

Tegrity

Building upon 10 years of research and development of education technology, Tegrity Campus 2.0 incorporates class capture and delivery, sophisticated database management, and search and retrieval capabilities into a web-enabled campus-wide solution.

During an interview with Tegrity President and CEO Isaac Segal on his cell phone while in an automobile somewhere in Israel, we listened to an overview about how this web-service-oriented system is geared toward enabling large numbers of faculty and staff to participate in the production of rich media courses and events.

How It Works

As a web-service, instructors go to a Tegrity.NameOfInstitution.edu website, obtain a Tegrity account, log in with their credentials, find the course they are teaching among a list of courses and then simply click on the record button when they are ready to start their presentation.

Any computer that meets basic system requirements and is installed with presentation and document-producing software, as well as any connected peripheral video camera and/or microphone (or built-in camera and microphone), works with the Tegrity web-based system. "There is no need for any special devices," says Segal. "Anything that will be recognized by Windows will work with Tegrity. The professor starts the recording, and Tegrity has a small tool box with a stop and pause button. They do whatever

they want while Tegrity is in the background capturing their presentation."

As noted on the Tegrity website, Campus 2.0 seamlessly integrates with Blackboard, WebCT, Angel, Moodle, Peoplesoft/Oracle, SCT and any other CMS, SIS, portal or any other IMS-compliant systems. Tegrity is a scalable, web-based enterprise system. Plus, with new built-in iTunes integration capabilities, any Tegrity recording can be published to an institution's iTunes U site with a single click. Mobile support also enables students to review class content on their RAZR phones.

Company Info

Tegrity is headquartered in Santa Clara, CA with an R & D center in Israel. Its web-service product started in 2005. Since 2000, it has also sold an appliance-based, rich-media production system. Segal says that many Tegrity customers who started with an appliance-based system, which he refers to as the "production point," are now transitioning over to the web-based service. "People who have bought at the production point and are looking more globally at their institution or department are likely to convert. Many have converted to this model because it gives them an open license and encourages everyone to record."

University of Alabama Adoption

In a recent article in *Campus Technology*, freelance writer Linda L. Briggs outlined how a University of Alabama geology professor decided to record and archive his traditional classroom-based lectures and

PowerPoint presentations with Tegrity in order to offer his students an additional learning resource. Initially there was some concern that many students would decide not to show up for the live, face-to-face class meeting. However, except for a few students, class attendance has remained steady. In addition, Briggs noted that the professor spent a total of four hours to become a proficient Tegrity user and that currently it takes him about five minutes of handling and editing to ultimately publish his classroom audio/video lecture and PowerPoint on the campus server. Students have reacted positively, and plans for the future include recording geology field trips.¹

Pricing

"The pricing is based on full time equivalent (FTE)," says Segal. "We are not into a production point. We want to enable everybody to use it." Similar to other web-based educational technology vendors, Tegrity has an annual licensing fee ranging "anywhere between the low tens of thousands of dollars to 100,000 dollars. Our pricing is not complicated. You give us an FTE and we give you a number. There are no devices. You will get one simple quote."

Notes:

1. Linda L Briggs, "Classroom Recordings Augment Lectures at U of Alabama," *Campus Technology*, 4/4/2007, www.campustechnology.com/article.aspx?aid=46567

Related Link:

www.tegrity.com

Tegrity Web-Based Solution Drives UCF FEEDS Program

The College of Engineering and Computer Science (CESC) at the University of Central Florida (UCF) enrolls more than 5,800 students and employs more than 240 faculty. In 1982, through Florida legislation, it created the

Florida Engineering Education Delivery System (FEEDS) to deliver courses, primarily at the graduate level, to engineers throughout Florida. FEEDS delivers engineering and other technical courses and programs at a distance to students

enrolled in courses offered by 12 colleges and schools of engineering that are members of a state-wide consortium.

