

Case Western Reserve University Chooses LifeSize to Deliver HD Video to faculty and staff

Pioneers in using HD video communications as an educational tool, LifeSize video has multiple uses at Case Western

Organization

Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio, USA

Formed in 1967 by the federation of Case Institute of Technology (founded in 1880 by philanthropist Leonard Case Jr.) and Western Reserve University (founded in 1826 as the Western Reserve College), the university offers programs of study in Arts and Sciences, Dentistry, Engineering, Law, Management, Medicine, Nursing, and Social Sciences.

According to *U.S. News & World Report's* 2008 rankings, Case's undergraduate program is ranked #1 in Ohio and #41 among national universities. It is most highly regarded for its medical school (currently ranked #21 and #28 for research and primary care, respectively, in *US News* rankings) and Biomedical Engineering department, which ranks at #7 among undergraduate and graduate biomedical engineering programs. In 2006, *The Times* ranked Case 26th in the US and 60th worldwide.

As of 2005, the university had 4,186 undergraduate students and 5,766 graduate and professional students. The undergraduate student body hails from all 50 states and 82 countries.



Haydn Hall on the campus of Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland



CHALLENGE

Case needed an HD video communications system that was simple to use and easy to deploy, with built-in collaboration tools and superior quality, but also because the systems are university-funded, the choice would have to make sense fiscally.



SOLUTION

The university decided that LifeSize® Team™ systems were the best choice. With crystal clear HD resolution and a simple interface and design, all LifeSize products are standards-based, so they are compatible with Case's existing video communications systems.



RESULTS

5000 minutes of video used per month, campus-wide. The School of Medicine, the School of Nursing, the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, The Campus Career Center and the Housing and Greek Life Departments all use video on a regular basis.



Challenge

Case Western has always had a firm grasp on technology utilization. A true video conferencing veteran, the university was one of the first to implement HD video in a campus setting. In fact, CWRU was one of LifeSize's first five customers. In 2005, CWRU conducted the world's first live telesurgery in high definition. Sending a 1Mbps HD video call to a luncheon for hospital donors, surgeons at University Hospital in Cleveland were able to perform laparoscopic surgery live from the OR in rich, high definition.

Today, Case has an entire department devoted to video communications. Case MediaVision is responsible for providing traditional audio-visual services, technology enhanced classrooms as well as a set of 'video-centric' technologies that are designed to take advantage of the university's world-class, gigabit-to-the-desktop network. For Case, videoconferencing offers countless opportunities for many of the university's departments. Meetings involving participants from different geographic locations, interviews of potential faculty or businesses outside of the local area, distance learning and research project collaboration are just a few of the ways in which the university currently uses the technology.

As campus-wide utilization of video communications began to grow, so did the demand. In 2008, the university's Instructional Technology and Academic Computing (ITAC) group began offering campus departments the opportunity to apply for Videoconferencing Opportunity Grants. The program allows any department throughout the school to apply for university-funded video systems. But with the university-wide demand on the rise, Case needed a video communications system that would meet multiple criteria.

Key Needs:

Superior quality: True-to-life, crisp HD video quality for meaningful, rich communication

Unique flexibility: Easy to deploy, simple to use, with built-in collaboration tools

Unmatched price-performance: High demand for university-funded systems means an HD system that makes sense fiscally



Case's medical school is primarily affiliated with University Hospitals of Cleveland.



"The benefit of HD is obvious. LifeSize gives you exceptional quality, it's easy to deploy, it's cost-effective and totally compatible with other systems."

- MIKE KUBIT, DIRECTOR OF MEDIAVISION



Solution

After Mike Kubit, Director of MediaVision at Case, and his team announced the Videoconferencing Opportunity Grant program, the applications began to pour in. Right away, some 30 different departments within the university wanted to use video communications in their departments. After weighing the options, Mike and his team decided that the LifeSize® Team™ product was the system that made the most sense.

"The benefit of HD is obvious," Kubit said. "LifeSize gives you exceptional quality, it's easy to use and deploy, it's cost-effective and totally compatible with other systems."

Soon, departments across the university began to realize what Kubit and his team already knew. With LifeSize, you get a true-to-life experience.

"The immersion factor of the LifeSize systems is the important piece," Kubit said. "The more realistic the quality, the more it draws you into that session as it allows you to pay attention to facial expressions and pick up on non-verbal cues."





Results

Since the LifeSize implementation, Case uses about 5000 minutes of video per month, campus-wide. The university has truly seen the technology flourish in a multitude of different applications.

Through their partnership with University Hospitals of Cleveland, LifeSize systems allow surgeons at the hospital to broadcast surgery instruction back to the Case Medical School student classrooms.

At the Case Career Center, students can have their first interviews with potential employers over LifeSize video.

In both the Housing Department and Greek Life Department, north and south campus residents used to drive or ride the bus to fraternity and sorority meetings and study groups. Now, they have LifeSize units in the student unions at both locations, eliminating travel and increasing focus.

In the School of Nursing's graduate-level informatics courses, a combination of healthcare management and information systems, many of the students are currently working as nurses in regional hospitals. Now, they can attend class via LifeSize in this distance learning application.

And in the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, Goodrich Professor of Engineering Innovation, Mehran Mehregany, stays connected with students even though he now offices out of his home in San Diego.

In 2007, Mehregany was asked by the university to establish a presence for Case in Southern California. Striving to maintain relationships with the large group of Graduate and PhD students he leads, communicating without video was challenging.

"For the first six months, we didn't have LifeSize," Mehregany said. "Email and conference calls were our only modes of communication, which was not effective at all. There is just something about the human psychology of seeing one another and our interactions were missing that."

Now, Mehregany has a LifeSize system set up in his office at Case and an identical system at his home office in San Diego. So when students want to meet with him, they just drop by his office for a chat.

"Communicating with my students over video has entirely changed the quality of our interactions," Mehregany said. "This technology is a significant enabler for the work we are doing."

Mehregany and his team also use the built-in H.239 data-sharing capability. Connected to a document camera, they are able to study tiny electric motor drives and collaborate in real-time.

"When I do come to Case, my students don't feel like I have been away. One colleague told me that when people ask, 'where's Mehran?' they say, 'he's on TV.'"



"Communicating with my students over video has entirely changed the quality of our interactions."

– MEHRAN MEHREGANY, GOODRICH PROFESSOR OF ENGINEERING INNOVATION



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