ViewCast®

University of North Carolina, Wilmington Turns to ViewCast® Niagara® HD Streaming Encoders to Power Expanded Video Communication Program

The Challenge

Enthusiasm for Video Outstrips the School's Capabilities

The media production team at the University of North Carolina, Wilmington was a victim of its own success. The team had begun a modest program to stream video of important university events. The videos proved to be extremely popular and the team had increased the number of UNC events covered, including graduations and convocations, press conferences and other events. It was clear to Chip Bobbert, Producer and Director in the Department of Media Production, that using Adobe free software and computers equipped with inexpensive video capture cards was no longer an adequate solution.

UNC Wilmington began as Wilmington College in 1947 with just over 200 students, many of whom were veterans returning from military service following World War II. Today, approximately 13,000 undergraduate, graduate and doctoral students experience the university's unique blend of teaching, research and service learning opportunities, a mix of classical and innovative approaches that creates powerful learning experiences which give our graduates a competitive advantage in today's marketplace.

"We were delighted that so many students, parents, alumni and other friends of UNCW utilized the video we offered to keep up on school events, but the amount of video we were streaming and the number of people viewing it was outpacing our capabilities," Bobbert noted. "We knew we had to move to the next level of sophistication in our video hardware and software to ensure we maintained the quality in our video solutions that reflects the quality of the institution we represent."

The Solution

ViewCast Niagara® 9100 Streaming HD Video Encoder

Bobbert and his team met to discuss solutions. They made it clear that there was no room for failures, anything less than 100 percent quality was essential given the nature of the video content and the importance of every audience to the school. After researching several solutions and product lines, Bobbert chose ViewCast's new Niagara 9100 Streaming HD Video Encoders.

The Niagara 9100 forms the cornerstone of UNC Wilmington's streaming media upgrade. It delivers multiple, simultaneous streams in a variety of formats and is optimized for live streaming/simulcasting, webcasting, and archiving/video on demand. It can be configured for a variety of video and audio inputs, including HD-SDI, component Y/C, and composite video with balanced, unbalanced, embedded and AES/EBU audio. A flexible Web interface enables remote set up, control and monitoring as well as access to all popular industry streaming formats.

"We found the Niagara 9100 to be as close to a turnkey product as exists on the market today. It was up and running within 30 minutes, is easy to use and adjust. We are an all-SDI shop and found that many competitive products were analog only. While the pricing of competitors' products appeared lower, when we factored in the cost per channel, ViewCast was actually less expensive. Not to mention we knew ViewCast's longstanding reputation for solid engineering and high-quality solutions," Bobbert continued.

The Result

UNCW Accelerating an Expanded Video Streaming Program

UNC Wilmington plans to increase the number of events covered by video streaming from 12-15 per year to more than 20 per year. Bobbert's team is also exploring making video available 24/7, something impossible before the upgrade to UNCW's systems. The team is also looking at adaptive streaming, which will result in very little buffering for viewers, as well as fast start times and a good experience for both high and low bandwidth connections in different network topologies.

"We are eager to have our expansion plans underway. It's something we had in mind for some time, but until we were comfortable that our video infrastructure was able to handle more content and always-on availability, we were not willing to expand," Bobbert noted. "We also know that friends of the school will view video on smart phones, tablets and other devices as well as computers, we're now able to provide a quality experience for everyone."

Bobbert added that before ViewCast's Niagara 9100 encoders, he didn't trust the performance of UNC Wilmington's video streaming capabilities. Today, he's expanding the content offered and increasing the department's capabilities – built on the performance and reliability of the Niagara 9100.

Profile

ViewCast Niagara video encoders are taking the market by storm, enabling IT teams in organizations ranging from businesses to universities to incorporate high-quality video as part of their everyday communications. Drawn by high performance, the flexibility to work with a wide range of video and audio inputs, as well as create a superior viewing experience on smart phones, tablets, laptops and other "screens," IT teams are asking for Niagara by name.

The University of North Carolina, Wilmington is just the latest to deploy the Niagara 9100, part of the school's strategy to more effectively communicate with students, parents, alumni and others, incorporating video. The Niagara 9100 represents an easy-to-deploy, feature-rich platform for using video more effectively.

Industry

Universities

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