissioned eight episodes of *The Way We Worshipped*.

2006

True North was the eighth biggest supplier of programmes to Five.

2009

Passion Distribution secured rights to *To Build Or Not To Build* for True North.

True North was the sixth-biggest English indie outside of London, according to a survey of Britain's top production companies, published by leading industry publication, *Televisual*.

2010

The Cumbrian Murders: The Untold Story won the RTS North East and Border award for Best Current Affairs Programme.

True North hired *The Only Way Is Essex* Exec Producer Fiona O'Sullivan.

Developed in house post-production facilities before opening facilities up to other companies.

2011

True North joined with Organiq Music to create Pitch Music, as a deal with Universal Publishing Production Music.

True North secured its first-ever Chinese programme commission.

True North joined with Manchester post facility Flix to open a new production hub at MediaCityUK in Salford.

2012

True North was named Best Independent Production Company at the Proflic North Awards.

BBC One commissioned second series of *Animal Frontline*.

Co-founder Glyn Middleton left True North after thirteen successful years.

2014

MTV orders UK version of smash hit US series *Teen Mom* from True North.

UK and Australia based Beyond Distribution has acquired finished programming and format rights to a daytime cookery series on Channel 4 *Too Many Cooks* to be made by True North.

2015

True North named as the "fastest-growing indie outside London", according to the Broadcast Indie Survey for 2013.

True North named amongst most influential companies in Northern creative sector.

Channel 4 invests in True North as part of a £20m Growth Fund.

True North produces first China focussed YouTube channel – *China Icons*.

2016

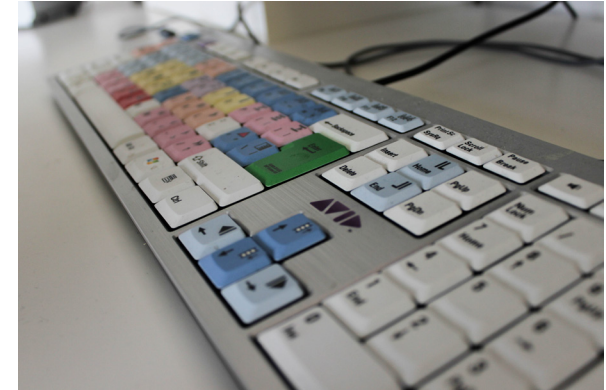
POST PRODUCTION

With in-house post-production facilities, True North are committed to achieving high quality aesthetic on all productions, working on projects from development to sending the production to the broadcaster. True North Post has seen ten years of delivering outstanding quality to all the major broadcasters, including the BBC and ITV Productions. True North are able to care for a company's editing needs, boasting a highly skilled team of Edit Assistants and Editors with access to the following:

- 15 Avid offline & online suites and over 150TB of shared storage
- 3 HD Avid symphony suites
- Pro tools dubbing suite
- VT support area for Avid ingest, exports, uploads & DVD encoding
- Harding PSE test equipment
- Tapeless delivery & HD tape mastering

With a base in MediaCity Manchester, True North are able to further their post-production work thanks to a deal with Flix Facilities. Based at the Pie Factory, the company dry hires in offline edit facilities when required, but try to do as much as possible in their own facilities, as Leeds remains the mothership of True North.

“We can edit in Manchester and send the project files to Leeds for the onlining process; we can quickly arrange viewings for CBBC and others at MediaCityUK, even if the the programme is being edited in Leeds. And it gives us resilience. If something did go wrong at Leeds or Manchester, we can switch to the other location because all the data is mirrored.” - **Allen, 2013**



FILMOGRAPHY

True North have created and produced over one hundred productions for renown channels nationally and internationally. They have created exciting content, covering a range of genres from children's television to factual entertainment, from single documentaries to hard hitting series. Here are just a few of the productions the company has in their ever growing portfolio:

