BESPOKE SUITES

Post house Envy opened a 7,000 sq ft site in Central London last month. Wire Broadcast co-founder and director Robin Howell tells **George Bevir** about the design and installation of the facility

Wire Broadcast has worked with Envy on all five of the post firm's London sites, designing and building edit suites, sound studios and machine rooms. The newest, on Windmill Street, contains 24 edits and takes Envy's total number of offline suites to 100.
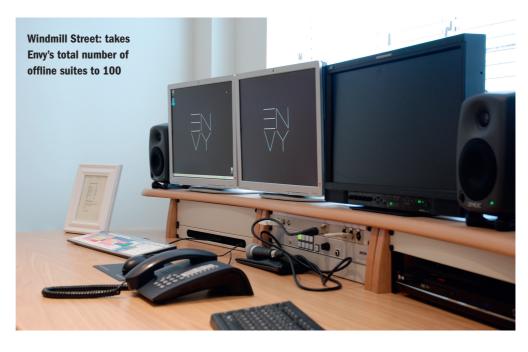
Wire Broadcast co-founder and director Robin Howell describes the system design as an iterative process. "Envy tells us what it wants to achieve and we draw up a draft of schematics and basic layouts. We work closely with its engineers to refine it to exactly the design Envy is looking for. It's a collaborative process."

Working with clients

Howell says clients usually like to pick and supply the core items for an installation. "We are always happy to supply system items to fit around this, but it's important that we are independent; we are not resellers of equipment," he says. "Envy leaves us to take care of the 'system products'; all the bits needed to stick it together and make it work. So we supplied the Tektronix Sync Pulse Generator, the Lynx Technik frames, the Genelec suite speakers and the custom monitoring controller."

For post firms spread across multiple sites, conformity is paramount. Windmill St is part of Envy's offline expansion and is a similar set-up to its Holden House and Foley St sites. "It's important from an operational and engineering perspective," says Howell. "You need staff and freelancers to move around the various sites and have confidence in the systems."

Howell, who worked as a freelance broadcast engineer for facilities such as The Mill, MPC and

Windmill Street: takes Envy's total number of offline suites to 100

Rushes before setting up Wire Broadcast in 2000, says finishing on time and on budget are among the chief considerations for a systems integrator. "It generates repeat business," he says. "We need to hit target on every project so we build a high level of trust with our customers."

For the Envy installation, Wire spent a couple of days on off-site construction, using a mock-up desk before transferring the kit to Windmill St. The first part of the on-site construction involved fitting termination points in each suite to allow Wire to 'bolt on' the prefabricated edit suite.

With the shift to tapeless workflows, facilities need to be able to move content around in a streamlined manner, making sure that data remains organised and easy to find. Windmill St is connected with Envy's other offices via a 1Gb fibre connection so files can be moved easily between sites.

'It's important that we are independent; we are not resellers of equipment'
Robin Howell

THE KIT

The suites are equipped with HP Z800 workstations running Avid Media Composer with JVC picture monitoring. Genelec 8020 speakers, Wire Broadcast's own custom audio monitoring controller, a Sonifex microphone amp and V/O mics complete the set-up. The machine room can accommodate six VTRs, with duplication via a Blackmagic Universal videohub. House referencing is provided via a Tektronix TG800 (pictured).

The server rack area contains an Avid Isis 5000, HP Procurve network switching, servers, Cat6 structured cabling and fibre cabling termination. Tyrell CCT supplied all of the Avid equipment, including the Avid PCs, while ERA supplied all the non-Avid IT equipment.