Ensemble Enables Automated Video Workflow at St. John Fisher Wegmans School of Pharmacy

CASE STUDY

At a Glance

Challenges

- Need simple, secure method to distribute recorded patient counseling simulations for school of pharmacy.
- Need automated video production workflow to manage nine simultaneous live recording sessions.
- Need video content management that works together with Crestron and Digital Rapids tools.

Benefits

- Streamlined media delivery process to off-campus faculty.
- Decreased workload for busy IT professionals, instructional designers, and faculty.
- Enabled immediate student self-reflection, and timely faculty feedback, to improve course outcomes and learning.

SUMMARY

St. John Fisher College is an independent, liberal arts institution, in the Catholic tradition of American higher education. Located just outside Rochester NY, the college emphasizes liberal learning for students in traditional academic disciplines, as well as for those in more directly career-oriented fields. In all, Fisher offers 33 academic majors, and 11 pre-professional programs, including the Wegmans School of Pharmacy (WSoP).

Matthew Miller is the Media Application Specialist for the college's Office of Information Technology. He oversees media applications, and implements technologies that promote active learning across campus. In 2010, Miller led the search for a tool that would allow him to upgrade and automate the video production and distribution workflow for student assessments in an advanced WSoP course. In this course, pharmacy students are videotaped performing patient care activities in a simulated environment, for feedback and professional growth.

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CHALLENGE

The St. John Fisher Wegmans School of Pharmacy (WSoP) was looking for a simple, secure way to distribute videos and feedback documents to students, in order to help them improve their proficiency and communication skills as future pharmacists. As the final course before students begin their rotations in real patient care settings, *Concepts in Pharmacy Practice* integrates all aspects of pharmaceutical care, in a simulated practice environment.

The simulations take place in a series of study rooms that are equipped with video tools, and monitored by Miller and WSoP administrative staff in a control room. WSoP employs actors to portray patients in a series of realistic, case-related counseling sessions. Each session is designed to focus on a specific condition or consultation scenario. This learning model allows students to integrate their knowledge and develop professional communication skills in a supervised practice environment, before interacting with the public, out in the field.

In the past, each session was recorded onto a mini DV tape, which was later converted to DVD format. Individual DVDs were created for each student, for self-reflection. The sessions were also compiled onto a master copy, for faculty feedback and grading. Even with only six study rooms, at that time (as opposed to the nine they have now), Miller and media department staff, with the help of student technicians, were producing 50-100 DVDs every week or two.

Further weighing down the process, the DVDs had to be distributed manually. For the many

Wegmans School of Pharmacy

faculty members who spend a significant portion of their time at off-campus pharmacy practice sites scattered around Central and Western New York, the DVDs had to be sent by US Mail. From start to finish, the whole process took approximately two weeks, and was repeated roughly ten times throughout the course.

SEARCH

In 2010, Miller launched a search for a more efficient way to record and distribute videos of simulated patient counseling sessions for the WSoP *Concepts in Pharmacy Practice* course. Miller worked together with colleagues in the Office of Information Technology, as well as WSoP Assistant Professor and Laboratory Experience Coordinator Anthony Corigliano, to find a solution.

"We weren't initially looking for a video platform," said Miller. "We were just looking for a way for the school of pharmacy to push out videos and feedback documents. We needed to record nine videos

simultaneously, convert them, and stream them on the web so students can watch. And we needed to do that six times in the same day. So, that's more than 50 videos in the same session. And then we needed to turn them around in less than 24 hours."

The team chose Digital Rapids and Crestron products to automate the video production process. But they still needed a way to deliver the finished videos, together with related links and documents, to the appropriate students and faculty.

A vendor recommended Miller and his team examine Ensemble Video, a video content management and publishing platform built by a group of educators at Syracuse University, and adopted by hundreds of educational institutions across the country. The team looked at Ensemble, along with one of its competitors.

Although the two platforms offered similar capabilities, Ensemble Video presented a better

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From a control room, Miller facilitates video production for simulated patient counseling sessions in nine individual study rooms. Each room is wired with a mounted pan–tilt–zoom (PTZ) camera, start/stop recorder, and a Digital Rapids TouchStream LE live video encoding and streaming appliance.

TouchStream appliances are ideal for on-location live streaming, offering unparalleled ease-of-use. Software controls are accessed through a vivid, streamlined touch-screen interface with integrated live video monitoring and VU meters for audio validation, eliminating the need for laptops, keyboards, mice, and separate monitors.

Miller uses a 15 inch Crestron Isys Tilt Touchpanel (TPS-15B), with a Crestron PRO2 Professional Dual Bus Control System to monitor and control all the cameras and recording devices.

Audio and video output from each study room is sent to the TouchStream appliances. Files are automatically time/date stamped, and recorded to unique shared watch folders on the Ensemble Video server. The files are transcoded by Rhozet ProMedia Carbon (part of the Ensemble Video package), and appear in Ensemble Video media librarie,s designated by study room number, allowing Miller to stream them out to the appropriate users.

Matthew Miller
Media Application Specialist

value, said Corigliano. Another advantage was Ensemble's willingness to collaborate with the college on future software upgrades. "There has been discussion of further development of this type of education and videotaping of live scenarios," he said. "Ensemble offered an opportunity to get in on the ground floor with the development of features."

SOLUTION

The college installed Ensemble Video on their campus servers in October 2011, for improved video content management and publishing. Crestron and Digital Rapids tools were adopted to streamline the video production workflow.