Real Life: The Lottery Liar (2002, ITV1)
Secrets of the Royal Kitchen (2002, Five)
Steamtown (2003, BBC Two)
Crimefighters (2004-6, ITV1)
Who's Taking Your Daughter Home, Tonight? (2004, ITV1)
MacIntyre's Big Sting (2004-6, Five)
ONE life: The Woman In Me (2004, BBC One)
Flying Scotsman Comes Home (2004, BBC Two)
Real Life: Children of the Miners' Strike (2004, ITV1)
ONE Life The Ripper Murdered My Mum (2005, BBC One)
My Yorkshire (2005-8, ITV1)
Trapped Inside My Body (2005, ITV1)
Ripper Hoaxer - The Real Story (2006, BBC One)
Animal 24:7 (2006-10, BBC One)
Extraordinary People: The Twins Who Share A Body (2007, Five)
Christa Does Bollywood (2007, BBC One)
Building Britain (2007, BBC One)
Saving Planet Earth (2007, BBC Two)
My Fake Baby (2008, Channel 4)
Animal Rescue Squad (2008-9, Five)
Killer Couples (2009, Crime & Investigation Network)
Cutting Edge: Addicted To Surrogacy (2009, Channel 4)
Michaela's Animal Road Trip (2009, Five)

To Build Or Not To Build (2009-11, BBC One)
Britain's Underworld (2010-11, National Geographic Channel)
Food Fighters (2010-11, BBC One)
Cumbrian Murders - The Untold Story (2010, Discovery Europe)
Dick & Dom Go Wild (2011, CBBC)
Battle of Wills (2011, Crime & Investigation Network)
Stormchaser: The Butterfly and The Tornado (2011, BBC Three)
Inside The Riots: Panorama (2011, BBC One)
When Life Means Life (2012-13, Crime & Investigation Network)
Dispatches: Undercover Undertaker (2012, Channel 4)
The Valleys (2012-14, MTV)
Animal Frontline (2013, BBC One)
Junior Vets (2013, CBBC)
Beauty School Cop-Outs (2013, MTV)
Building The Dream (2013-15, More4)
Hens Behaving Badly (2013-14, Five)
Designed in China (2014, CCTV9)
Junior Vets On Call (2014, CBBC)
Homes by the Sea (2014-15, More4)
Gift of Life (2015, Five)
Tina Malone: My New Body (2015, TLC UK)
The Last Leg Down Under (2016, Channel 4)
A New Life in the Sun (2016, Channel 4)

Upcoming Productions:

Teen Mom (2016, MTV)
The Ex Detectors (Channel 4)
The Great Escapers (Channel 4)
Too Many Cooks (Channel 4)

HIGHLIGHTS



The Last Leg Down Under Channel 4
Last Leg stars Adam, Alex and Josh head down under to take on an Australian road trip from hell.



Building The Dream Channel 4
Architectural designer Charlie Luxton helps people to self-build their dream home.



The Valleys MTV
Eight youngsters escape the desolation of the Welsh Valleys to follow their dreams and indulge their extreme party lifestyles.



Animal 24:7 BBC One
Protecting and rescuing Britain's most vulnerable animals



A New Life in the Sun Channel 4
Meet the Brits setting up new businesses in the sun.



Gift of Life Five
Patients undergo organ transplants at Newcastle's Institute of Transplantation, one of the world's leading transplant centres.

THE PROCESS

■ **The Last Leg Down Under:** “Adam Hills sets out to prove to Josh Widdicombe and Alex Brooker that Australia isn’t the silly place they thought it was, but is in fact a searing hot, unforgiving hellhole full of people who are hard as nails. To achieve his objective he arranges the toughest Outback itinerary with the help of blind adventure tour guide Amar Latif” - **True North, 2016**



Idea

Jo Haddock was at a drinks reception in York, and got talking to a man called Amar Latif, an explorer who is also blind.

Development

After another interview with Amar, Jo created a taster about him. This included his family history of his parents moving from Pakistan, his entrepreneurial skills and his inspirations.

Channel 4 wanted Amar on the channel. Jay Hunt, Head of C4 suggested that they take Amar to Australia.

Channel 4 decided the idea could star the presenters of *The Last Leg* so put True North in partnership with Open Mike to have Amar lead the trio through a gruelling journey in the Outback.

Production

True North wrote a proposal “Amar takes the Last Leg to Australia”.

True North and Open Mike travelled to Australia to co-produce and create *The Last Leg Down Under*.