Pre-Web Days and Next Steps

FEEDS was pre World Wide Web, so, initially, the mode of delivery was

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hard videotape. UCF engineering faculty would teach and record their face-to-face classes inside fancy multimedia rooms with television cameras, and then the videotapes were transported by automobile to the consortium-member campuses.

“That went on for about 20 years,” explains Al Ducharme, CECS assistant dean, Distance and Distributed Learning. The next mode of delivery adoption entailed taking the television cable and signal (called an NTSC cable for National Television Standards Committee) and plugging it into a computer with video capture capabilities, allowing for the production of a digital recording of the course that could be published on the Internet. “By this time, which Ducharme calculates as about six years ago, the equipment and recording methods were starting to age. The NTSC standard, for instance, produces a relatively low screen resolution. “It is the quality of a YouTube or iPod video (for smaller screens); it was not that good of quality. By 2006, we were beginning to fall behind in terms of the quality of what we were streaming out to our students.”

Change on the Horizon

Ducharme, who started working for UCF as an engineering professor five years ago, was assigned a FEEDS course. He found that out of a class of 30 students, maybe two or three would show up because they had opted to view it online instead. So, being “sort of a gadgety guy who liked to play with video and video editing,” Ducharme hooked up a web cam and microphone to his laptop and started taping his FEEDS class from his office with a free trial of a popular screen recording and presentation software. He says the video quality became “infinitely better. Students started talking to other students. It caught on that I was doing this from my office. People started asking why

couldn't we do this for more classes.”

By the following semester, 15 instructors were taping courses from their offices using the same kind of set up that Ducharme had initiated. However, there was one drawback: “For every hour of class, it took about two hours to produce the video,” he says, referring to the time it took to encode his production as well as burn it onto a CD and physically walk it down to the person running the server where these videos were ultimately archived in the FEEDS database.

Nonetheless, an increasing number of engineering instructors were asking about his videotaping, and he started to informally train some of his colleagues on how to set up their own office-based recording systems. Then, one day, “the dean put his hand on my shoulder and said ‘we need to change distance education; we need to change and overhaul FEEDS; I really like what you are doing; can you do it for the whole College?’

“When the dean asks you to do something, you nod your head and say ‘yes,’” Ducharme jokes.

Searching for a Better Solution

The side of the college where Ducharme works is comprised of 150 instructors who teach about 3,000 students. The challenge he now faced was how would he obtain and store enough individual software purchases to give every instructor what he or she needed to record. “I’m thinking that I have to pass discs out and show all of them how to use the software. It was daunting,” he says, adding that the college has a good number of older faculty who are not exactly ready or willing to adopt video screen capture and presentation educational software.

“I started looking at what else is available, and there must be at least 50 programs you could get, and they all end up being fairly complex,”

Ducharme explains. “I started going to technology shows, looking around at different technologies . . . My thinking was I would like to give every instructor his own mini recording studio so he can record anywhere he wants - in his office, in a hotel room at a conference.”

The solution became a Tegrity account that the entire college could access. This allowed any instructor with a web-cam and a microphone either built in or hooked up to their computer to log-in to the Tegrity web-based service, open their personal account, and record and upload their recorded course presentation to the server where it’s archived for viewing by students almost immediately.

Successful Adoption

“Now we have more instructors recording in their offices,” says Ducharme. “You walk down the hall and you see papers signs on their doors - ‘recording in progress.’ The optimal setup that some of the instructors now have is a Tablet PC with a built-in web cam and microphone. They literally turn on their Tablet, start Tegrity, and, with their digital pen in hand, give a lecture from anywhere.”

Another benefit of this implementation is that all those instructors who record from wherever it is most convenient for them obviously do not need to reserve a time slot in a multimedia room to record their FEEDS lectures. “It has enabled us to say, in terms of scheduling, that every classroom in the college that we have control over is now a FEEDS room,” Ducharme notes. “We can record FEEDS classes from any classroom. Now, my other hope is that we can expand beyond FEEDS and have rich-media content produced for every face-to-face class.”

Related Link:

<http://feeds.ucf.edu/index.asp>