

How the University of Pennsylvania Increased Video Usage Fivefold with Panopto



Between 2019 and 2025, Panopto enabled Penn to more than triple views and downloads (729K to 2.7M), grow unique viewers nearly fivefold (420K to 2.0M), and nearly double minutes of video delivered—without increasing staffing or operational resources—demonstrating scalable ROI without added cost.

When the University of Pennsylvania needed to modernize video content management, the institution didn't just select a platform; it pioneered a new approach to collaborative technology services that has become a model across campus.

Today, Panopto serves as Penn's unified solution for video management and lecture capture, fully integrated with the university's teaching and learning ecosystem. But according to **Eric Snyder, Sr. IT Manager for Unified Communications Services**, the real transformation runs deeper: "It's the first and the best example of a collaboratively managed service that we have on campus."

The Challenge: Different Schools, Different Tools

Penn's pre-Panopto landscape reflected common challenges at large universities. Different schools used various tools, including RealMedia, MediaSite, Apple products, and local servers, resulting in a patchwork

SUCCESS STORY STATS

4X

Views and downloads

5X

Unique viewers

2X

Minutes delivered

STORY SUMMARY

Customer

University of Pennsylvania

Location

Philadelphia, PA

Industry

Higher Education

of disconnected systems where data and expertise couldn't be shared, and resources were stretched.

Storage limitations and bandwidth constraints plagued the various solutions. Penn needed a platform that could scale, integrate with existing classroom technologies, and work across a decentralized institution with minimal demands on central IT resources.

The Implementation

Penn selected Panopto for three critical strengths: cloud scalability, ease of use, and robust integration capabilities. Moving from on-premises video management to the cloud marked new territory for the university, raising both expectations and pressure. Panopto proved worthy of its strong implementation reputation, guiding Penn through a process that was organized, efficient, and partnership-driven.

But Penn's implementation approach proved as innovative as the technology itself. Rather than central IT issuing a mandate, one school adopted Panopto first and then transferred its expertise to the central group. This collaborative model gave schools genuine ownership while accelerating campus-wide adoption.

As Snyder notes, this challenged traditional models: "Central computing groups are very control-oriented. With Panopto, we relied on our community of schools to help us administer it. Folks feel that they have a lot of ownership of the product across campus."

Seamless Workflow Integration

The automated integration between Canvas, Zoom, and Panopto transformed faculty workflow. Faculty schedule courses in Canvas, Zoom provisions meetings automatically, and Panopto captures recordings without manual intervention. Faculty work within familiar interfaces, as Snyder explains:



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Eric Snyder

Sr. IT Manager, Unified Communications Services,
University of Pennsylvania

"They don't have to be experts in Zoom, they don't have to be experts in Panopto. They have one panel they're familiar with."

This integration elegantly handles Penn's complexity. Different schools run separate Canvas and Zoom instances, but Panopto's deep and flexible integrations with role-based permissions accommodate these variations seamlessly.

Building Community

Penn supports faculty through video-based training resources, monthly user group meetings, and responsive IT support. The various formats align naturally with faculty work, enabling effective self-service and collaboration. Monthly sessions have become venues for sharing updates, discussing features, and strengthening the cross-campus community.

Panopto staff participate actively, and the company hosts regional user group events. As Snyder recalls from a recent customer user group session Penn hosted: "There were roadmap sessions, birds-of-a-feather discussions... it was nice to see the vendor so engaged with the campus community."

The Impact

Usage patterns reveal Panopto's role as an essential academic resource. Regular spikes before exams indicate that students are returning to lecture recordings to master detailed content. Without Panopto, Snyder notes, "students would be hard-pressed to recall the details they need" for success.

The platform has advanced accessibility significantly. Some schools record and caption every lecture, leveraging Panopto's unlimited scalability. Monthly reporting to the provost's office consistently shows high engagement, and user feedback focuses on advanced features, indicating that basic usage is friction-free and users are ready to explore more capabilities.

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Looking Forward

Snyder sees AI as central to Panopto's future value at Penn. As video libraries grow, AI becomes essential for helping students navigate content and identify exam priorities, while faculty need AI assistance managing their collections and deriving insights: "AI is going to be the only way to get a grip on all of that varied content and derive useful information from it."

Panopto's commitment to continuous innovation, particularly around AI capabilities, aligns with these needs. Beyond the roadmap, Snyder values the vendor partnership: "The people at Panopto are great to work with. The vendor is very responsive... and gives good roadmap sessions, so you know what's coming out in the future."

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The Bottom Line

With Panopto, Penn transformed video from a technical challenge into a unifying force for collaboration, academic impact, and innovation. The platform's technical capabilities, seamless integration, unlimited scalability, ease of use, and genuine vendor partnership combine to create an ecosystem that empowers faculty, supports students, and enables continuous innovation.

For Snyder, this combination makes Panopto an easy recommendation: the technology works, the vendor listens, and the collaborative model gives the entire community ownership of success.

Find out how Panopto can benefit your institution

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