Aired:
29th January 2016
5th February 2016

24th top Channel 4 Programme
February 2016
2,019.2 thousand viewers
(BARB, 2016)

Executive Producer: Andrew Sheldon
Series Producer: Christian Hills
Director: Gavin Searle

CLIENTS



Real Story: Death of a Policeman (2004), The Ripper Murdered My Mum (2005), Animal 24/7 (2006-10)
Saving Planet Earth (2007), Food Fighters (2010-11), Panorama: Forgotten Heroes (2011), Animal Frontline (2013)



Dick & Dom Go Wild (2011), Junior Vets (2013), Junior Vets On Call (2014)



My Fake Baby (2008), Cutting Edge: Addicted To Surrogacy (2009), Dispatches: Cops On The Cheap? (2009)
Dispatches: Undercover Undertaker (2012), Compare Your Life (2013), The Last Leg Down Under (2016), A New Life in the Sun (2016)



Churchill's German Army (2009), Britain's Underworld (2010-11), Bloody Tales of the Tower (2012), Bloody Tales (2013)



MacIntyre's Big Sting (2004-5), Extraordinary People: The Twins Who Share A Body (2007), Animal Rescue Squad (2008-9) Extraordinary People: The Man Who Shared His Liver (2009), Michaela's Animal Road Trip (2009), Hens Behaving Badly (2013-14), Gift of Life (2015)



Killer Couples (2009), Killer in the Family (2009), Battle of Wills (2011)
Murder On The Social Network (2011), Married, Single, Dead (2011), When Life Means Life (2012-13), Witness: Beast of Bermondsey (2013)



Crimefighters (2004-6), My Yorkshire (2005-8), Trapped Inside My Body (2005), My Mums Used To Be Men (2005), One Man And His Canoe: The John Darwin Story (2008), My Dad's Army (2011)



The Valleys (2012-14), Beauty School Cop-Outs (2013), Teen Mom (2016)

CHANNEL 4

True North has a major partnership with the public service broadcaster Channel 4. In 2014 it took a minority stake in the company under its £20m Grown Fund initiative. The partnership aids True North's relationship with Channel 4 commissioners whilst they receive support and mentorship from the broadcaster about expansion and growth development. Co-founder and creative director Andrew Sheldon comments:

|"Television is a mercurial business, and having a world class broadcaster as a stakeholder will be an enormous advantage as we grow the company nationally and internationally in such a rapidly changing environment." - **Sheldon, 2014**



INTERNATIONAL

True North announced the launch of 'China Icons' in 2014. This is the first professionally produced YouTube Channel exclusively dedicated to China. It was commissioned by True North with Beijing-based media company CICC (China Intercontinental Communication Centre), this channel provides a unique insight into Chinese culture, society, industry, the arts and more. The channel launched initially with a dozen individual video stories, ranging from an exclusive interview with NBA star Yao Ming, to rare footage of Giant Panda cubs in the wild.





The videos on the channel will be in video-diary style, as foreigners living in China share their insights and enthusiasm for Chinese life, culture and heritage. Through the channel, True North will help a broad global audience get an insider's look at many aspects of China today, and hear the voices of today's China, as viewers meet China's icons, past, present and still to come, with new content uploaded on a weekly basis.

Liz McLeod, Executive Producer at True North, has the responsibility for overseeing the project from start to finish:

|"China Icons represents an intriguing new move from two progressive media production companies looking to take full advantage of opportunities in online and social media. The great thing about YouTube is we can respond really quickly to what our audience likes and wants to see more of and we expect to see China Icons evolving and growing over the coming years." - **McLeod, 2014**



Producing for China represents True North's skill and outreach across borders. They are able to produce diverse content and look to a future of expanding into new and exciting areas. True North are able to hone in on what their audiences are looking for through online response and are able to shape their content quicker than before. With experience of creating new and exciting content across borders, this may bring in new opportunities for the company, such as further international commissioning from other countries.



youtube.com/user/Chinalcons
chinaicons.com

AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS



2010 *The Cumbrian Murders: The Untold Story* won the RTS North East and Border award for Best Current Affairs Programme.

2011 True North won three prizes at the Royal Television Society Yorkshire Awards, for Best Terrestrial Programme (*Stealing Shakespeare*), Best Non-Terrestrial Programme (*Britain's Underworld*) and for Independent Production Company of the Year.

2013 *My New Hand* (True North Productions for BBC One) RTS Yorkshire Awards.

