



Rikki Gutcher

The University of Aberdeen

Camtasia Relay[®]

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**UNIVERSITY
OF ABERDEEN**

The University of Aberdeen

The University of Aberdeen is a leading academic institution based in Scotland. For over five centuries the University, known as the 'global university of the North', has dedicated itself to expanding its pool of knowledge and to the creation of ideas through excellence in scholarship.

The University of Aberdeen sought a simple and automated method of capturing lecture content and making it available to students immediately after a lecture. The overriding aim was to provide students with a digital version of all lectures as they were delivered. These would act as learning and revision aids as well as review materials for students, on the rare occasion when lectures could not be attended.

Capturing Learning Content

Previously, lecturers provided students with learning content by uploading PowerPoint presentations to the University's Blackboard Learning Management System (LMS). The lectures were captured using the screencasting software Camtasia Studio, creating a digital video of the lecture. These videos could also be augmented with an audio voiceover or web-cam video of the lecturer delivering the content.

While Camtasia Studio provided an easy and effective means of capturing and editing such videos, the process was not fully implemented into the University's existing IT infrastructure, which is better suited to an automated process. Having a scalable, automated process means that lecturers can easily record and upload their screencasts without needing much training. Rikki Gutcher, Video Services Manager at Aberdeen, wanted to automate this process and therefore minimise the time required by lecturers to digitise their content. Additionally, he was looking for the ability to provide students with access to lecture captures immediately after a given lecture was delivered, in order to aid student's retention of information.

Automating the Capture Process

Following a review of existing systems, the University began using Camtasia Relay to capture lectures and uploaded to the LMS. When a lecture commences, the lecturer selects their profile (their unique account on Camtasia Relay, which specifies their preferences and who their content should be distributed to), and begins recording with a simple click of the mouse. Once the lecture has ended, the lecturer stops recording with another click of the mouse and selects the video for upload. It is then uploaded to their streaming media server and accessed by the students from Blackboard.

'Relaying' information

Following an extensive pilot, Rikki found that more and more members of staff wanted to use Camtasia Relay as a learning resource and the number of volunteers ballooned. Following extremely positive feedback from pilot participants, the University has rolled out the system officially for the 2011 academic year. Camtasia Relay is now installed in all lecture theatres, approximately 51 rooms, which hold on average 100 students. Over 350 members of staff are actively using the system and the university is currently recording approximately 100 plus videos every three weeks. This means, in one academic year (30 weeks, September – May), the University could potentially record over 1,000 lectures. Since the start of the two year pilot in 2009, the University has recorded over 3,150 lectures and presentations.

Rikki comments: *“The great thing about Camtasia Relay is that it’s so straightforward to use. Lecturers have a limited amount of time, so it’s great that they can get their lectures running, select their Camtasia Relay profile and then forget about it until the end of a session. This creates a digital version of the lecture, which can be uploaded to our streaming server as soon as the lecture has finished.”*

One of the main areas the lecture distribution is being used is in the medical school, where both lecturers and guest speakers are being recorded to add to the digital bank of student resources. This is especially important in the medical school, where there are numerous guest speakers presenting one-off lectures during the year. If students need to revise the materials or missed a guest lecture they can log onto their blackboard account and easily find the session to view.

In addition to academic departments, it is also being used by the distance learning department to help students work from home. This has allowed the University a competitive edge by being able to enroll students who cannot physically attend the sessions on campus onto already established courses, such as arts, law and philosophy. This equates to over 200 students studying on approximately 30 courses in the 2011/12 academic year.

Rikki comments, *“The need for digital resources is becoming more and more integrated into everyday teaching. Students have an expectation for flexibility in their learning. This coupled with advances in personal technology means that we expect our use of screencasting with Camtasia Relay to go from strength to strength.”*

There are further plans to use the software for staff training and software tutorials.

Get product details, attend a webinar, download a free trial:

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