

PRESS RELEASE

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GROUND-BREAKING MEDIA PRODUCTION SOFTWARE FOR MEDIA STUDIES HONOURED IN NATIONAL EDUCATION AWARDS

MediaStage wins 2006 BETT Award in 'Secondary Software, Content, and Tools' category

Stand D70, BETT 2006, Olympia, UK – Immersive Education has won one of the most prestigious and sought after awards in the education industry: a BETT Award 2006 in the Secondary Software, Content and Tools category for its software title *MediaStage*, which includes activities written by Heinemann, part of Harcourt.

This is the third year in a row that Immersive Education has been recognised for its achievements at the BETT awards. This year's award follows a win for both *Krucible*, Immersive Education's physics simulation software and *KarZouche*, the storyboarding and role play software.

"Winning a BETT award is a major achievement for any education market ICT supplier", said Chris Lloyd, CEO, Immersive Education. "The awards represent the very best examples of how ICT can encourage creativity and improve results in the classroom. Our third award confirms our position as one of the leading suppliers of software to schools and demonstrates our commitment to providing tools for teachers and students that can add real value to their work".

Chris Jones, CEO, Harcourt adds "we have been delighted to work in partnership with Immersive Education on this project – this award is the icing on the cake! It is the combination of our expertise in producing inspiring classroom resources with Immersive's cutting-edge software that makes this an ideal solution for any school that is serious about teaching Media Studies".

MediaStage is ground-breaking media production software that incorporates everything Media Studies students need to make high quality media production a reality in the classroom. It allows students to become film and TV directors, screen writers, lighting crew and camera technicians within a powerful simulated 3D environment on a PC or Interactive Whiteboard.

MediaStage incorporates a series of curriculum activities written by leading education publishers Heinemann, part of Harcourt, and enables students and teachers to:

- Practise and perfect the key skills that underpin the technical aspects of film and television.
- Utilise preset performances that link with Student Books produced by Heinemann that model, illustrate and exemplify the skills that students need to acquire.
- Control an extensive bank of 3D characters, sets, props, voices, cameras and lighting, producing immersive performances that can also incorporate custom videos, images and music.
- Create powerful movies in real-time 3D which can be saved in standard video file formats as evidence of work.

MediaStage has been developed using Immersive Education's 3D technology and underwent trials in schools in association with FutureLab, a government backed research organisation based in Bristol. Futurelab's Director of Learning, Martin Owen, believes the software will make a big impact in the classroom. "This software represents the absolute cutting edge of what students can do creatively with a computer" he said.

Professor David Buckingham, from the Institute of Education, has also been using Immersive's 3D technology as part of a three-year research project exploring ways in which computer games software can be employed within education:

"*MediaStage* has enormous potential for media teaching. It enables students to play with aspects of media language in a purposeful and engaging way," he said.

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Notes to Editors

Pricing for MediaStage starts from £350 for a single user licence.

About Immersive Education

Immersive Education is a specialist education software publishing business based in Oxford, UK. Immersive develops innovative software solutions for use by teachers, pupils and parents designed for schools and homes. Immersive also publishes curriculum-based offline support materials for teaching in the form of lesson plans, activity suggestions and units of work that function alongside its software platforms. Immersive's products are designed to unlock creativity in a way that so engages children that they often don't realise how much they are learning. This quality, derived from Immersive's use of technical and design platforms pioneered by the computer games industry, is leading to numerous tangible classroom benefits for both teachers and pupils. Immersive Education's products have won several major awards including the BETT 2005 Secondary Software Award, BETT 2004 Secondary Software Award, 2002 BCS IT Award, ERA Award and a BAFTA Interactive Award nomination.

For more information visit Immersive Education at www.immersiveeducation.com or call 01865 811000.

About Harcourt

Harcourt is one of the UK's largest publishers of software and learning resources for primary and secondary schools and further education colleges. Harcourt's family of brands – Heinemann, Rigby, Ginn, Payne-Gallway and Harcourt Assessment – provide a range of e-learning, assessment, teachers' support and pupil materials in all core subjects, for all ages. Our products are teacher-friendly and easy to use, based on the latest educational thinking and tried and tested in thousands of schools.

To find out more visit www.harcourteducation.co.uk or call 01865 888080.