2014 True North's development producer Darrell Brown made it onto the shortlist for Sheffield Doc/Fest 'First Cut Pitch'

2014 Prolific North Award for the Best Independent Production Company .

2015 The Factual Series winner RTS Yorkshire awards winner was *Junior Vets*.

2015 True North receives RTS 'Yorkshire Centre Award' for Excellence.

2015 Nominated for Talk of Manchester Award.

2016 Short List for Prolific North Independent Production Company.

2016 Broadcast Awards shortlist for Passion for Distribution.



IN HOUSE STAFF



Andrew Sheldon
Creative Director and Founder

Andrew leads the Documentaries and Current Affairs departments at True North and has gained a reputation for negotiating exclusive access and years of investigative experience.



Jess Fowle
Creative Director and Founder

Jess has made everything from long running, multi-episode features series to immersive one-off docs and leads the Features and Children's departments for True North.



Fiona O'Sullivan
Executive Producer

Fiona joined True North in 2011. As well as running True North's Reality division, Fiona heads up the Factual Entertainment team, winning several prime-time commissions for True North.



Marc Allen
Managing Director

Marc joined True North from ISD where he was responsible for all broadcast and media operations. He is responsible for all business operations for True North with a particular emphasis on its strategic growth and planning.



Jo Haddock
Development Executive

Jo has an impressive fifteen-year freelance career. Joining True North in 2010, Jo has worked both in development and in production across the features, formats, factual and reality slate.



Liz McLeod
Executive Producer

With over a decade in experience as Executive Producer, Liz's role at True North sees her running the Specialist Factual team with a particular focus on international content and creating programmes in Asia.



Carol McKenzie

Head of Production and Facilities

Carol's duties include budgeting and staffing across all projects, training, talent development, whilst liaising with broadcasters and trade bodies. Carol oversees every production at True North including its time in post-production.



Julie Heselgrave

Production Finance Controller

Julie joined True North in 2002 and with her years of experience in the unpredictable world of programme making, Julie now supervises every aspect of production finance within the company.



Andrew Lurcuck

Head of Post-Production

With over a decade's experience as an offline and online editor, Andrew runs True North's post-production facilities, with an overview of 15 HD Avid suites in Leeds and the post base in MediaCity.



Mark Stokes

Director of Photography

Mark arrived at True North in 2002 and has gained over 30 years as a cameraman and editor. Mark is responsible for maintaining and promoting the aesthetic of much of True North's output.



Sarah Blowers

Office Manager

Having been with the company for over a decade, Sarah's role puts her at the heart of the day-to-day running of True North's bases in both Leeds and Manchester.



Nigel Augustine

Technical Operator

Nigel keeps True North's IT and computer systems running smoothly and maintains the integrity of the production network and implementing unified communications, whilst responsible for the Avid network in post-production.

EMPLOYEE PROFILE

CAROL MCKENZIE

HEAD OF PRODUCTION



Carol started her media career as a trainee production assistant with Yorkshire Television. At this time in her career, there were very little freelancers as they had in-house staff with thirty-five production assistants. Carol and her fellow production assistants gained much experience with varied genres as rotations allowed for work in live TV, drama, entertainment and studio based programmes. This allowed Carol's knowledge of the industry to grow until employees started to specialise. It was here that Carol moved into factual and documentary genres.

Carol's career with Yorkshire Television grew, moving into becoming a Production Manager, then after her years of experience, became Head of Production. She was in charge of looking after factual programmes for YTV, Granada and Time T's. In 2009, True North's directors sought out Carol for the position of Head of Production. After leaving her employment on the Friday, her work for True North swiftly began on the Monday. Carol describes her role as "the nuts and bolts of programme making" as her role of Head of Production contains two sides, one where it focuses on the editorial side to True North's programmes and the other side focuses on management. After an idea for a programme has been developed and commissioned, Carol's duties include drawing up a budget, staffing the programme, organising a post-production schedule and organising equipment needed for the contract, before she hands it over to her colleagues in production. Carol must also overview all of True North's programmes whilst looking after their in-house post-production facilities in both Leeds and Manchester. Carol has gained thirty-four years of Media experience and counting. She sees her future career continuing with True North as it grows as the biggest indie in England outside of London. Carol enjoys the diversity of her work and it is excited for future projects until retirement.

