



Industry

Education

Daily Use

- Live, streaming Webcasts from dozens of classrooms
- Central, online archival of Webcasts, and video conferences, for on-demand play back

Solution

- Polycom® RealPresence™ Broadcast Producer software automates live, rich media Webcasting
- Polycom® RealPresence™ Media Manager software provides central, online searchable portal for archived assets

Results and Benefits

- Technology enables SDCOE to cost-effectively extend learning opportunities to broader audiences online
- Online study aids help SDCOE meet No Child Left Behind mandates
- Multimedia online materials enable at-risk kids to catch up with peers
- Online materials help English as a second language (ESL) students review information at their own pace

Polycom Helps San Diego County Office of Education Beat Community Learning Challenges with Online Webcasts

Overview

The San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) is one of the largest public agencies in the State of California, serving over 500,000 students from 42 school districts within a 125 square mile region. The SDCOE faces many challenges not only in educating its students, but also in efficiently communicating with faculty, parents and other administrators and increasing staff productivity within tight budget guidelines. Additionally, the SDCOE faces challenges in effectively reaching out and educating the region's migrant, disadvantaged, and chronically troubled students. Federal mandates such as the No Child Left Behind Act add to the demands placed on the SDCOE to find ways to do more with less.

A Technology Crossroads

The SDCOE Webcast Services team, headed by director Deen Elder and his associate, Simon Grays, holds the charter to provide the latest technology in communications technology to help SDCOE school systems meet growing demand for cost-effective learning solutions. In addition to operating three technical support centers, the team also provides a portable studio that enables them to develop content in the field.

When their previous Webcasting product began having problems, the team realized they were at a technology crossroads. While their old Webcasting station came with a seemingly simple interface, the product created complexity by not working effectively with Apple® Macintosh® computers deployed widely throughout the school system. Additionally, the Webcast station was incompatible with varying versions of RealPlayer and the media streams created network bottlenecks. These factors, and the ensuing lack of technical support, led Elder to find an alternative solution with Polycom.

Webcasting with a Purpose

"Unlike the technology that preceded it, Polycom's architecture was flexible enough to deal with a wide variety of network environments and media formats," said Elder. "When we tested and then deployed the Polycom solution, we found it was network-agnostic and supported all RealPlayer variations, eliminating the need for constant upgrades."

"With a mix of Macs and PCs at our school district locations, we found that Polycom worked well with both," said Grays. "It also helped that Polycom could provide scalability and a media management and search portal that would enable us to offer on-demand access to all of those presentations after-the-fact."

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Today, the SDCOE Webcasting Services team uses the Polycom® RealPresence™ Media Manager and Polycom® RealPresence™ Broadcast Producer solution, and its own in-house production studio and dedicated servers to provide a prolific volume of live streaming educational Webcasts (over 30 per month). The team relies on the Polycom solution to create and manage an archived library of multimedia presentations captured from Webcasts and from nearly 100 Polycom video conferences held per month. Students can access as many as 80 classes online, including SAT preparation. The Webcasts also boost staff efficiency by allowing administrators to communicate and educate staff online instead of having to make daily trips to remote schools.

Technology Serving the Community

The impact of the Polycom solution on students, faculty and administrators has been significant. The SDCOE has been able to address the demands of the U.S. federal government’s “No Child Left Behind” initiative to reach out through a compelling, “YouTube-like” medium that captures student attention and enables them to review online educational materials to better prepare for exams. Students themselves are allowed to make their own productions that can be viewed by other students, thus increasing their learning experience. Spanish-language Webcasts give teachers new opportunities to communicate better with students for whom English is a second language.

In addition, the archive of Polycom online educational materials helps the SDCOE meet the unique needs of their community by enabling migrant and disadvantaged students in smaller and less resource-endowed communities to enjoy the same curriculum found in other schools and to help troubled students, who have been removed from the mainstream student population, to keep up with their studies through Web-based access.

About Polycom

Polycom is the global leader in standards-based unified communications (UC) solutions for telepresence, video, and voice powered by the Polycom® RealPresence™ Platform. The RealPresence Platform interoperates with the broadest range of business, mobile, and social applications and devices. More than 400,000 organizations trust Polycom solutions to collaborate and meet face-to-face from any location for more productive and effective engagement with colleagues, partners, customers, and prospects. Polycom, together with its broad partner ecosystem, provides customers with the best TCO, scalability, and security—on-premises, hosted, or cloud delivered.

For more information, visit www.polycom.com, call 1-800-POLYCOM, or contact your Polycom sales representative.

Product Listing

Voice Content Management

- Polycom® RealPresence™ Broadcast Producer
- Polycom® RealPresence™ Media Manager
- Polycom® RealPresence™ Media Editor

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