

Emerging Trends in State Webcasting: A cost savings model for government agencies

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- Michigan programs faced decreasing state and federal funding, a shrinking pool of workers and expanding business needs
- The Michigan Public Health Institute (MPHI) identified webcasting as a cost-effective method to meet the state's health communication challenges
- MPHI now uses Mediasite® to rapidly and cost-effectively create webcasts for multiple agencies including Michigan Department of Information Technology, Michigan Department of Community Health and Michigan Department of Treasury
- Webcasting enables Michigan to reduce travel, enhance services and boost outreach and training
- Results include improved workforce performance, anytime-anywhere access to information and rapid ROI
- The Michigan Department of Community Health tracked savings of at least \$80.00 per viewer for a typical webcast, for a total of \$420,400 savings from 19 webcasts to date

In this white paper

The Michigan Public Health Institute (MPHI) recognized the need by state agencies to use webcasting to translate, communicate and coordinate information and services in an array of program areas. Public sector use of webcasting (the streaming of audio, video and visual aids over the internet for live or on-demand viewing) is growing. With its Interactive Learning Center (ILC), a state of the art conference facility, the MPHI is now uniquely situated to scale up its webcasting services as part of an integrated technology approach to knowledge sharing and information exchange.

The mission of the MPHI is to provide high quality education and training to the public health workforce. Under that umbrella, MPHI's Interactive Solutions Group (ISG) helps healthcare organizations and public sector agencies operate more effectively and efficiently by automating their information exchange.

Challenge: counteracting reduced funding for outreach and training with webcasting

The growing sense of urgency by state agencies to adopt web-based training and communication solutions was fueled by a significant budget deficit and reduction in funding for many workforce learning and performance related activities. In particular, MPHI's customers, Michigan Department of Community Health, Department of Treasury and Department of Information Technology, faced decreasing state and federal funding, a shrinking pool of workers and expanding business needs.

MPHI identified webcasting as a cost-effective method to meet many of the state's health communication challenges. As an established educational partner for many state and local agencies, MPHI believed offering webcasting was an effective way to enhance both the distance communication and blended learning technologies already in place.

Michigan's webcasting platform:

Mediasite® by Sonic Foundry® is a comprehensive rich media webcasting and content management platform.

- automatically webcast lectures, training and briefings, including video, audio and presentation graphics
- generate interactive media-rich presentations that can be immediately viewed via the web
- presenters share knowledge with no change to their presentation style
- viewers can watch live, on-demand or listen to podcasts on the go

MPHI required a solution that would rapidly and cost-effectively create, disseminate and manage searchable streaming content. The government agencies that were relying on MPHI to provide a continuum of learning services also expressed the need for rich media webcasting: online presentations that synchronize video, audio and digital graphic images.

In 2006, they selected Mediasite® by Sonic Foundry, a comprehensive rich media webcasting and content management platform. Mediasite streamlines the capture and distribution of multimedia presentations for people who need to share their information or message with others. Mediasite captures all the elements of a multimedia presentation, including video, audio and presentation graphics, and combines these into an interactive media-rich presentation that can be immediately viewed via the web. Presenters share their knowledge online without changing how they normally present, and viewers can watch the presentation live, on-demand when it is more convenient for them or listen to podcasts on the go.

MPHI then invited current and potential customers to an open house to learn how other local and state government customers, including the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, were using Mediasite for public health outreach, workforce management and training. Wisconsin representatives presented data on their initial evaluation and cost benefit per Mediasite presentation, indicating that the state saved an average of \$8,500 per training event, generating \$850,000 in cost savings in their first year alone.

