

Kutztown Independent Film Production and Distribution Company Based in Kutztown Collaborates with SPC

LANCASTER, PA, JULY 6, 2011—During the summer of 2011 The Software Productization Center (SPC) at Millersville University will collaborate with regional company Haydenfilms for the center's fourth year of their Seed/Assistance Funding grant program. Each year, the effort helps a local business productize an idea to help grow the company through efforts of Millersville University students and faculty.

Haydenfilms, an independent film and distribution company based in Kutztown, PA, is dedicated to the support and development of emerging independent and student film producers. This commitment has led to partnerships with students at both the Millersville University Software Productization Center and the Kutztown University Small Business Development Center this summer. The founder of Haydenfilms, Hayden Craddolph, along with university students and professors from the computer science, art & design, and business departments, are working together to develop a software prototype for Cemboo, a tool that will enable film festivals, schools, filmmakers, and companies with large media libraries to manage, monetize, and distribute their quality content that can be used to demo the software concept, host the next Haydenfilms Online Film Festival and raise next-round funding for a unique content distribution model.

The collaboration hopes to complete marketing research regarding the best way to position and price this exciting new visual content distribution prototype, create the design work surrounding the brand and identity, and create software including the basic distribution system player. In addition, students will create a Customer Management Interface and prototype system to show potential customers and investors.

The SPC at Millersville University, formed with a three-year infrastructure grant from the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE), started in January of 2008. The center received a fourth year of funding to continue the program in 2011. Each January the center puts out a call for proposals for regional businesses that have conceived a collaboration idea that harnesses the talents and expertise of Millersville University students and employs them through a grant in the summer months, to strengthen the regional economy by assisting a fledgling business. This model uses faculty expertise to guide and mentor students in working with the participating entrepreneurs. The student role in the SPC is so vital that slightly over 40% of the center's operating budget is comprised of student salaries.

The term "software productization" refers to the process of turning an underdeveloped software concept or early prototype into a marketable product, and the mission of the SPC is to assist regional entrepreneurs with developing all aspects of their software product from market research to software prototype to branding and physical packaging. The SPC is a cross-disciplinary effort that has involved faculty and students from computer science, graphic design, business/marketing, and communication/public relations. Together, the faculty steering committee of Stephanie Elzer, Nancy Mata and Patrick McCaskey have mentored over twenty five students as they have worked with four different companies, including WorkXPress, Cruzstar, MRG Power Labs, and Runoff Studios.