EMPLOYEE PROFILE

JULIE BEANLAND

SERIES PRODUCER

Since Julie was in school, she knew she wanted to work in TV. With a fascination for supernatural and crime documentaries, her passion grew for creating programmes. Julie discovered a passion for research when writing her dissertation. Knowing she wanted to work with documentaries, Carol believed the best route to television was journalism, so took a course in Leeds containing a broadcast element. She grew her media experience by working on the student newspaper, the student radio station, hospital radio station and free work in various places. After doing the NCTJ Journalism course, she worked for BBC Radio, then worked as a news researcher and went onto reporter. With Yorkshire Television having a regional documentary department, Julie moved to Leeds and started making regional documentaries, soon moving onto national documentaries. With her impressive experience in the industry, True North welcomed Julie as they set up their indie company.



Julie began as a producer director for True North before quickly moving into her twelve year career as a series producer. Her job covers both smaller and larger running series where she has to oversee the entirety of the series. Julie has recently worked on a twenty-five hour series, *A New Life in the Sun*, where she and her crew searched for expats looking to move to France and Spain, sourcing contributors online and through business estate agents. With her overview, the series is put together in True North's in-house edit suites and delivered to the channel upon completion. During filming, Julie takes a hands-on approach, such as flying over to check locations and the crew for *A New Life in the Sun*. Whilst in the UK, Julie and the crew communicate everyday by receiving notes on what was filmed in order to keep on top of all stories to decide how the episodes will progress. Julie looks to her future by continuing series producing. Her career could move to executive producing but her heart remains in her current position as her passion lies in the creation of TV and getting stuck in. Julie is excited to get into a variety of genres and series with her True North team.

EMPLOYEE PROFILE

JO HADDOCK

DEVELOPMENT EXECUTIVE



Jo studied Journalism until post graduate level, her dream was to write and edit magazine articles. Jo achieved her dream straight out of university, and spent the first 5 years editing and writing magazine articles in London. After thinking she was on track, Jo received a phone call from an Executive Producer from a production company in London who had heard her name due to her writing an article relevant to the programme they were making. The Executive Producer invited Jo for a chat, offering her a 4 month contract, in which Jo declined as she was on a full term contract working for a big magazine company. A couple of weeks later, the Executive Producer asked Jo what they could do to persuade her to join. Jo decided to take the offer, and handed in her notice at the magazine and went to work for Basil Productions, which later went on to become Endemol.

Jo worked on a low budget, fast turnaround Channel 5 afternoon antique show, in which she was unsure of her duties within the job. Luckily she was taught everything by a fellow researcher, learning about contributors and casting and what people need, alongside researching antiques in which she loved it. She later got another contract working as a researcher on *Fantasy Rooms* with Lawrence Llewelyn-Bowen for BBC2, whilst meeting and impressing new people. She went onto series producing the first series of *How to Look Good Naked* and *Wife Swap* for Channel 4. In 2007, Jo moved away from London, and found True North during a time that True North did not have a development team. Throughout her time at True North, Jo has dabbled in a variety of different roles including executive producing and directing. Her future career plans are to stay and grow at True North as she believes it is an exciting time to be a part of the company.

EMPLOYEE PROFILE

MARC ALLEN

MANAGING DIRECTOR

True North hired Marc Allen as the managing director to bring some “extra commercial understanding” into the company. He joined True North from the board of multichannel retailer ISD where he was responsible for all broadcast and media operations. Previous to this, Marc was the business affairs manager at Pathe UK and worked on production, finance and distribution for programmes such as *The Queen* and *The Motorcycle Diaries*. At the BBC he was business the affairs manager for daytime and current affairs and investigations, then became the production executive in London Factual and BBC Sport. True North’s Creative Director, Andrew Sheldon, said:



“The company has grown rapidly in the past 12 months, with major commissions for broadcasters as diverse as MTV, CBBC and Nat Geo. We felt the time was right to bring some extra commercial understanding into the heart of the company.” - **Sheldon, 2013**

Marc Allen is responsible for all the business operations at True North with a particular emphasis on its strategic growth and planning. A recent project Marc is working on for True North is *Too Many Cooks* for Channel 4. With partnership with Beyond Distribution, Marc hopes to sell the format globally, helping the True North brand grow throughout the world. Marc realised that in 2013 True North had reached it’s critical mass in Leeds and were faced with the dilemma whether to add 10 new edit suites in Leeds, or create a new base in Manchester. Marc believes that “Leeds will most likely be upscaled as well as a result of the move. The partnership means that True North now has 10 Avid suites at The Pie Factory as well as additional production space.” Another strategic investment for True North was the licensing of a drone. This drone is used to capture footage for shows including its Channel 4 property series *Building the Dream* and other property formats, making True North productions stand out from others as staff members are being taught to operate it, as opposed to bringing in those outside of the company.

