

CASE STUDY

Stevenson Simplifies Distance Learning Using BlueJeans' Meeting Versatility

Developing online programs and identifying tools to virtually extend and advance classroom connectivity is what Stevenson University does. Needing to facilitate first rate distance learning and enhance university-wide communication, former Chief Information Officer, Steve Engorn set his sights on finding a premier video conferencing software platform. The result would be broader program offerings and easier accessibility for students and professors alike, no matter their endpoint or location. In essence, “a tool to communicate with everyone,” says Engorn.

Easy to Use, Easy to Integrate SaaS Meetings

Originally, Stevenson used WebEx for internal collaboration, but encountered ongoing limitations, including no single sign-on, no recording feature, and attendee join restrictions — a logistical nightmare for organizers. Following a successful 6-month demo in 2009, Engorn, in tandem with faculty, department chairs, and program coordinators, slowly rolled out BlueJeans across Stevenson University Online, formally known as Stevenson's School of Graduate and Professional Studies. During this phase, Engorn used a second device to evaluate the experience from the students' vantage point.

Prior to being introduced to students, BlueJeans was used for recurring faculty and academic meetings. Initially, this meant sending emails to attendees with instructions on how to join. Early meetings involved demonstrations on features like screen sharing and recording. Attendees picked it up quickly, resulting



Industry: Education

Challenges: Expand available distance learning programs for working students.

Provide easier video call accessibility for students and professors, regardless of endpoint.

Solutions: BlueJeans livestreams interactive lectures and supports traditional classroom activities via multiple devices and endpoints.

BlueJeans' interoperability connects users through existing, multi-vendor room hardware.

Results: Highly accessible, easy to use meetings via any endpoint for students and faculty.

Maximize traditional video hardware and streamline distance learning with platform integrations and interoperability.

BlueJeans' 24/7 support for assorted video call and livestreaming scenarios.

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in a seamless transition to the new meetings platform. The only feedback received involved user error or spotty bandwidth causing connectivity issues. “BlueJeans has been really helpful — in every way possible — to make meetings easy to use, easy to integrate, and more effective, so we don’t have to worry about the technical side,” explains Engorn. Now, hundreds of faculty members use BlueJeans every month.

Multi-Party, Multi-Device Online Learning

Originally, Stevenson’s online program was the brainchild of Stevenson’s former president, who envisioned broader course offerings and easier student accessibility, allowing working students to earn degrees. The goal was to provide online courses for every program. According to Engorn, “that’s where BlueJeans really flourished.” With BlueJeans, professors teach while students attend class from anywhere, using the device or endpoint of their choice.

BlueJeans worked so well that one professor held her residency program in Stevenson’s distance learning classroom (outfitted with a traditional Polycom endpoint) while hosting a guest speaker, located in Guantanamo Bay. The guest speaker shared PowerPoint slides with the class and engaged them in interactive discussions, like

she was standing in front of the class. This dynamic really enhanced her residency. With the support of BlueJeans’ customer team, it marked the first time a Stevenson professor livestreamed a class through the Polycom platform. “The BlueJeans support team was phenomenal,” offers Engorn.

Unrivaled Support for Today’s Connected Classrooms

Versatile and easy to access, BlueJeans connects students and professors for biology, forensic science, and coding classes, as well as faculty orientation, Board of Trustee meetings, career service appointments, summer abroad student coordination, and even commencement for those unable to travel. In some instances, professors record lectures or virtual lab demonstrations for easy playback. This practice has been replicated for additional courses. “It’s been phenomenal,” Engorn asserts. “We’ve had so much success using the various options to connect while maintaining faculty to student engagement in online courses.”

On one occasion, an instructional designer was presenting to group of remote students via BlueJeans. One of them couldn’t hear the meeting audio. After being notified,

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Engorn called customer support and asked them to analyze the call’s audio quality. Support reported the audio on the student’s computer microphone was broken. After being informed, the student had the microphone in their hardware replaced.

BlueJeans’ support team has been so impressive that Engorn encourages students to call if they encounter difficulties. “If we were to look at another product, with everything being equal, I have a hard time believing that their customer support could do the things BlueJeans does. The level of care is never compromised. To me, that puts BlueJeans above the rest,” he adds. Satisfied with finding a SaaS-based conferencing tool that does so many things and runs from anywhere, Engorn concludes, “we’re not just buying a video conferencing service, we’re partnering with an organization. To me, that’s the difference.”

ABOUT STEVENSON

Founded in Maryland as Villa Julie College in 1947, Stevenson University is a private university located in Baltimore County, Maryland. The name was changed to Stevenson University in 2008.

Stevenson University has two campuses, one in Stevenson and one in Owings Mills. The university enrolls approximately 3,615 undergraduate and graduate students. Stevenson University Online offers master’s, bachelor’s, and certificate programs for working professionals.