



California's First Higher Education Institution Stays Ahead of the Remote Learning Curve with Matrox

The Matrox MaeveX 6020 Panopto-certified Remote Recorder makes Santa Clara University's campus-wide transition to virtual classrooms effortless



MaeveX 6020
Panopto-certified Remote Recorder

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Joel Bennett
Manager of media systems at SCU



Matrox MaeveX 6020 made Santa Clara University's (SCU's) mass deployment of lecture capture hardware effortless

Image courtesy: Santa Clara University (SCU)

From mission revival architecture to a revival of classroom AV hardware, Santa Clara University (SCU) has seen many changes since its establishment in 1851. With the early 2020 onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, California's oldest higher education institution was faced with the challenge of making a complete shift to remote learning – and without much warning. Thankfully, SCU's existing Matrox® MaeveX 6020 Remote Recorder appliance and Panopto™ video management system (VMS) lecture capture solution made it easy for the university to integrate MaeveX 6020 devices and deploy them quickly across all buildings, allowing SCU students and faculty to transition seamlessly from the classroom to the university's remote learning platform.

Searching for a sustainable solution

In 2016, SCU started using the Panopto VMS in combination with a Windows-based, computer-and-capture card solution that was built, imaged, and maintained by the university's media systems team. Not only did this solution require a tremendous amount of time to build and maintain in-house, it was also far too labor-intensive to manage with a small staff. Furthermore, unexpected updates and shutdowns of the systems made it particularly difficult for the team to maintain uniformity across devices. Lacking configuration for mass deployment software, the Windows-based solution required security and software updates that forced staff to manually update each system one at a time.

Three years later, the team began to realize that this solution was unsustainable in the long term and began to look for alternatives in order to save on time, resources, and cost. A turnkey solution that comes fully integrated with the university's existing preferred VMS, MaeveX 6020 turned out to be the perfect fit. Between the standalone appliance's ability to function without unexpected operating system updates, its configuration and firmware utility for centralized control of the devices, and its highly competitive price point with no reoccurring licensing fees, MaeveX 6020 was a clear choice. According to Joel Bennett, manager of media systems at SCU, MaeveX 6020 made a vast difference right away – from integration to deployment. "It is so much simpler," he said. "Once, the AV installers install the unit, I can do everything from my desk. Before, I would have had staff here, working, building, and installing. MaeveX 6020 has significantly reduced our workload."



Each common classroom and conference room at SCU is equipped with a MaeveX 6020 device



SCU leverages MaeveX 6020's dual Full HD streaming and recording functionality, and rack-friendly, quiet design

Seamless transition to remote learning

While MaeveX 6020 was the ideal match for SCU's streaming and recording needs since it first arrived on campus, its reliability and ease of integration became paramount to the university's remote learning transition in early 2020. Just after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in the U.S., the university was able to deploy 60 MaeveX 6020 units for a current total of over 100 appliances in just 30 days. Using the intuitive configuration and firmware utility, MaeveX 6020 made mass deployment effortless, allowing for the configuration and simultaneous setup of multiple units in record time. Now, every common classroom across all five academic colleges on campus is equipped with a MaeveX 6020 device, providing access to streamed classes and lecture capture recordings for the university's nearly 10,000 students.

MaeveX 6020 was helpful when we first acquired it, but when the pandemic hit, it became irreplaceable," said Bennett. "We were able to deploy several recorders in just a small amount of time. I do not think that we could have built and supported that many of our previous solutions in that time period. Matrox allowed us to focus our time and resources on other tasks because everything from the installation to deployment was so simple."

California streamin' (and recording)

SCU leverages MaeveX 6020's dual Full HD streaming and recording functionality by simultaneously streaming and recording all lecture videos and content in 1080p30 in order to match the setting on the hardware devices. The MaeveX 6020 device and Panopto platform are capable of streaming up to 1080p60 on one channel, and 1080p30 on the second if desired.

Stream and record operations are securely controlled by the Panopto Cloud VMS and scheduled ahead of time with the full capabilities of the Panopto software scheduler. Additionally, all Zoom meetings are streamed as a backup in the event that the Zoom live stream fails.

Each classroom is equipped with a single camera in the back of the room as well as a ceiling microphone that picks up audio from both the students and faculty. Course content is provided by an in-room Mac or PC, or a faculty member's personal laptop, which is fed into a switcher device. On the MaeveX 6020, the camera is fed into HDMI 1, the switcher is fed into HDMI 2, and the audio is fed into the analog input. SCU is also leveraging the MaeveX 6020's HDMI zero-latency pass-through output to connect an HDMI-to-USB bridge to convert the audio and video into USB for Zoom calls.

Grade-A tech support

Instances where Bennett and his team needed to contact Matrox technical support were met with trusted Matrox speed, efficiency, and attention to detail. According to Bennett, the service he received allowed him to quickly feel supported and at ease with the equipment. "From the beginning, Matrox was incredibly responsive," said Bennett. "I've dealt with a lot of technical support groups and I've never experienced one like Matrox. It was very clear that they were taking our inquiries seriously, wanted to understand them, and they were a high-priority to address."

The ideal distance learning solution

For now, MaeveX 6020 remains an integral part of SCU's remote learning strategy, but it will not be going anywhere when students come back to campus. With plans to add over 40 new units to its lecture capture setup, including one unit for each classroom and conference room in its new academic building, Bennett and his team at SCU could not be happier with MaeveX 6020. According to Bennett, the multi-site control and maintenance of MaeveX 6020 has made everyone's workdays significantly easier. "For any school in need of a remote learning system, I highly recommend the MaeveX 6020 and Panopto combination," he said. "The difference this solution has made compared to our previous one is like night and day." MaeveX 6020's easy, plug-and-play setup, high-quality streaming and recording capabilities, and whisper-quiet operation make it the ideal remote recorder for SCU network administrators, faculty, and students alike.

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