



CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

Delivering Education Equality with Video Collaboration at Gippsland Trade Training Centres

Industry

Education

Solutions

- Polycom® RealPresence® Group Series
- Polycom® RealPresence® Utility Cart
- Polycom® RealPresence® Collaboration Servers
- Polycom® RealPresence® Capture Server



Gippsland is a rural region located in the south-east of Victoria in Australia. Covering an area of more than 41,000 square kilometres, Gippsland's geographic location means the community relies heavily on self-sustainability, with industry trades being the main source of employment for its more than 250,000 residents. Giving local residents the skills they need to enter the workforce is a challenge in the region where education resources are stretched. The limited number of vocational teachers accessible to students means many miss out on valuable hands-on experience. The region wanted to increase retention rates in schools and increase the participation in education by indigenous students by ensuring that everyone had the same access to education via a range of delivery modes.

Enabling education equality

Commonwealth Government funding has been provided to establish Trade Training Centres (TTC's) in South and West Gippsland. In 2012, West Gippsland was granted \$11 million in funding and in 2013 South Gippsland received \$7.7 million. The two organisations have pooled some of their funding to create a combined video conferencing network and the Interactive Learning Project. TTCs are consortiums of secondary schools and Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) located in the regions to expand the options for Vocational Education and Training In Schools (VETiS). The main aim of the consortiums is to address the skill shortage facing the region and to boost retention rates in schools by providing easy access to vocational learning and practical trade learning, which was previously not available to everyone in the region.

“Video is helping the community of Gippsland address the issue of skill shortage, extending our scarce educational resources to students across the region. We can now provide education equality to our students regardless of their location, ultimately enriching and strengthening our community and its resources.”

Rod Dunlop, Project Manager at Gippsland Trade Training Centres

To meet this need, the TTCs turned to Polycom for a comprehensive range of unified collaboration solutions, including Polycom RealPresence Group Series and Utility Carts, which were implemented across the participating education institutes in the consortium.



“Video is critical to achieving our vision of enabling equality in education. We were facing a shortage of vocational teachers and parts of Gippsland have a geographically dispersed population. It was difficult in some cases to provide students with the skills required for the workforce in an effective way through traditional methods of teaching. We had a small pool of experts spread out across the region and we wanted to leverage these resources for everyone. However, we didn’t want to add extra travel time and costs. Video provided us with an effective solution to help address these challenges,” commented Rod Dunlop, Project Manager at Gippsland Trade Training Centres.

Two-way interaction through video

Video collaboration solutions were integrated into classrooms and practical workshops within the participating educational facilities. Now, classes can remotely connect with vocational teachers who may be on a farm or in a commercial kitchen,

hundreds, if not thousands of kilometres away. Often the instructor is wearing a mobile, on-person camera, so the students are able to see exactly what the instructor is demonstrating. Programmes can be delivered across the two Gippsland regions using video connected classrooms. Additional mobile camera units complement this setting by providing multiple views of the workshop environment for students to witness practical demonstrations. So in addition to instructor views of the students as they complete their practical work, students are in a unique position to be able to demonstrate back to an instructor/other students a practical skill via these mobile workshop camera trolleys. This enables education facilities to provide consistently enriching educational experiences to students regardless of distance or location.

John Cargill, Project Coordinator at South Gippsland Trade Training Alliance commented, “With video we can now expand classroom reach from our immediate area to other schools in the region, interstate and even around the globe. The real-time, visual, personal interactions with the vocational teachers, also ensures students can get the most out of the classes. In addition, the blended learning model complements the hands-on learning experience the students receive and helps equip students with the skilled needed to enter the workplace.”

Education anytime, anywhere

In addition to live video collaboration sessions, the GTTC also incorporated Polycom RealPresence Capture Server and the RealPresence Media Manager. These solutions allow participants to stream, record and play back video sessions for students who may have missed a class, anytime, anywhere. This is an extremely important part of helping the consortium achieve its aim of providing equal access to education. Teachers are finding the recording tools useful to create a library of recorded modules for students. The ability to edit and playback recordings allows instructors to continuously improve their modules to create a valuable high quality education asset.

The West GTTC programme has been successful with more than 300 students participating in vocational classes over video in the last year alone. There has also been an increase in enrolments into VET courses as well as improved retention rates. Programmes in South Gippsland will begin in 2016 and schools are currently seeking expressions of interest from students wishing to participate in this exciting new initiative.

Dunlop concluded, "Video has really enabled us to not only enrich learning, but also our community and its resources. It is an extremely positive initiative, which will keep our children in the region and ensure a strong and sustainable community well into the future."

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