

How James Cook University reduced the cost and complexity of video at scale



The institution

Geography has always shaped the way technology supports teaching and learning at [James Cook University](#) (JCU).

With campuses and study locations spread across Queensland, Australia, and an international campus in Singapore, JCU has long relied on video to extend teaching beyond the physical classroom. Video is woven throughout the learning experience, making learning resources available to students wherever they are.

"Video is a huge part of what we do now," said **Toby Nutting, Learning Environment System Lead at JCU**. "It's really common now to see pretty much every content item have a video component in it."

When Nutting first began working with [lecture capture](#), recordings had to be moved between teaching spaces and hosted manually on a web server. The university later adopted Mediasite, which helped JCU eliminate the manual process and establish lecture capture more broadly.

"It did what it needed to do at the time," Nutting said. But as video became more important to teaching and learning, JCU's needs evolved.

The challenge: Making video sustainable at scale

"Part of the decision to change our video and lecture-capture platform was cost, but it was also about making sure the platform worked for everyone who relied on it, including students, academics and the staff responsible for keeping it all running," Nutting said.

5K

Videos deployed across JCU in 2026 alone

94%

Reduction in support tickets to JCU's learning systems team

30 seconds

Time it takes a recorded lecture to appear in the LMS

At a glance

Customer

James Cook University

Location

Queensland, Australia, with an international campus in Singapore

Industry

Research-intensive public university

Size

21,000 students

The university had a relatively small learning systems team responsible for approximately 25 different platforms. The right video solution needed to work well for academics and students and be manageable for a small team to operate and support.

JCU's previous lecture capture environment relied on dedicated recording appliances that, depending on the configuration, could cost tens of thousands of dollars.

The university also self-hosted its video environment, maintaining about 70 terabytes of video storage in its data center, plus equivalent capacity for disaster recovery.

As video use grew, JCU did not want the hardware, storage, and support burden to grow with it.

Why Panopto

As its existing contract approached renewal, JCU evaluated several alternatives.

"Ultimately, it came down to functionality and ease of use," Nutting said. "We needed something that would be simple for end users, align closely with our LMS, and make lecture capture easier for us to manage. So we evaluated our options, and Panopto was the best fit."

Strong [integration](#) with JCU's Blackboard environment was essential, along with permissions and role management that could organize video around academic subjects and courses. Panopto's [video content management system](#) gave the university the flexibility to connect its LMS and timetabling systems. JCU could also build its own business rules around how recordings were captured, organized, and published.

With this solution, JCU replaced specialized recording appliances and ran Panopto on standard computers in its teaching spaces. "Now our lecture capture process is much simpler and more cost-effective. We basically use inexpensive computers and hide them under a desk," Nutting said. "They run Panopto, they're covered by warranty, and they're cheaper."

"We didn't have to have managed hardware devices that only a few people knew about," he added. "These are just computers running software, so that was a big win."

Moving to Panopto also meant JCU no longer needed to maintain its own large-scale video storage and disaster-recovery environment.

Panopto customer since 2022

Use cases

Automated lecture capture, video creation and sharing, LMS-integrated video, video assessment

Removing barriers to video adoption

JCU had learned from its previous environment that extra steps involved in managing or publishing a recording could become a barrier for busy academics. With Panopto, the university connected lecture capture to its LMS and timetabling environment and automated the process from scheduling through publishing. JCU calls the model *low-touch lecture capture*.

When educators teach in a Panopto-enabled room, recording begins automatically, stops when the scheduled class ends, and publishes to the appropriate subject folder connected to the LMS.

"There is literally nothing an educator needs to do to have their lectures captured in Panopto," Nutting said. "They walk in, it turns on, it records. Time's up, it stops recording and uploads it to the subject folder, which is linked inside the LMS roughly 30 seconds after the educator finishes teaching. It's driven up the amount of video captured and improved the consistency with which it's available to students, which has been a meaningful improvement to the learning experience."

From lecture capture to everyday video

Approximately 5,000 Panopto videos have been deployed at JCU in 2026. Nutting says video is now routinely incorporated into learning content across the university.

Video created outside scheduled lecture capture is also increasingly housed in Panopto. Before the transition, educators often uploaded video files directly into JCU's LMS because that was easier than using the university's prior video service. But that approach contributed to a very large LMS storage footprint.

"People were just uploading video to the LMS because it was easier than using the alternative," Nutting said. "But Panopto makes it easier for them to upload, so everyone is happier with that."

Training has remained lightweight. JCU covers the core workflows most academics need in a single one-hour annual session: low-touch lecture capture, creating and uploading video, editing, publishing through the LMS and viewing analytics.

"It is a complex platform and has extensive capabilities, but it's an understandable complexity," Nutting said. "You can logic your way through how the thing is working, which frees up time for me and my team."

"There is literally nothing an educator needs to do to have their lectures captured in Panopto."

Toby Nutting

**Learning Environment System Lead,
James Cook University**

Lowering the ongoing support burden

Before Panopto, JCU's learning systems team fielded about 40 internal support tickets per week related to its previous video service. Today, that number is generally two or three. For a small team responsible for approximately 25 learning platforms, that is a significant reduction in the day-to-day work required to support video across the university.

Giving students reliable access to learning

JCU can also see how students are using the content once it is available.

"You can very clearly see in the stats that students use them for review in the lead-up to assessment," Nutting said. "And making it easier to capture and publish that content means more of that knowledge is there for students when they need it."

Views increase around relevant assignments and topics as students revisit particular explanations and concepts. Across JCU's distributed campus environment, that gives students reliable access to course content when they want to review, catch up, or prepare for an assessment.

Looking ahead

Several years after the transition from Mediasite to Panopto, video is now part of JCU's everyday learning environment.

The university is looking at how it can bring more recordings created through online teaching and collaboration tools into the same environment as classroom lectures and other learning resources.

"It's still very important to us that there's a platform that does what people want and that they can just get into and use," Nutting said. "Panopto has delivered exactly what we needed."

"We went from averaging 40 tickets a week for the old service to two or three. Even those two or three tickets are typically about JCU policies or workflows we've set up, rather than operating Panopto itself."

Toby Nutting

Learning Environment System Lead,
James Cook University

Interested in making video easier and more cost-effective to support across your institution?



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