



CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

Polycom® and BT Help Western Kentucky University Bring Four-Year College Courses to Hundreds of Students in Small Towns

Industry

- Education

Daily Use

- Distance learning and training
- Recruiting

Solution

- Polycom® RealPresence® Video Solutions help enable students at regional campuses to conveniently take main campus courses, letting students and faculty interact face-to-face
- Faculty teach classes from their desktop, on iPads and Android tablets with Polycom® RealPresence® Mobile
- BT Conferencing integration, support and maintenance helps WKU staff deliver a user-friendly experience

Results and Benefits

- Hundreds of students in small towns and rural areas are now able to earn college degrees that may have been out of reach for working students and parents
- Hard-hit areas are gaining a better educated workforce who can earn more, spend more and create jobs
- Replacing driving with video collectively saves students nearly US\$1 million in annual fuel costs, 5 million miles of driving. Less driving reduces overall CO2 emissions by 150,000 tons a year



Overview

In Central Kentucky's small towns and rural areas, cash-strapped students and time-challenged working parents who otherwise might never have the chance to earn bachelor's and graduate degrees are doing just that, thanks in part to remote video classes powered by Polycom® RealPresence® Video Solutions.

More than 100 video classes per semester are offered by Western Kentucky University (WKU) at five regional campuses and its main campus in Bowling Green. Offering interactive, face-to-face instruction, the classes allow students to take courses that aren't offered at their local campuses. This extends WKU's four-year college experience to more students in more places, and saves students the costs and time required to commute to Bowling Green.

- More area college graduates means a better educated local workforce that can earn more, spend more, and generate jobs in economically struggling communities.
- Replacing driving with video collectively saves students nearly US\$1 million in fuel costs annually and 5 million miles of driving. Less driving also means reducing carbon emissions by nearly 2,000 tons a year.



“Many of our students have jobs and families, so they can’t come to Bowling Green and live in a dorm. They’re anchored in their hometowns. Without this service, they might not be able to obtain that education.”

Tamela Smith, Communication Technologies, Manager – Interactive Video Services Western Kentucky University

Delivering not just video, but a future

Every week, WKU delivers 900 hours of instruction through Polycom® RealPresence® video solutions. BT Conferencing is a highly-valued partner who provides quality support for WKU, when it comes to purchasing Polycom equipment. Instructors use the video network to offer over 100 courses per term, some with as many as 60 students participating. Courses range from core English and math classes to advanced studies aimed at doctoral candidates.

“Many of our students have jobs and families, so they can’t come to Bowling Green and live in a dorm,” says Tamela Smith, WKU’s manager of the university’s Interactive Video Services (IVS) group. “They’re anchored in their home towns. That’s why we need to provide the course content to them with Polycom RealPresence video. Without this service, they might not be able to obtain that education.”

By giving more students an opportunity to earn four-year degrees, Smith argued, WKU contributes to the emergence of a professional workforce that is more likely to drive growth in their hometowns by purchasing a home or starting a business. “These students graduate and become economic engines all by themselves,” she said. “They earn more, buy more, donate more, and contribute more.”

Conservative estimates from WKU show the savings to students are substantial. Even if just half of the 1,378 regional campus students currently enrolled in IVS classes are spared a twice-weekly commute to Bowling Green, they collectively would save more than 38,000 hours of travel time, 5 million miles of driving, and nearly \$1 million in gas per year. The reduction in driving also prevents 780,288 kg of CO2 from being emitted into the environment.

A solution that delivers value, every day

Polycom® RealPresence® room video systems are integrated into 44 classrooms and conference rooms throughout the WKU system. Aside from the benefits to students, the university itself has saved thousands in travel expenses by using video to conduct first-round interviews of candidates for a variety of positions. The IVS staff, also has collaborated with WKU’s Career Services Center to let students interview for jobs with potential employers. The university even leases its video systems to local businesses for customer and board meetings and legal depositions.

WKU worked with BT to select its video collaboration platform. “We’ve built a close working relationship with BT Conferencing and Polycom,” says Smith. “For more than seven years BT has provided consistent quality of service; they’re responsive, provide great support, and they’re always willing to work with us and to share their expertise. Whatever I need, even if it’s just good advice, I know I can always go to BT.”

Partner

BT Conferencing

www.btconferencing.com



Product Listing

Video Collaboration Environments

- 40+ Polycom® RealPresence® Room (HDX® series)
- Polycom® RealPresence® Desktop (CMA® Series)
- Polycom® RealPresence® Mobile for iPads and Android tablets

Universal Video Collaboration

- Polycom® RealPresence® Collaboration Server (RMX® 2000 Series)

Video Resource Management

- Polycom® RealPresence® Resource Manager (CMA® Series) software for scheduling, managing and provisioning calls

Video Content Management

- Polycom® RSS™ 4000 for recording, streaming and playing back video calls

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BT provided the video endpoints, audio-video equipment, 24/7/365 helpdesk support, and maintenance by 100 percent Polycom-certified staff. The result is easy on users, too. “With our faculty, there’s never a discussion of endpoints or codecs or connectivity,” said Hughes. “Connections are made automatically via the Polycom® RealPresence® Platform, allowing faculty to concentrate on content, not the technology. “There’s a touchpad control in each room, and the faculty member simply taps it to turn the system on. We’ve worked very hard to make it simple and transparent for users, and BT and Polycom have helped us to do that.”

Expanding to mobile

With more faculty offering video-based classes, WKU is expanding its use of Polycom® RealPresence® Mobile environments, which bring HD video collaboration to iPads and Android tablets and give instructors the freedom to teach class from home or the road.

And as WKU expands its horizons and collaborates beyond its own network, Smith says Polycom’s support for open industry standards will ensure that everyone can participate: “Polycom plays well with others.”

Learn More

To find out more, visit us at www.polycom.com or speak with a Polycom Account Representative.

About Polycom

Polycom is the global leader in standards-based unified communications (UC) solutions for telepresence, video, and voice powered by the Polycom® RealPresence® Platform. The RealPresence Platform interoperates with the broadest range of business, mobile, and social applications and devices. More than 400,000 organizations trust Polycom solutions to collaborate and meet face-to-face from any location for more productive and effective engagement with colleagues, partners, customers, specialists, and prospects. Polycom, together with its broad partner ecosystem, provides customers with the best TCO, scalability, and security for video collaboration, whether on-premises, hosted, or cloud-delivered. Visit www.polycom.com or connect with Polycom on Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn.

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