DIVERSITY

There has been new initiatives within the television production industry around diversity, and Black, Asian and Ethnic minority groups within production.

True North is complying with these changes, attending sessions at events, such as the BBC's Move On Up day, which offers more support and encouragement internally, both on and off-screen.

True North has taken on two BAME trainees, found through the Creative Access scheme, Fiona Udahemuka, who came from radio to work in production, and Mohsin Ahmad, who was producing corporate films after graduating and is now a camera and post-production assistant at True North. Working with BAME background not only helps with commissioning but helps to tackle diversity and maintain a community in regions such as Leeds and celebrating culture.

After London and Birmingham, Leeds and Bradford have the biggest Muslim community in the UK, however the BBC has recently closed its office in Bradford.

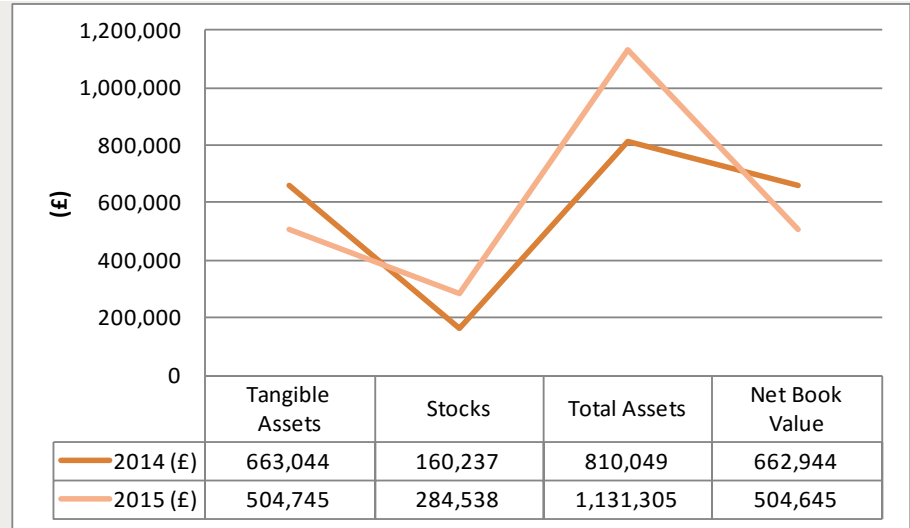


FINANCES

“The company is entitled to deliver abbreviated accounts in accordance with section 444(3) of the Companies Act 2006.” - **Abbreviated Accounts 2015**

Smaller independent productions are now achieving a 10% larger share of UK commissioning in 2015 than in 2013, with smaller UK independent companies capturing a bigger share of the UK TV commissioning budgets, with total TV programming revenues hitting £2.9 billion in 2014.

True North focus on a wide range of genres, however have a strong focus on factual and factual entertainment, according to the UK Television Export 2014/2015 this is an important and sizeable genre with content reaching niche audiences across multiple countries. The company has been able to position itself as a thought leader when it comes to international co-productions and sales, with True North investing and making stronger ties with China, with exports from the TV industry as a whole selling 21% to South East Asia. International income of the TV industry was made up of £180m of overseas sales from the UK.



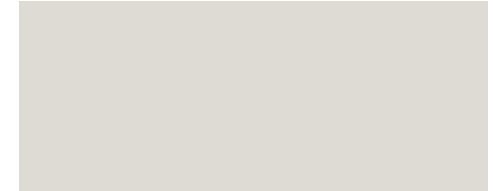
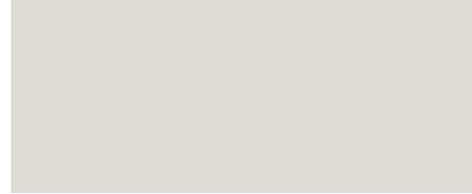
True North ascended the Broadcast magazine chart of “UK Biggest Indies 2014”, to become the 58th biggest independent production company in the UK. Due to the company’s growth, revenues are up 65% over the past year which was highlighted in the Indie survey Survey. True North named No.2 Popular Factual Producer in UK 42% rise in one year to £10million+ turnover, propelling the company up 14 places in overall chart to become 58th biggest Indie in UK. Assets have depreciated in value, In March 2014 was £663,044 compared to March 2015 in which the assets had depreciated by £128,299 to £504,745.

