

USC CD-ROM

Graduate's senior project blends video, music for interactive multimedia tour of university

From staff reports

Brad Weston named his college project "The University of South Carolina: The Interactive Media Exploration." But an appropriate subtitle might read "Everything You Wanted to Know About USC, but Didn't Know to Ask."

As part of his senior requirement for graduation from the Honors College, Weston had to choose between writing a thesis or completing a project. The 22-year-old computer science major and "Star Trek" fan decided to go where no student had gone before — the production of an interactive multimedia presentation of the university.

His goal was to create a multimedia experience that would allow prospective students to learn everything about USC, including information on academic programs, campus housing, student life and the university's history and buildings.

"Prospective students to any university get tons of mail, tons of brochures," Weston said. "My idea was to take students on a multimedia tour of USC so that they could explore the Honors College and USC on their personal computers without ever having to come to Columbia for a tour."

Six months, hundreds of hours and \$6,500 later, the student project is being talked about in glowing phrases in academic circles across the campus.

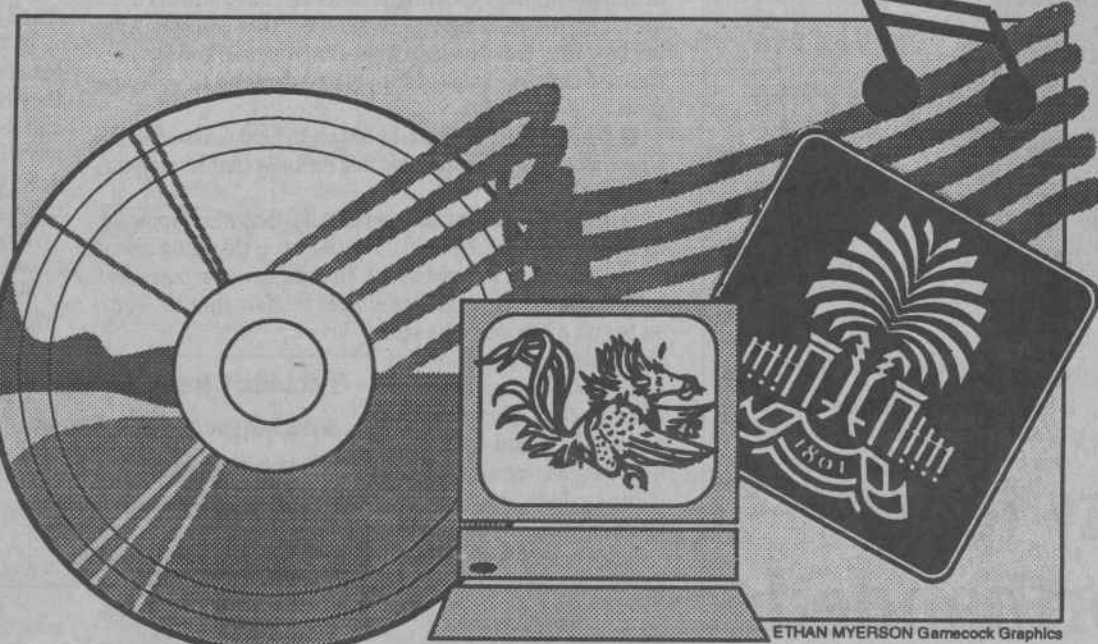
"This is the most comprehensive presentation of the university in multimedia that has ever been done," said Robert Oakman, a computer science professor who was Weston's faculty director for the project.

Oakman, director of USC's instructional software development and support group, developed a multimedia presentation about the university that was shown at the State Fair in October. Weston's project surpassed that effort, Oakman said.

"Brad took on an enormous task, and the result is unbelievable," Oakman said. "The multimedia show is beautifully done, professionally created and totally state of the art. It is a spectacular production."

Peter Sederberg, dean of the Honors College, said he gave the project "two thumbs up."

"I thought it was stunning, exceptional, a must-see," he said. "It is a work of imagination and dedica-



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tion that I would like to say is typical of the work of our Honors College students. But Brad Weston's project goes beyond what we expect. It is an impressive achievement."

Simply by clicking the computer's mouse, the interactive video takes students on a full-color tour of the university. The video features original music by USC student Kevin Flowers of Darlington, as well as beautiful color photography and video of campus buildings and campus life — all of which is not bad for a Weston, who came to USC, in part, on a music scholarship.

Weston, the son of Roger and Carolyn Weston of Peachtree City, Ga., graduated from McIntosh High School. An outstanding student with a high SAT score, he was recruited by schools throughout the Southeast but chose USC because of the academic reputation of its Honors College and the opportunities he would have to major in engineering and minor in music. In fact, he received a USC Alumni Award Scholarship and a music scholarship for percussion.

But along the way, Weston, who worked for four years as a student representative for Apple Computer, decided to change his major to computer science. He completed an internship in the summer of 1994 at the Atlanta Briefing Center for Apple Computer, and while he was Apple's student representative at USC, Weston was instrumental in helping Apple Computer sales at the university grow from about \$500,000 two years ago to \$2.6 million this year.

In addition to a rigorous work and academic schedule, Weston found time to participate in USC's Carolina Alive, a vocal and dance ensemble.

He leaves the university with an "A" on his Honors College senior project and the opportunity "to go forth in the working world," Sederberg said.

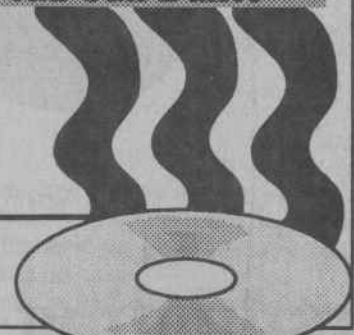
Sederberg hopes to make the project available on CD-ROM for high school guidance counselors so that students can take an interactive video tour of USC's campus.

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CAMPUS BEST SELLERS

Compiled by the Chronicle of Higher Education from information supplied by college stores throughout the country. December 15, 1994

Care of the Soul, Thomas Moore (Harper Perennial, \$12.00)

Without Remorse, Tom Clancy (Berkley, \$6.99)

Having our Say, Sarah L. Delany and A. Elizabeth Delany (Dell, \$5.99)

Embraced by the Light, Betty J. Eadie with Curtis Taylor (Bantam, \$5.99)

Forrest Gump, Winston Groom (Pocket, \$5.50)

The Shipping News, E. Annie Proulx (Touchstone, \$12.00)

The Vampire Lestat, Anne Rice (Ballantine, \$6.99)

Homicidal Psycho Jungle Cat, Bill Watterson (Andrews & McMeel, \$12.95)

Disclosure, Michael Crichton (Ballantine, \$6.99)

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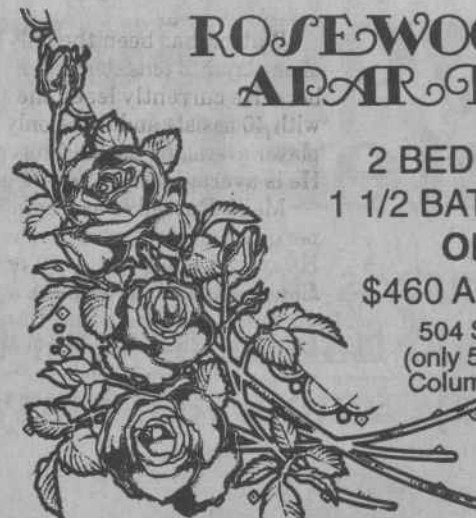
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