



TAFE Queensland Masters Education Revolution with Managed Video Services

Organisation Background

TAFE Queensland is the largest provider of practical, relevant and quality education and training in Queensland, delivering educational excellence to around 230,000 students each year.

The organisation offers around 800 courses which are available through an extensive network of geographically distributed institutes - from Thursday Island in the state's north to the Gold Coast in the south.



Video Proves The Perfect Fit for Australia's Most Decentralised State

TAFE Queensland bases its Videolinq (TAFE Queensland's video network) strategy on the need to provide quality educational and communication outcomes to internal and external TAFE Queensland clients whenever and wherever they may reside. Video conferencing, video streaming and learning technology services support enhanced educational opportunities for off campus, distance and integrated educational delivery models.

To support its objectives of delivering quality educational and communication outcomes where location and time is not a factor, TAFE Queensland has partnered with Telstra iVision for more than 14 years. Considering Telstra iVision the expert in video conferencing and UC solutions this partnership has gone through many technology changes and refreshes. While PictureTel and Polycom technologies were originally deployed, TAFE Queensland has more recently consolidated its platform with leading-edge TANDBERG technology solutions.

As technologies and requirements have changed, Telstra iVision and TAFE Queensland have worked together to deliver on the objectives of the Videolinq network. With this in mind, the partnership has seen tremendous growth and constantly flourished.

Deploying Video for Better Education Outcomes

A major benefit of video conferencing for TAFE Queensland is that it supports the need for increasingly flexible teaching, allowing students to access courses that may not necessarily be available in regional areas.

For example, the Central Queensland campuses that are linked through video conferencing on a daily basis include Mackay, Rockhampton, Gladstone, Emerald, Biloela and Yeppoon. In addition, the remaining facilities at Blackwater, Moranbah and Longreach are also now being utilised more frequently enabling students in these remote locations to enjoy greater access to staff and course material.

"The number of videoconference hours within the network is steadily growing as groups of students in different locations connect to the same class. At the same time, video conferencing can unify smaller groups where there is less demand for particular courses, for example in specific trade classes such as Air Conditioning or Advanced Fitness," says Paul Crosisca, Manager of Videolinq at TAFE Queensland.

"The secret of video is in the immediate ability to connect with a teacher. Video is an inclusive technology which establishes a positive familiarity between teachers and the students. Teachers get an immediate response from their students by being able to see that their exact meaning and instruction has been interpreted correctly. This is critical with remote-based student interaction," says Crosisca.



The Solution

In recent years, TAFE Queensland has rolled out 40+ sites on the Videolink network using Telstra iVision's implementation and integration services. Through Videolinq, training and educational courses are delivered in real-time via video conferencing to groups of students wherever they may be located.

The key to Videolinq's ongoing operational success is Telstra iVision's managed services, which includes help desk support for end users and technical staff and conference reservation and booking services. As a result of these services, Telstra iVision has become a trusted supplier to TAFE Queensland with these services being offered for 14 years with the latest three-year contract signed between the two companies in the middle of 2009.

The technology areas overseen by Telstra iVision's managed service organisation are videoconferencing, videostreaming and web service technologies, all provided across multiple sites throughout Queensland.

For video conferencing, Telstra iVision manages a highly disparate network of video conferencing systems on the Videolinq network. This includes a range of Polycom desktop units, a suite of TANDBERG telepresence, portable set-top units and room-based video conferencing systems. Videolinq also has 150 licenses for connecting video conferencing lessons to students' PCs at home using TANDBERG Movi - a software-based video conferencing platform. This technology will have a wider implication for video conferencing delivery as more students can be connected without having to physically attend lessons at each campus.

At the same time, Telstra iVision supports TAFE's video streaming capabilities. While course presenters may include polls in their presentations, participants can email the facilitator directly with questions and comments. They can also manipulate the video audio levels and change the layout of the slides and skip between slides. Video streaming provides for a dual-screen interface with the presenter and slides side by side making for a compelling user experience.

Usage and Adoption Services - Results, Results, Results

Along with Telstra iVision's managed service offering, TAFE Queensland is also taking advantage of Telstra iVision's usage and adoption services. This service includes reporting on individual site usage and statistics, network and bridging utilisation, fault reporting and conference bookings and cancellations. These reports are collated and provided to TAFE Queensland on a quarterly basis.

"The reporting enables us to see trends and different usage algorithms which then allow us to review our charging models for the video conferencing service. As we gain our revenue based on student contact hours, the data enables us to extrapolate the amount of dollars allocated in regional educational usage. For example, if we know we conference in 25 students over a certain number of hours in three locations, we can better understand where our video revenue may come from in the future," says Croisica.

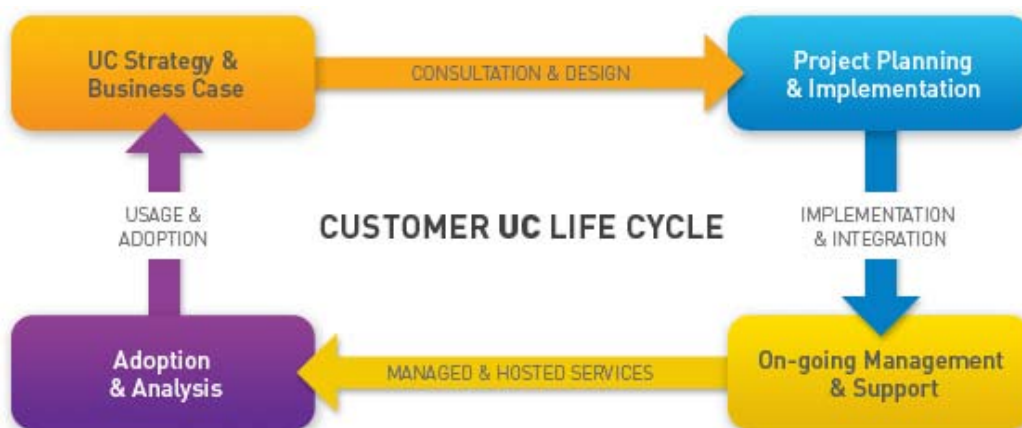


Over the past few years, TAFE Queensland has seen spectacular growth in usage of Videolinq, including a rise in the annual hours of usage of over 250% in the last eighteen months. Part of this increase is due to increased demand from TAFE administrators who increasingly use video for ad hoc meetings and internal communications.

At present, Videolinq provides the organisation with 25,000 transmission hours per year. In the first six months of 2009, it generated 248,000 student contact hours. Around four per cent of the video conferencing usage time is used for commercial use where TAFE Queensland can hire out rooms.

“In the future, we hope to incorporate VoIP and capitalise on the existing video capability with Movi and new features in IP telephony. As part of this program, TAFE Queensland will establish virtual meeting rooms for ad hoc conference capabilities, enabling students to meet and learn anytime.”

“Telstra iVision has been committed to TAFE Queensland and is willing to work to our specific requirements. Over the past decade, they have consistently driven our strategy and vision and we have enjoyed an outstanding relationship with them based on high integrity and exemplary capability. In 2010, we’ll increasingly strengthen our relationship with Telstra iVision to expand the network and review a next steps strategy for Unified Communications” says Croisca.



Key Services

Key Telstra iVision services used by TAFE Queensland:

- Implementation and Integration
- Managed Services
- Usage and Adoption

With every customer, Telstra iVision’s approach is always with service first, technology second.