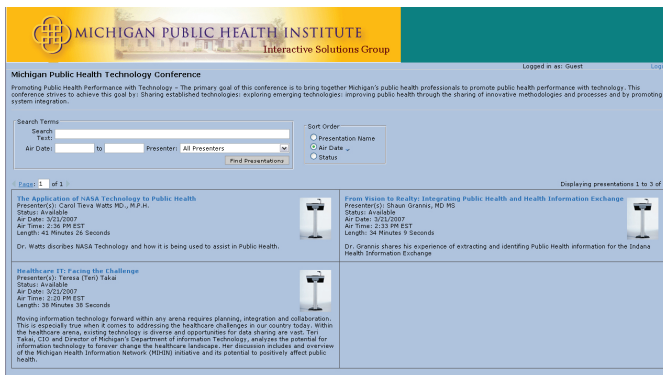
After implementation, MPHI acknowledged one of their challenges is overcoming customer reluctance to try webcasting due to lack of familiarity with the platform and how it works. For example, many agency workers fear that unless they can perfect their video recording with seamless transitions and no misspoken words, they must redo the presentation repeatedly, according to Larry Doele, director of the ISG at the MPHI.

"In reality, people don't care if the speaker stumbles over their words – they just want the information and to move on," said Doele. Fortunately, the ILC at MPHI has state-of-the-art communication technologies, including a tele-prompter, to help alleviate some of the on-camera jitters and support their customers' desire to create and disseminate polished and effective education, training and communication products.



Solution: using webcasting to reduce travel and enhance services

MPHI now supports webcasting services for a growing number of state agency customers that require rapid and cost effective dissemination of information and knowledge.



> Reducing the need for travel.

Teri Takai, the CIO of the Michigan Department of Information Technology (DIT), has relied on Mediasite to share her message as the President of the National Association of State Chief Information Officers (NASCIO) and Chair of the Harvard Policy Group. When Takai was invited to give the welcoming address to the Harvard Policy Group she was unable to make the trip in person due to a schedule conflict. She worked with MPHI to record her four-minute welcome address in under an hour, thereby saving herself and taxpayers both time and travel costs, yet meeting the communication goals of the conference coordinators and attendees. Takai noted, "MPHI was able to work with us to turn around this communication piece from start to finish in just an hour and a half so we were able to meet the conference's deadline."

> Enhancing project management.

DIT also needed to capture and host on-demand Mediasite presentations targeted for departmental employees to provide an engaging and easy way to share knowledge on specific project management and security maintenance protocol. Employees can now access the knowledge library when they are on the job site, ready to apply the new information.

> Boosting outreach on policy and legislation.

The Michigan Department of the Treasury needed to translate new tax law information to business owners and their financial partners statewide as quickly and effectively as possible. Working with MPHI, Treasury staff recorded a live Mediasite webcast on the new tax laws, and then made the presentation available on-demand immediately after the session was over.

Michigan state agencies and programs using webcasting:

Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH)

- Michigan Care Improvement Registry (MCIR)

Michigan Department of Information Technology (DIT)

Michigan Department of Treasury (DOT)

Michigan Department of Education (MDE)

Michigan Public Health Institute (MPHI)

- Interactive Solutions Group (ISG)
- Interactive Learning Center (ILC)

Michigan Association for Local Public Health (MALPH)

Benefits of webcasting

- reduce the need for travel
- enhance project management
- boost outreach on policy and legislation
- train remote partners

The presentation also included links to PDF documents and other web-based reference materials. While only 14 constituents watched the live presentation, 768 viewers watched on-demand over the following few days and the state avoided additional costs for coordinating subsequent meetings or sending out supporting information. According to Mike Martin, Tax Specialist, with the Department of Treasury, "Given our current economic restraints, this low-cost method to get our message out became a viable alternative to providing training in costly geographical areas. We were able to reach an audience that was otherwise unavailable to us."

> **Training remote partners.**

The Michigan Department of Community Health (MCDH) works with MPHI to webcast training on the Michigan Care Improvement Registry to statewide users and administrators. MDCH regularly sends out a series of Help Desk programs that are viewed by over 70 partners each week, including pediatric physicians that provide immunizations and school nurses who check the system to verify student immunizations. This level of service contributed to Michigan's immunization registry being recognized nationally for its high rate of statewide use and support.

