



## Carlow University – Pittsburgh, PA

### Making Student Recording More Efficient

#### Overview

For years, Carlow University, a Catholic liberal arts university located in Pittsburgh, PA, used mobile carts to provide the AV technology needed in their classrooms. When the benefit of mobility was overshadowed by the lack of reliability and efficiency due to dead batteries, missing and broken cables and lack of programming capabilities, Carlow University sought a new solution to their classroom AV needs.

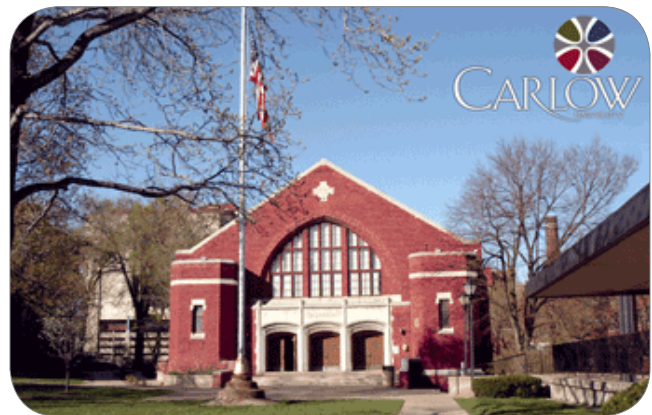
#### A more efficient solution was needed

The team at Carlow began their search with one thing in mind; finding a solution that worked efficiently and easily. As part of their graduation requirements, each student creates an electronic portfolio and maintains it throughout his/her tenure at the university. Included in this portfolio are specific writing samples, research papers and video clips of speeches given in class.

Each student is required to upload at least two videos during the first two years at Carlow, and some degree programs require more. Because of this, demand for recording resources was high and it was imperative for the AV carts to be set up and ready to record at a moment's notice.

According to Katie Bartus, Manager of Technical and Media Services, "Our AV cart had a camera, a copying device for students to burn CDs, a microphone and a VCR so that they could record a back-up tape, along with other hardware and wires connecting everything. The VCR had to be set to a certain channel to record, the camera had to be turned

on, the mic connected correctly and batteries all working. There was plenty of opportunity for technical failure." Dr. Linda Schifino, Assistant Professor of Communication Studies adds, "My biggest difficulty was with the time it



took to process the speeches. We had to interrupt the class after each speech and wait an indeterminate amount of time for the CD to burn, wasting valuable class time. There was so much lag time between speakers that I couldn't keep the class moving." Reliability of the

finished product was also an issue. “Another difficulty I had was when a student would lose their CD or it became corrupted. There was no way I could give them another copy.” States Schifino, “It was very frustrating for the student and for me.”

Karen Sturgeon, Assistant Vice President of Information Technology states, “We knew it was time for an upgrade. These videos are such a necessary part of our students’ academic requirements and we had to make sure that they could record and easily obtain copies for practice and for their e-portfolios.”

### **MediaPOINTE was the right choice**

After evaluating many possible solutions, Carlow decided to purchase Advanced Media Design’s MediaPOINTE Digital Media Recorders (DMRs) with CopyMe! functionality, allowing students to create their own copies of self-produced videos, lecture notes and presentations quickly and easily.

“We have permanently installed MediaPOINTE DMRs in two classrooms, along with ceiling mounted cameras and microphone units in the podiums.” States Sturgeon, “It’s positively changed the way we record and distribute videos.”

“Carlow University needed a simple solution to a complicated problem and we knew our DMRs would fit the bill,” adds Gareth Wade, Vice President of Sales and Marketing at AMD, “The installation was quick, training was easy and they’re satisfied with our all-in-one, non-cart based resolution to their issue. We are pleased that we were able to meet their AV requirements. “Bartus adds, “It was critical that everything was permanently mounted and easy to use. We found that with MediaPOINTE.”

MediaPOINTE’s technology is extremely user-friendly, allowing instructors to simply press a single button to start recording. At the conclusion of the presentation, students

simply attach a USB drive or insert a recordable CD, press a button and walk away with a copy of their presentations for later review and uploading to their portfolios.

Sturgeon states, “It is so convenient for our students. They can use different types of media, flash drives or CDs and it’s effortless. The digital format is simple for students to upload, and the critique process is easier for our academic reviewers.”

### **Teaching the Teachers**

One of the most challenging aspects to introducing new technology on campus is gaining approval and adoption by the teaching faculty. “In the past, I didn’t have much time to train our instructors and we used to have a lot of technical problems.” Bartus states, “The MediaPOINTE products are so easy for the faculty to use, that I have taught two 15 minute sessions to a group of instructors and that’s all it took. I haven’t had any issues since we installed the systems.”

“I was wary at first,” added Dr. Schifino, “and I even made a backup of every speech at the end of each class, just in case a student misplaced his/her flash drive or CD. After a while, I realized that step was unnecessary because each speech is recorded on a master file. I have been able to retrieve any student’s speech quickly and easily. It is so much easier than it used to be.”

### **Thinking ahead**

Identifying other applications for MediaPOINTE has been easy for the folks at Carlow. There are many degree pro-grams that would benefit from recordings of speeches, presentations and other situations. “In fact, we’re considering these technologies for other degree programs.” States Sturgeon, “For example, our students can record mock counseling sessions for a counseling degree, or mock interviews for our career services area.”