

Recording & streaming continuing education programs at an Ivy League school

Business Case

An Ivy League school recently contacted Epiphan for help organizing high-end lecture recordings for their Extension School courses. This continuing education program is very demanding in terms of video quality, given that half the course participants complete the courses online.

To ensure the success of such a school, they needed to provide off-campus learners with the same degree of excellence that is offered in the classroom. The school determined the best way to provide these students with the same kind of 'classroom presence' feel obtained by on-campus students is to focus on top quality recorded lectures.

The more satisfied and successful the remote students are, the more likely they are to take more classes. Thus, monetization of the program depends a great deal on the quality of video recordings the school provides. To meet the exacting needs of this distinguished school, Epiphan recommended Pearl, an all-in-one recording, streaming and switching solution.



EPIPHAN VIDEO

Designers of some of the world's most reliable audio visual communication solutions for education, healthcare, aerospace, live event production, security and transportation.

Our field-proven video grabbers and professional streaming and recording products capture, record and stream video from just about any source. With over 10 years of experience in audio visual communications, Epiphan's family of products deliver critical communications in more than 1600 universities around the world.



Using Pearl with existing hardware

As with most educational facilities, the school already had a lot of equipment installed. Each classroom had two cameras (SDI outputs), a slide projector with VGA output, and a document camera with DVI output. Audio equipment included an RF microphone and five ceiling-fixed microphones connected to an audio mixer. Using Pearl's six video inputs (two HDMI™ / DVI, two SDI, two VGA) and two ¼" TRS audio inputs, they were able to connect all the existing equipment audio video equipment. Pearl's small footprint and optional rack-mount shelf made it a perfect fit for the already crowded AV closet used for the existing gear.

Installation of Pearl took the AV team about 15 minutes per classroom, including testing. They spent another 15 minutes or so on configuration of a video layout combining the picture from the slide projector, two classroom cameras, and the document camera.

15 minutes to unpack
& connect

15 minutes
to configure

15 minutes to integrate
into LMS

Thanks to Pearl's comprehensive APIs, the IT team was also able to integrate it with the existing Crestron panels for integrated in-room controls.

Using Pearl with existing learning management software

The university uses Opencast as its learning management system (LMS), therefore they needed a lecture recording solution that easily and smoothly integrates with it. Here too, Pearl had a great fit. Its integration with Opencast took just 15 minutes for all the devices.

As a result of the integration, Opencast is able to control recording on Pearl according to the timetable loaded into the system. After each lecture, Pearl is configured to automatically transfer recordings to the Opencast server via the campus network, making lecture recordings available for students a mere three minutes after a lecture ends!



Live and on-demand online lecture streaming

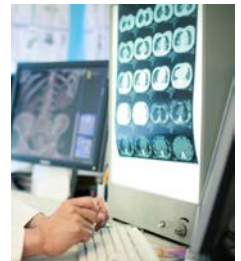
Some classes offered at this school require remote students to participate in Q&A sessions while the lesson is being taught. To accomplish this, the school live streams lectures with a visual layout while concurrently recording and saving the original layout to the LMS. Using the Pearl systems already installed in the lecture halls, AV engineers created the live streaming layout, facilitating simultaneous live streaming to YouTube (for remote participants) and local file recording for transfer into Opencast LMS.

Ease of use for faculty

Since its installation, Epiphany Pearl has proven itself to be a hit with faculty. Its ease of use and unique features allows professors to provide better materials for students. Professors use Pearl to:

Show and record video from external sources

During class, professors use not only document cameras for sharing additional materials with students, but also their personal iPads and specialized equipment like microscopes and oscilloscopes. Professors now make use of Pearl's idle HDMI port to connect these devices and capture them as part of the recorded lecture shared with the remote audience.

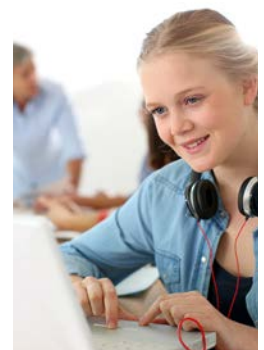


Get lecture recordings to visiting speakers right away

Some visiting speakers ask that the school provide a copy of their lecture recording immediately following the event. Prior to deployment of Pearl in the lecture halls, the school was unable to meet this request. With Pearl, this task is a snap! Pearl can be configured to automatically or manually copy recordings in AVI, MP4 or MOV format directly to a flash drive connected to Pearl via USB.

Better out of class sessions

As part of their dedication to excellence, this school gives remote students the ability to request one-on-one online meetings with their professors. Many professors travel extensively, even during the school year, and the IT team was initially unable to find a high quality video conferencing solution that met the expectations of the professors and course participants. Epiphany's AV.io HD, an affordable, portable video grabber, solved this problem easily. Using an AV.io HD each professor could plug in an HD camera right into the computer and have a HD picture for Skype, LMS online office hours or one-on-one sessions. Driverless and very easy to use on Mac or PC, AV.io HD has become the faculty's favorite hardware tool.



Pearl gets results!

Adding Pearl to the AV closet in their classrooms, this Ivy League school provided a number of important benefits to faculty and students.

Extension school students

- › Higher course completion rates
- › Easy access to materials in cases of illness
- › Higher average course grades
- › Easy access to lectures online

Faculty

- › Ability to share diverse teaching materials
- › Better content for students' self-studies

IT Team

- › Increased functionality
- › Easy and fast LMS and hardware infrastructure integration
- › Reliable solution with extensive support (on Epiphan's support plan)

School Administration

- › Higher student satisfaction rates
- › Increased faculty loyalty and satisfaction
- › Classroom lecture quality and faculty monitoring through HQ recordings
- › Budget savings (alternative solutions are usually 3-4 times more expensive than Pearl)
- › Higher profitability of the courses due to the increased sign-up