"Administration assistants hit 'record all' to trigger all the TouchStream devices to start recording," explained Miller. "They go for about 20 minutes and are stopped individually, as each session finishes. Each study room has its own Ensemble Video media library. The administrative assistant provides a spreadsheet of which student was recorded at which time. Then, I share them out to students individually, via other libraries that are made just so students can see them. The videos are shared to faculty libraries, so faculty can see all the students' videos, while students can only see their own individual video."

WSoP Assistant Professor and Laboratory Experience Coordinator Anthony Corigliano utilizes the attachments feature in Ensemble to include self-reflection questionnaires for students, in the form of Microsoft Word documents. For faculty, he provides a link to a grading rubric for the course in Blackboard Learn, the college's learning management system (LMS).

Ensemble's attachments feature supports spreadsheets, PDFs, PowerPoint documents, zip files, images (including Photoshop documents), and many other file types.

The college utilizes Ensemble Video in a similar way for its Master of Science in Mental Health Counseling. "Last year, we upgraded our mental health counseling rooms," said Miller. "We have five counseling rooms and one control room, and we use Crestron CaptureHD-Pro high-definition recorders together with Ensemble Video to capture real counseling sessions, much in same way as we produce the pharmacy videos."

Ensemble is also used to securely stream orientation videos, licensed library content, and copyrighted content, for faculty members who obtain permission to convert and stream videos for online classes.

Miller simply uploads the videos to Ensemble and provides an embed code for faculty to post in Blackboard Learn.

RESULTS

Miller, Corigliano, and their colleagues have successfully streamlined the video production and distribution process for the *Concepts in Pharmacy Practice* course, using the Ensemble Video platform together with Crestron and Digital rapids products.

"It has really been a dramatic positive change in terms of turn-around time," said Corigliano. Faculty members are pleased they can access the videos almost immediately, from anywhere, rather than having to wait for a DVD to arrive in the mail. Faculty are able to use the videos for grading and provide feedback very quickly.

"Faculty love it," he said. "It's just so much more efficient than what we were doing before. And, we also now have a video library as a resource for examples and trainings." Faculty members use past videos to share exemplary student work with future classes, and course coordinators like Corigliano use the videos to orient new faculty and "patient" actors to the course.

From the IT perspective, Miller sees the proof in the pudding. "I know they're happy with it, because I haven't heard any complaints," he said. He also notes improved security. Before, the DVDs could be passed around to anyone. Now, students have to login to the Ensemble system, and can only see their own work.

"It's more secure, there's better turn-around time, and the videos can be accessed anywhere," said Miller. "It can be two in the morning, and they don't have to worry about having access to a DVD player."

Through course evaluations, students have expressed that this is one of the courses they love and hate at the same time, said Corigliano. "It's stressful because they have to perform in a live scenario," he said. "We give them a case, and they have five minutes to review it before they enter the room where the patient is, and have to provide counseling. Then, they only have 12-15 min to complete the counseling session. "

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Despite the challenge, or perhaps because of the challenge, students say this is a very important course for them. "They know these are skills they're going to need," said Corigliano. The videos allow them to get meaningful feedback on their performance, and the quick turn-around allows them time to reflect before the next session.

"It does actually help some of the impressions students have," said Corigliano. "For instance, when

Anthony Corigliano
Laboratory Experience
Coordinator

they think they did much better than they did, they are able to see that. The camera doesn't lie."

FUTURE

Forward-thinking programs like WSoP are evolving to reflect a more interdisciplinary approach to health care. It is important for medical professionals to work collaboratively with multiple disciplines, said Corigliano. The college plans to broaden the recorded patient counseling sessions to include students from the school of nursing, and other health care curriculums, providing students with the opportunity to develop interdisciplinary communication skills, and improve overall patient care.

On the IT side, Miller recently upgraded to Ensemble Video 3.5, providing a host of new education-focused features, to further streamline video content management. At the top of the list, the Ensemble Video Portal will increase publishing options and enable easy management of public

and private academic content, delivered through a secure, branded website.

For library content, Ensemble's new Restricted Streaming feature provides the necessary security to enable digital checkout of DVDs and other videos. The college will utilize Restricted Streaming to satisfy media licensing restrictions by limiting the number of concurrent viewers for a particular media file.

With Ensemble's new integrated uploader, Miller can stream larger files than ever before, including full-length and HD films. While users were previously limited to 2GB uploads, this limit can now be customized for individual media libraries. For example, the Media and Communications Department (MAC) will be able to stream a full-length film recently created by a digital production class.

To further streamline the video management workflow for WSoP, Miller will be able to auto-create new student accounts based on LDAP groups. Currently, he has to individually create 75 new Ensemble Video accounts for every new student cohort, and then assign those accounts to a media libraries. This process takes about two days to complete, and is subject to human error.

As Miller and his colleagues delve further into Ensemble Video, they find more and more ways to use the technology to enhance teaching and learning at St. John Fisher College. Not only have they created a secure method for

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distributing recorded patient counseling simulations; integrated the process with other education technology tools from Crestron and Digital Rapids; and made great strides in automating the entire workflow; but by doing so, they have boosted student engagement; decreased unnecessary workload for busy IT professionals and course coordinators; and improved media delivery to off-campus faculty, thereby accelerating turn-around time for grades and feedback.

Moving forward, the college will continue to harness powerful education technologies like Ensemble Video to accomplish its mission to "engage students in the quest for knowledge and truth," and to achieve its goal of becoming a widely recognized college in the Northeast Region.

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