



CUSTOMER

Oxford Community Schools

INDUSTRY

K12 Education

LOCATION

Oxford, MI

SIZE

8 Schools serving
4,595 students

In 2011, Oxford Community Schools (OCS) in Oxford, Michigan started looking for a better way to manage its media storage. As Tim Throne, Executive Director of Strategic Initiatives & Technology, puts it, “We had, in all of our buildings, an old analog system that quite frankly, just didn’t work anymore.”

When the district started looking for a new system, three key points were identified. OCS wanted a media storage system that allowed it to maintain the rights on the district’s content, allowed for centralized digital signage and allowed it to use content in the manner it chose.

In the end, OCS chose MediaCAST. “For everything that we were looking at doing and the capabilities within the various products, we felt that MediaCAST delivered the best value for our dollar,” remarked Throne. In addition to the value MediaCAST provided, Oxford Community Schools felt that Inventive Technology, the company behind MediaCAST, would be able to provide a true partnership with the district in which each would bring value to the other.

Oxford Community Schools opted for a VMware virtualized version of MediaCAST because it “allowed us to have more of a redundant, stable system,” explained Throne. To complement its MediaCAST digital content management platform, OCS chose to include Digital Signage, IPTV and OnLocation Carts.

RECORDING AND BROADCASTING

Through the MediaCAST digital content management platform, OCS teachers can upload and search media files including video, audio and more. One of their favorite features is the ability to record and save television programming. Through MediaCAST IPTV, the district is able to provide digital TV channels to every classroom in the district. Teachers are then able to schedule a recording of a desired show to support classroom lessons. Once recorded, the program shows up in the MediaCAST platform and, As Throne puts it, is “available in the repository so that other people can use that resource too, not just the one teacher that may have set up a certain science program to be recorded. Now it’s available for everyone to use.”

“Whatever [media] that we have rights to, it can be saved and uploaded and used for later retrieval [with MediaCAST].”

-Tim Throne

Executive Director of
Strategic Initiatives &
Technology

Creating a Partnership

When looking for a media storage solution, Oxford Community Schools wanted to find a company with which it could develop a partnership. As Tim Throne puts it, “We really wanted to develop partnerships whereby we could bring value to the company or the organization and, obviously, they could bring value to us.” They found that relationship with Inventive Technology, the company behind MediaCAST. “We really felt like [Inventive Technology] were the ones who were committed to, or had the same type of perspective of wanting to build a partnership or a relationship.”

This is an especially important feature when it comes to the district’s sister school program with China. Through this program, students participate in a virtual exchange program with another school in China. Some students participate virtually through online instruction and discussions while others are physically present in Oxford Community Schools. For this program, OCS uses digital materials and instruction, kind of like an online course, to teach both students in Michigan and students in China at the same time. MediaCAST is used to store the resources that teachers need in class such as documents, videos and images.

“We opened up our own virtual academy and the long term goal is to own our own courses. Whether that’s online courses or hybrid courses or, obviously, our face-to-face courses, we want to own those. And in order to do that, media and video and audio, and all those types of rich assets that can be used in a classroom, we needed somewhere to store them. We needed some type of mechanism by which teachers could search for all of the assets that we have out there,” says Throne.

SCHOOL YEAR IMPLEMENTATION

For students located on an Oxford Community Schools campus, digital signs are used to communicate important information including welcoming guests, sharing emergency weather updates and other school news.

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Oxford Community Schools is able to ensure it really is a district for the community by using OnLocation Carts to record important events around campus including athletic events, graduations and plays.

“We purchased [OnLocation] Carts at all of our buildings, so for special events, we can either broadcast them live or record them and then make those events available to people who either couldn’t attend or maybe they want to go back and look at them,” elaborated Throne.

Additionally, OnLocation Carts are used to facilitate professional development training. If there is a training that not all district staff are able to make it to, OCS can record the training and make it available at another time and location. With OnLocation Carts, teacher training is no longer restricted by teacher’s ability to be at a certain place at a certain time.

Oxford Community Schools was able to achieve its goal of creating a media repository for the entire district through MediaCAST. Now, both students and staff benefit from the updated, digital system.