



# Rancho Bernardo High School



## Advice to Other Districts

- Encourage interactivity instead of lecture-based teaching
- Allow students to set the creative direction for projects
- Showcase students' work through entries into media competitions

San Diego, CA—When the three car dealerships saw the concepts for their new television ad, they knew they had a winner. The Poway Honda, Toyota, and Chevrolet representatives also felt sure that the production company making the pitch would create a glossy, broadcast-quality product. Quite a vote of confidence, considering the entire crew consisted of students from Rancho Bernardo High School (RBHS) in San Diego, California. Using state-of-the-art production and postproduction tools—including Power Mac G4 systems and Final Cut Pro—the young videomakers crafted a [30-second spot](#) that had all three dealers asking for more.

The car commercials are just one of the major success stories that have come out of the award-winning Regional Occupation Program (ROP) in Digital Media at Rancho Bernardo. Founded and mentored by digital media instructor Ross Kallen, and supported by Apple hardware and software technologies, the course has received national acclaim.

Kallen's aim is simple: to prepare students for careers in digital media and familiarize them with industry-standard tools. "We want to take students who might lack a clear vocational path, put the best tools possible—such as Final Cut Pro—in front of them, and give them hands-on training. Then whether they want to go on to college or go to work in the industry, they'll already have a skill set that will take them there. And they'll be much more effective communicators."

## Productivity, Priced Right

Kallen originally scoped the program with a plan to buy four high-end video editing systems. But at a cost of \$30,000 each, the purchase just wasn't feasible.

"I realized I couldn't afford to do this with any of the existing tools in the industry, or a PC-based solution," says Kallen. "Fortunately I saw a demo of Final Cut Pro, and thought, 'Wow, this is better than anything I've seen!' Final Cut Pro works so much more intuitively, at a fraction of the cost of other video editors."

## Profile in Success

Rancho Bernardo High School

## Quick Study

### Challenges

- Integrate digital media production into high school curriculum
- Increase computer access for students
- Equip students with real-world skills

### Solution

- Six dual 500MHz and one dual 800MHz Power Mac G4 computers with 160GB of hard drive space, 1GB of RAM, dual 18-inch monitors
- Final Cut Pro
- Xserve with Fibre Channel
- Digidesign Pro Tools 24 TDM\*
- PowerBook G4 and Globecaster Studio switcher
- QuickTime Broadcaster, Squeeze, and Video 3

### Benefits

- Macintosh computers provide a cost-effective solution to budgetary challenges
- Powerful yet easy-to-use platform facilitates students' creativity
- Knowledge of industry-standard tools prepares students for future careers

Kallen was especially impressed with the workflow in Final Cut Pro. "If you consider the production process," explains Kallen, "you're not just shooting, editing, or doing computer graphics. You're putting all of those elements together. What I've found is that Final Cut Pro gives students a creative platform that supports them in completing numerous tasks, and combines all of those elements. Its structure actually helps push the creative process forward."

Final Cut Pro is now available at RBHS in seven nonlinear editing bays, six of which feature dual 500MHz Power Mac G4 systems with 160GB hard drives, 1GB of RAM, and dual 18-inch monitors. The seventh Power Mac G4 system runs Pro Tools 24 sound editing software. As the need for digital storage grows, Kallen plans an upgrade that will deliver up to a terabyte of storage that students can access from anywhere. Additional plans include an Xserve RAID with Fibre Channel, which will speed file sharing over the network.

### Final Cut Pro Ramps Up Production

Kallen's students might soon need the storage space. In addition to TV spots for local merchants and promotional speaker Zig Ziglar, the RBHS digital media class and the after-school Production Club now produce a monthly video newsmagazine. Conceived, storyboarded, shot, and edited entirely by student teams, the award-winning [Bronco Magazine](#) offers often-humorous stories of interest to RBHS students and their families.

"Final Cut Pro is what enabled *Bronco Magazine* to happen," Kallen says. "The premise was that the kids knew how to edit using the application, so the newsmagazine would push the envelope and take them to a different level. I told them I'd be their facilitator in the beginning, but it needed to be done entirely by them, in their voice."

As Kallen proudly notes, the RBHS students (with Kallen's guidance) have exclusive control over every aspect of the program—from segment concepts to final credits. "What you see in *Bronco Magazine* isn't my vision, it's theirs," he says. "I think that many times in production classes, teachers tend to say, 'Here's what you should do in a news broadcast.' But then suddenly it's not the kids' message, and they lose their creativity. This magazine has just that teen edge, which is really, really funny. They're connecting with each other in ways that only they can do."

### Bringing Home the Gold

Polished, visually rich, and professional looking, *Bronco Magazine*, along with many other student-produced films, has given RBHS an exciting new voice. The show and films have created some impressive buzz as well. The 2002 Santa Barbara International Film Festival bestowed multiple awards on the students' projects. Eight citations were won by Kallen's students at the 2002 Innovative Video in Education Film Festival sponsored by the San Diego County Office of Education. In addition, RBHS was selected to host superintendents, CIOs, and teachers from across the United States as part of the National School Board Association (NSBA) Technology and Learning visitation in May 2003.

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Ross Kallen, Digital Media Instructor  
Rancho Bernardo High School

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Ross Kallen

*Bronco Magazine* is now streamed on the Rancho Bernardo website, along with coverage of live athletic and other school events (including instant replay). Students use a sophisticated four-camera setup for their webcasts, served up via Sorenson Broadcaster from a PowerBook G4 laptop and a rack-mounted Globecaster switcher that can tag along to any event. The school also employs Sorenson Squeeze and Sorenson Video 3 to compress and optimize newsmagazine footage, as well as material for web-based poetry projects, interactive video CDs, and digital yearbooks.

#### **Beyond Rancho Bernardo**

Future projects for the digital media mavericks include the mentoring of students in South Central Los Angeles on Final Cut Pro–based projects, and a possible trip to China to help train production teams that will cover the 2008 Olympic games.

For now, Kallen remains convinced that Final Cut Pro will take his students anywhere they want to go in the production arena. “One of my students emailed me the other day from Brooks Film School, where he’s a freshman,” Kallen says. “He said, ‘You just need to know that what we have going on there is way better than you think.’ And he’s right. Working with tools such as Final Cut Pro is really giving kids a visual language, real-world skills, and a new conduit to literacy.”

## For More Information

For more information about other Apple education products, visit [www.apple.com/education](http://www.apple.com/education) on the World Wide Web or call 800-800-2775.

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