Running Interactive Virtual Classrooms in Times of Physical Distancing

Summary: Coronavirus has brought the world to a grinding halt. It has also threatened the academic progress of students who find themselves locked in their homes, unable to meet their teachers and classmates. Fortunately, several educational institutions have realised the value of online collaboration platforms in this environment. They are adopting conferencing solutions to disburse knowledge in virtual classrooms, ensuring that their students have a holistic learning experience.

The unprecedented situation created by the coronavirus pandemic resulted not only in restrictions on travelling and commercial activities but also on long-term closure of schools and colleges. All educational institutes in Covid-19 affected countries had to shut down their campus for the safety of their students and staff.

Even as the uncertain duration and rules of lockdown made it impractical for students to venture out of homes, schools had to devise a strategy to maintain the continuity of learning. Like enterprises in most other industries, they too leveraged the digital collaboration technology to bring their students and teachers in virtual classrooms.

The major challenge in using these systems is their multiplicity, feature complexity and security concerns. What the schools need is a high-definition video-conferencing application that comes with easy-to-use interactive elements and simplified administration. They must spend more time in delivering knowledge than in managing the intricacies of a software system.

Webcasting

Tata Tele Business Services (TTBS) delivers Webcasting solutions to organisations that need to communicate with a large audience and give them a consistent experience of participating in an online event. It is a user-friendly tool for schools that need to schedule regular classrooms for the students locked in their homes.

Here are some features that make Webcasting an investment-worthy digital tool for the education industry that is adapting itself to the changing condition of our world:

Ability to communicate with a large audience

The TTBS Webcasting allows users to connect with a big group audience. It may be an individual classroom of a few pupils with their teacher, or the school principal addressing the entire assembly of students, the Webcasting solution is an effective communication channel for groups. It can be used to organise meetings with up to 5,000 people and takes less than a minute to involve everyone in the broadcast.

Freedom to use any device and accessory

As a fully-automated, DIY cloud-based conferencing service, the TTBS Webcasting solution allows users to join meetings through any digital device. They can connect their existing video conferencing units, webcams, microphones, headsets and other computer/smartphone accessories to participate in the discussions.

Teachers can use PPT presentations, images, videos, and scanned copies of handwritten notes to explain concepts relevant to their subjects. The Webcasting system supports multiple video file types including .flv, .f4v, .mp4, .wmv, .mpeg, .3gpp, and .webm. Teachers can also create downloadable PDFs of their slides for the class.
Student can mute their individual lines to cut out noise when the teacher is speaking and can get their doubts cleared whenever required. On a single URL, they can view live presentations shared by the teacher.

**Ease of evaluating the success**

Conducting online classes for a prolonged duration is a new experience for most schools and their students. While the teachers can keep track of every child’s attendance and academic progress directly in the school using traditional methods, they are unsure about the effectiveness of such systems when the students are away from them.

The Webcasting tool has special features to eliminate such hurdles. It lets a teacher mark error-free attendance for every student whose unique ID becomes active on the system. She can assign projects, conduct surveys, ask questions, and initiate group discussions in real-time to keep everyone engaged.

Parents can also get involved in the teaching-learning mechanism and play a more active role in their child’s school life. Webcasting is a convenient way to conduct parent-teacher meetings (PTMs) regularly and keep them in the loop on the school’s ongoing and upcoming activities.

**Keeps the virtual class secure**

When minors use digital devices, it is natural for parents to worry about their security and the integrity of systems used by them. The rising number of cybercrimes and fraudulent online activities during Covid-19 has intensified the fear of parents whose children attend online cases.

Webcasting has been, therefore, designed thoughtfully for users at all levels. It is a secure application wherein every page runs over SSL (https://) technology. This implies an encrypted link between the server and the client, eliminating the possibilities of unauthorised parties prying into the system.

This web conferencing service also has password-protected login and schools can add a unique URL key to the attendee link for further security.

While the entire platform is easy and safe to use, a trained team of associates at TTBS is also available for a quick resolution on any issues.

**Preparing for the future**

The disruptions created by coronavirus did seem upsetting for all stakeholders in the education industry. They shattered a teaching model that had worked for decades.

However, built with appropriate blocks, virtual classrooms can be as realistic as traditional classrooms. Indeed, they offer more flexibility in delivering knowledge while giving teachers and learners a rich collaborative experience. Schools can cover their curriculums with engaging communication through open discussion boards, polls and multimedia content. They can train students for the e-learning mechanisms that will be commonplace in the professional life of the future.

If you wish to deploy the TTBS Webcasting solution for your school or coaching classes or need more information on the product, do call us at 1800-266-1800.