According to Brenda Fink, director of the MCDH Division of Family and Community Health, "We are constantly challenged to find ways to be more effective in developing and delivering training but at less cost due to the risk of losing funding. The emerging ability to do things through the use of the web is just an incredibly wonderful answer to all of these things. With Mediasite, we can do things much more cost effectively, but they are also far more effective."

Result: improved performance, expanded reach and rapid ROI

To date, MPHI has recorded over 77 webcasts with 8,973 viewers both live and on-demand. During this time, the Institute has documented significant benefits not only in cost-savings, but also in outreach and training outcomes.

> **Improved performance.**

With the reporting capabilities of the Mediasite system, agencies can begin to track and measure the impact and reach of their information and communication exchanges. For example, the Department of Treasury tracked the participation in their webcast on the tax laws for new business owners. The post survey indicated that viewers believed this would reduce their need to call the Department for further information on this topic. Similarly, MPHI has worked with agency customers to provide IT and web systems training for employees to drive workforce performance improvement.

MPHI attributes Mediasite's ease of use as a primary factor in its widespread adoption for training and outreach. Customer satisfaction surveys are conducted routinely, indicating that not only are government agencies pleased with the service and end result, but also they see value in expanding Mediasite use for additional business needs. In a recent survey, MPHI found that:

- 68% of customers were first time users
- 90% of customers reported clear and satisfactory visual quality
- 87% of customers reported clear and satisfactory audio quality
- 89% of customers considered viewing the archive of the webcast
- 96% of viewers would recommend using webcasting to a colleague

> **Expanded reach.**

By offering webcasts, training and conference sessions on-demand, Michigan agencies are now expanding 24/7 access to important information for individuals who were unable to attend a live or physical event. These on-demand presentations are automatically incorporated into a searchable content catalog that provides anytime, anywhere on-demand access to key topics and subject matter experts. Content can then also be secured; offered as a revenue tool within an e-commerce interface; integrated within a Learning Management System or made publicly available.

> **Rapid return on investment.**

MPHI determined their ROI, as well as that of their state customers, has been impressive. Using a simple formula, MPHI concluded the state saved \$80.00 per viewer for the typical live or on-demand webcast, based on the geographic distribution of state agencies and their target audiences. This conservative calculation factors in mileage and travel time only, and does not take into account the additional benefits of delivering training to the desktop while workers are on-the-job or providing 24/7 access to information, making it available precisely when employees are ready to apply it.

Michigan's results:

- improved worker performance
- expanded training reach
- rapid return on investment

**Michigan Department of Community Health
2006**

Webcasts	Viewers	Cost	Savings	ROI
19	3287	\$26,150.00	\$262,960.00	\$10.06

2007

Webcasts	Viewers	Cost	Savings	ROI
19	5255	\$26,150.00	\$420,400.00	\$16.08

ROI comparisons for 19 MDCH webcasts to date

How Michigan's program works:

- 1 Agencies pay \$50.00 per hour to record their own webcasts or a slightly higher fee to engage the services of MPHI's Interactive Services Group
- 2 If recording on their own for on-demand viewing, staff simply schedules a time, plugs in any presentation aids (laptop, PowerPoint®) and pushes record
- 3 For live webcasts, ISG's technical team assists with recording and production
- 4 Presentations are then available immediately for on-demand access via any web browser, no plug ins are required
- 5 For agencies with multiple recordings, staff may purchase a folder with a pre-set number of recording hours

Demand for webcasting is growing by the stakeholders, consumers and partners who require government information and services. In addition, consumers of the content are becoming increasingly web savvy and have now grown to expect that more information will be provided via webcast. Meanwhile, state agencies appreciate the benefits and cost savings they realize by not having to travel to state meetings in order to engage with the content or presenters.

