

Pendleton County Schools

Pendleton County School District in Kentucky is comprised of 4 school buildings and serves a 2,650 population of K-12 students. In 2010, the district underwent a project to renovate their facilities. The renovation included new construction, upgrades to existing buildings and a refresh of classroom technology which focused on using streaming video as a teaching tool.



The Challenge: Implement a Digital Media Solution to Improve Learning



As part of the renovation project the district decided to upgrade their video distribution system for all classrooms. Prior to the upgrade, the classrooms were equipped with older VCR's and tuner cards that were used by the teachers to bring programming onto displays in the classroom. However, during the renovation, VCR's became missing or non-functional, standard definition (SD) televisions were becoming obsolete and digital media requests were becoming more popular with the staff. That kicked off the process of finding a digital streaming solution that would allow them to deliver media to all classrooms seamlessly over the existing Local Area Network (LAN).

The Solution: A VBrick Media Management Solution Funded through ERate

Michelle Crowley, CIO for the District, was first introduced to the VBrick EtherneTV (ETV) system at a tradeshow. Upon further research, she discovered that the VBrick solution may be eligible for funding through the Federal E-Rate program. The E-Rate program makes discounts available to eligible K-12 schools and libraries for telecommunication services, Internet access, and internal connections. Video equipment used for distance learning is eligible under what is known as Priority Two services and the VBrick equipment had already been pre-approved by the Universal Services Administration Company (USAC), the federal entity that oversees the E-Rate program. The E-Rate program was created through the FCC Telecommunications Act of 1996 to ensure that economically challenged schools and libraries have access to affordable telecommunications and information services.

Pendleton County Schools decided to implement the VBrick EtherneTV solution to provide streaming audio/video distribution to all 200 classrooms. The VBrick solution gives each classroom access to live and on-demand content such as TV channels, purchased media and self-created content. Teachers have individual control from their laptops, MAC's and PC's where they can select media content based on search criteria as it related to applicable curriculum. The content can then delivered over the local area network (LAN) where it is displayed via projectors to screens in each classroom. Self-generated content such as classroom lecture being recorded, a class play, sporting event or graduation can also be captured and uploaded to the system for on-demand playback.

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Additional functionality was also added as Pendleton invested in several VBrick Express kits – a portable streaming solution that consists of a camera, microphone, encoder, tripod and switch mounted in a travel case. Students can use these kits for special projects in classes and to webcast special events, student productions and guest speakers. “It is nice to be able to share a guest speaker among the entire student body without having to gather in one central location.” said Michelle.



The Pendleton students and staff have found the solution to be simple to use, easy to manage and full of endless possibilities as it pertains to media distribution and management. Additional applications are always being discovered, such as the ability to transfer older VCR tape libraries to the VBrick on-demand server. These assets can then be tagged, categorized and managed according to user permissions and copyright agreements thanks to the system's Teach Act compliance.

The Benefit: Improved Communication, Ease of Use and Expansion Possibilities



Students have other types of technology already available to them in the classroom, so the VBrick implementation was transparent to them. Teachers were very excited about the new media distribution system and immediately began using it to strengthen and deliver their curriculums.

The IDSolutions team installed and configured the solution in just three days and provided training to the Pendleton network administrator, media specialists, and teachers. “The installation and training went very well, we have been happy with the install.” said Michelle.

Michelle has a solid game plan and anticipates getting maximum use out of the system. She intends to fully utilize the existing system capabilities and resources as well as ensure that 80% to 90% of teachers are using the system on a regular basis. Future use plans include streaming morning announcements, board meeting recording, training session delivery and distribution of other important events.

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