**£10.1 MILLION
TURN OVER**

**42% INCREASE
IN TURNOVER
2014/2015**

**58th BIGGEST
INDEPENDENT
PRODUCTION
COMPANY**
Broadcast Magazine

SALES



BBC Worldwide has the rights to sell a variety of successful True North one-off shows, including *The Ripper Murdered My Mum*, *The Woman Who Can't Stop Lying*, *Asleep at the Wheel* and *The Woman In Me*.

Beyond Distribution is successfully selling True North's children's shows such as *Dick & Dom Go Wild* and *Junior Vets*, both of which were originally made for CBBC.

ITV Studios Global Entertainment has the rights to distribute some of True North's most high-profile and successful series, including *Building The Dream* and *Animal Frontline*, as well as singles like *Death of a Policeman*, which was sold to the prestigious CBS show *48 Hours Mystery* in the USA.

Passion Distribution has the rights for licensing a number of True North's titles, including the BBC series *To Build Or Not To Build* and *Food Fighters*, as well as documentaries such as *My New Hand* and the international crime story, *Stealing Shakespeare*.

True North's programmes are sold around the world and can now be viewed in more than 220 countries, from the USA to Australia and from Russia to Brazil and Sub-Saharan Africa due to selected distributors.

PR AND SOCIAL MEDIA

IrPR was engaged to devise and implement a trade PR campaign targeting key media including: Broadcast magazine, Televisual, Prolific North and more. A series of news announcements, interviews, features and thought pieces were put in place positioning True North as an indie on the ascendancy. Ad hoc consumer programme publicity was also provided to give True North's shows an added level of exposure. True North has a Twitter presence with 5,816 followers, however does not have a social media manager in house and the Twitter is controlled by Series Producer, Julie Beanland. Twitter is used to promote and engage with viewers of *Two Many Cooks* and *A New Life in the Sun*. True North is often in Proflic North magazine and news, which specialises in media news within the North. This is essential for True North to be part of, to engage with the main target audience of Proflic North.

5,816 followers (Twitter)



5,622 views (Google+)



675 subscribers (Youtube)



422 likes (Facebook)





S.W.O.T

STRENGTHS

There is small amount of competition in the North.

True North have edit suites in house for 360 degree input.

They have different creative view points and input due to not being in London.

They are embracing multiple platforms to produce online games and Youtube content.

True North recently received a growth fund from Channel 4.

Their small teams allows for friendly, family atmosphere that are dedicated to their productions.

Choosing to deliver programmes they know they can make to create trust between the company and commissioners.

They now have bases in both Leeds and Manchester.

WEAKNESSES

True North sometimes has trouble getting freelance staff in Leeds.

Commissioners seek out firm relationships with companies which staff struggle to upkeep in Leeds.

When the productions have low budgets they can't always accommodate staff travelling.

Most broadcasters are very London centric.

True North lacks the day to day interaction with London companies.

True North requires a stronger social media presence on Facebook.

They receive no ongoing income from Youtube channels.

OPPORTUNITIES

Expanding as a company, gaining more of a trusted name and brand recognition.

True North are looking to create more returnable series.

Channel 4's investment allows for mentorship and a strong bond with the broadcaster.

They're looking to create more programmes that create a buzz within their audience.

Expanding their reach through social media to develop brand recognition.

THREATS

London based companies are better abled to get commissioned due to location.

There are many independent production companies they have to compete with over the country.

The loss of Glynn Middleton as creative director may impact the company.

True North may gain competition for post-production in MediaCityUK.

Other companies may offer more media opportunities across other platforms.

LETTER OF THANKS

Dear True North,

We'd both like to take the time to thank you for all the help we've received during this project, from our interviewees and the entire staff. During our visit on the 1st March, you made us feel very welcome and it was a warm and inviting glance into the industry that we hope to work for. We greatly appreciate the time your team took out of their day to go above and beyond in providing us with a large amount of information about the past and present of the company. We have learnt a lot during our time creating the report and we hope you enjoy the finished product.

Without your help, we would not have been able to complete our project to the standard we desired and we would not have enjoyed it as much as we have. Thank you again and good luck for your future projects and the growth of the company.

Kind regards,
Megan North & Lois Vernon

