



Rhode Island Legislature Goes Online with DEVOS

Capitol TV is an arm of the Rhode Island Legislature charged with broadcasting House, Senate, committee meetings, and special events. Organized as a conventional, small TV station, Capitol TV shares a statewide cable TV channel with other local broadcasters. Of course, the state's elected representatives don't schedule sessions around primetime hours when Capitol TV is available to local cable TV viewers, so watching live sessions was often impossible.

Moreover, Capitol TV produces hundreds of interview programs such as *Straight From The Gavel* and *Capitol Spotlight* where an elected official typically explains the background and details of issues important to citizens.

"Our cable TV schedule made it difficult to broadcast all live sessions and also make replays and interviews available during the hours when citizens wanted to view" said Derek



The Capitol TV team encoding live TV for the web

Hayes, Capitol TV General Manager. "But with streaming, we now have the capability to provide up to five live hearings and unlimited video-on-demand".

OPEN GOVERNMENT

The Open Government doctrine holds that citizens have the right to access proceedings of the government to allow for effective public oversight. Cable TV can help do that, but today's younger generation increasingly forego their parent's TV viewing habits in favor of viewing on smartphones, PCs, tablets, and over-the-top boxes like Roku. Open government is not just the ability to request documents, but the ability to see what the government is doing right now.

The Rhode Island government was certainly committed to open government, and needed a way to make it better, easy, affordable, and timely.

THE CHALLENGES

1. The RI state capitol needed to distribute its live video of legislative sessions to interested viewers inside and outside the capitol building for viewing on PCs, Macs, and mobile devices. Currently, the live video is only available on cable TV

End User

Rhode Island Capitol Television, Providence, RI

Application

- Distributing live video of the Rhode Island legislative sessions within the Capitol building and simultaneously on the Internet
- Recording legislative sessions and making them available for on-demand viewing

Discover Video Equipment and Service

- Discover Video Spirit Encoding Station
- Discover Video Rover Mobile HD Encoder
- Streamsie Software Encoder
- DEVOS Media Server Cloud Service



2. RI Capitol TV wanted to make recorded legislative sessions available on their website for on-demand viewing on any device.
3. There are locations in the Capitol building where TV coax cable is not available. Currently, there is no way to deliver live video from these locations. It is desirable to stream live video/audio from these rooms.
4. The IP-based video distribution system had to work over the existing capitol wired and wireless Ethernet network and not affect the IP connection to the internet.

THE SOLUTION

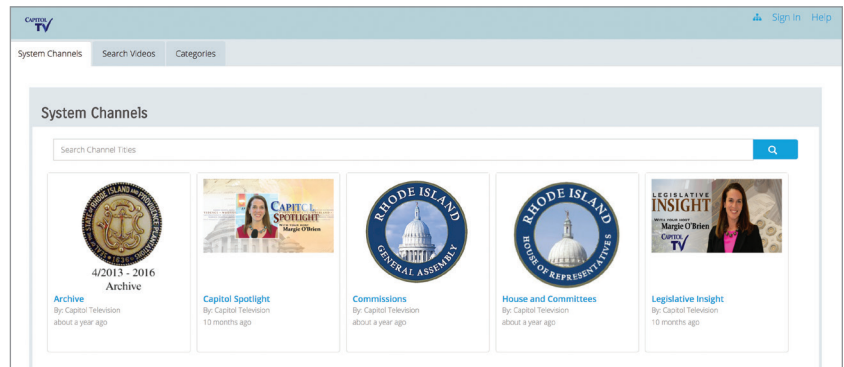
Capitol TV deployed a DEVOS system from Discover Video (discovervideo.com). They use the DEVOS cloud system for delivery to internal and Internet viewers. The system cost less than half of the cost of one staff member, including all software and hardware, encoders, servers, services, and installation.

It consists of a DEVOS Cloud service and multiple HD Video Encoders (Spirit and Rover). The DEVOS cloud media server receives live streams from the Spirit and Rover encoders and delivers them to interested viewers both inside and outside the capitol building. The streams are optimized for viewing on PCs, Macs, and mobile devices.

The H.264 Spirit and Rover encoders are used to stream the five live Capitol TV channels. The Spirit encoder uses the latest H.264 encoder which provides a high-quality stream from the control room. The Rover mobile encoders are used for delivering live streams from remote locations in the capitol building that are not connected directly to the TV station.

"Installation was pretty fast and easy, just a few hours" according to Hayes. "We have two fixed live encoders and two laptop 'Rover' encoders that allows us to produce live content from virtually anywhere. We simply start the encoders and we are on the air, and they simultaneously record and automatically upload the session for video-on-demand viewing. Then we add titles, descriptions, and other metadata to make searching fast and easy for our users".

There were a few bumps in the road. The Capitol TV staff were purely TV broadcasters and did not have much experience with online systems. Getting into the new workflow took a little time, but "it was remarkably easy." Discover Video provided onsite training and support.



Another group was charged with the integration of the online portal with the Rhode Island Legislator's website. Because the DEVOS system supports embed codes, the web developers decided to post the live video players independently of the video-on-demand listings and make other style choices.

Today the system has more than 5,000 VOD assets with new content added almost every day, five live channels, and 32 different collections. Viewing peaked during the legislative season in May 2013 with about 15,000 viewers.

THE BENEFITS

The Discover Video solution has allowed the RI legislatures and staffs to keep track of key sessions from their offices and from the outside the capitol building. To view a live session, they just go the RI Capitol TV webpage (rilin.state.ri.us/CapTV/) and click on the icon. Instantly the live feed is forwarded to them for viewing on any device. In addition, if they missed a live session, the legislatures and staffs can review it on-demand from anywhere.

In addition, Rhode Island citizens can view any session from any location. The video streams are compatible with computers and mobile devices. Recently, RI Capitol TV added the Roku feature, which allows anyone with a Roku box to watch the live or recorded content.

ABOUT DISCOVER VIDEO

Discover Video provides enterprise level streaming products and services. DEVOS is an award winning video platform for live streaming, video on demand, and digital signage. It is available for on-premises deployment (software and hardware) or as a cloud based service. The system can deliver thousands of live streams to any device and can hold thousands of hours of recorded videos for video on demand. Content is organized in folders (channels) so that viewers can find and watch selected sessions easily. It is used by education (k12 schools and universities), corporations, hospitals, and government agencies. www.discovervideo.com