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# REACH FOR THE STARS!

NEWS RELEASE

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PLYMOUTH FIRM SPRINKLES DIGITAL MAGIC OVER £16M PLANETARIUM PROJECT

<http://www.hmcinteractive.co.uk/press/>

IMPLODING galaxies, dwarf planets and decaying stars have become all part of a day in the office for award-winning Plymouth multimedia firm, HMC Interactive, whose programming underpins major exhibits at the £16m refurbishment of the Planetarium at London's Royal Observatory.

HMC Interactive's electronic media experts sprinkled their digital magic across seven exhibits which have been unveiled by the Queen at one of Britain's most famous visitor attractions.

The Devon firm were drafted in by exhibit designers, London creative agency Newangle, to programme their designs, effectively bringing the installations to life.

The exhibits form part of the remarkable new Weller Astronomy Galleries where digital interactive installations wow the visiting public. HMC Interactive's software interfaces put the visitor in the hot seat allowing them to take control of the adventure that unfolds before them.

The exhibits are controlled by a pioneering blend of interactive sliding pucks, digital dice and touch-sensitive panels. They also incorporate motion-sensitive cameras, high-definition projected displays and state-of-the-art computer programming.

The installations, including a giant electro-mechanical telescope and a game where visitors build and launch their own space probe, had to be not only vibrant and exciting but robust enough to be able to cope with the wear and tear of around 960,000 inquisitive visitors a year.

HMC Interactive worked with Newangle's designs and audiovisuals to embrace the challenge of programming electronic dice that explain the secrets of gravity to the layman. They also wove their programming magic through the interface of the exhibition's worthy centrepiece, the mind-bending Astronomer's Table.

The Astronomer's Table allows visitors to control heart-stopping high definition audiovisuals of stars and galaxies close-up as they are thrown across a giant projection surface. The four-metre exhibit is packed to the brim with the answers of the universe and is capable of being operated by eight visitors at a time.

"It's been a real privilege to be invited again to work with Newangle on such an ambitious and high-profile interactive project," said HMC Interactive managing director Korash Sanjideh.

"For the past six months our team has been immersed in a mountain of information from the world's top astronomers and graphics that have come straight from NASA - and that has been quite an experience.



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HMC Interactive's Adam Montandon said: "We often get asked to use our expertise in digital media to break the laws of physics - but I think this was the first time we'd been challenged to make an experience fun without breaking them - this is something that was new to us entirely."

It's been a packed 18 months for HMC Interactive who spent last year formulating the recipe for digital chocolate for the massive Cadbury World visitor attraction in Birmingham. The team also collected a gong in the Plymouth Media Partnership 2007 media innovation awards.

### RELEASE ENDS ###

**Notes to editors**

HMC Interactive's reputation for manipulating digital media sees the firm involved in various activities from wild websites to interactive exhibits for museums and tourist attractions in a field where strong competition fuels a constant commitment to innovation.

Further information available at <http://www.hmcinteractive.co.uk/press/>

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