Next steps: expanding service across the state enterprise

To meet the demand for webcasting from their customer base, MPHI invested in an enterprise server license that will allow them to host more content and increase their recorder inventory to better support content development for local and state agencies. Furthermore, MPHI incorporated a registration and payment system to enable conference or workshop registration for content to be accessed for a fee by end users.

The enterprise model MPHI will adopt incorporates a new pricing structure: each agency can do their own recording at one price or, at a higher rate, use the technical support services of MPHI's ISG to record the presentation. By doing their own recording, agencies will pay only \$50.00 per hour of recording time, vs. \$215.00 for MPHI's full-service recording support. Additionally, programs or departments may purchase a digital folder that will contain a set number of recorded hours to be managed and hosted by the MPHI team.

This cost savings model encourages agencies to identify those strategic planning, learning and performance improvement activities that could be most appropriately developed and delivered as a webcast. Once an agency has purchased a folder and determined which pricing model they prefer, staff can come into the ILC and do their own recording any time. The equipment is preconfigured so presenters only have to hit start/stop to record and then pay an hourly fee. If the Mediasite presentation will be a live webcast, then ILC's technical team will assist with the recording and provide them a discount.

MPHI anticipates this new pricing structure will generate more business for their services. The Mediasite server software allows MPHI to delegate administrative rights to individuals within the agencies who can then manage their own folder content and viewing rights as well as multiple folders by department and/or functional area.

MPHI's long-term plan is to support an enterprise webcasting model for the state of Michigan, where MPHI provides the production services and support for the Mediasite platform and state agencies can opt to host their content within MPHI's server environment or, as the Department of Information Technology is now exploring, on their own servers. One key advantage of this approach is that it does not increase the state's costs to increase use of the webcasting technology because the services are funded by existing program dollars.

By offering webcasting to support collaborative meetings in addition to an innovative pricing plan, MPHI anticipates local and state agencies to realize even greater ROI for their upfront investment in webcasting services. With Mediasite, MPHI's Interactive Learning Center is better positioned to meet the specific communication and knowledge sharing needs of not only its agency customers and their end users, but also Michigan residents statewide.



About the Michigan Public Health Institute

A full-service research, development, and educational institution, the Michigan Public Health Institute is a non-profit corporation created in 1990 to:

- *Maximize positive health conditions in populations and communities through collaboration, scientific inquiry, and the application of scientific health practices.*
- *Carry the voice of communities to health policy makers, scientists, purchasers, and funders.*
- *Advance community capacity to improve health, and reduce disparities among population groups and geographic areas.*

MPHI's vision is to be a unique public trust which will enable communities to apply state-of-the-art community health practices. Nationally, MPHI is one of several collaborative research and development institutes in the field of community health. Further, it is one of a select few that are pre-qualified, by virtue of a contract with the federal Health Care Financing Administration, to bid on high-priority projects related to improving health care in the U.S. For more information on other public health institutes, please visit www.nnphi.org.

The Institute was founded in 1990 by Michigan State University, the University of Michigan, Wayne State University, and the Michigan Department of Community Health. It is governed by a board of 12 directors, representing government, the partner universities, foundations, and others.



About Mediasite by Sonic Foundry

Mediasite® by Sonic Foundry is the only web communication and content management system that gives you the power to create affordable multimedia webcasts and the tools to manage and secure those presentations. Trusted by Fortune 500 companies, education institutions and government agencies, Mediasite transforms how knowledge workers receive vital information for program management, community outreach and online training.

At the push of one button, Mediasite automates the capture and delivery of multimedia presentations and lectures (combining audio, video and accompanying graphics) for either live or on-demand viewing via the web. The process is unobtrusive and instantaneous, requiring no time-consuming or costly production. Viewers access the information anytime, anywhere using nothing more than a standard web browser.

Learn more about Mediasite at sonicfoundry.com or call us at 877.783.7987. You can see how other organizations are using Mediasite by searching thousands of publicly-available presentations at mediasite.com.

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webcasting
program:

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