

TTU Rawls College of Business Client Success Story

TTU Rawls College of Business Sees Immediate Benefits in Mediasite Cloud Migration



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TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY Rawls College of Business

The vision statement of Texas Tech University's Jerry S. Rawls College of Business reads: "We solve problems facing business and society. We seek to better the world by creating and sharing knowledge and by educating and empowering students to become the next generation of business professionals and innovators."

Home to over 5,000 undergraduate and graduate students, the college is housed in a 140,000-square-foot, LEED-certified, state-of-the-art facility with breakout rooms, student lounges, study areas, career management center, and 22 classrooms that make innovation and knowledge sharing possible.

While the college is focused on educating and empowering its students, the Technology Services team at Rawls College was looking for a way to be more in control of its destiny as well, especially when it came to managing how the college gathered and stored video content. Rawls College had been an on-premises Mediasite customer for several years and had already done the hard work to standardize all their classrooms so that they were set up for Mediasite video recording and capture. However, they knew additional efficiencies could be gained, and they started eyeing a move to Mediasite Cloud.

The cloud conversation begins

"Our on-premises solution was fine, but my three Multimedia team members were spending a lot of time updating servers and performing other routine maintenance," says Dayton Perrin, senior director of technology services at Rawls College. "We had built our server environment five or six years ago, and it was starting to show its age." The team was at a crossroads:

should they rebuild everything on-premises again and continue to wrestle with troubleshooting and updates, or is it time to finally make the move to the cloud and not have to worry about that?

At the same time, COVID-19 was upending college experiences across the country, and Rawls College found itself in an academic world where most classes had a virtual component to them. Some were completely online, while others featured a hybrid model.

The Rawls Technology Services team did notice there were limitations with some students accessing the on-premises video content, especially for those that found themselves a distance away from campus. "If a student wasn't in Texas, or if they didn't have the best internet connection, there were some issues with video content performance," Perrin said.

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Weighing the benefits, addressing concerns

As Perrin's team started to get serious about cloud migration, they went through the pros and cons. "Our initial concern was cost," he says, "We knew it was the right investment, but we needed to make sure it fit within our budget. The cloud solution also had to seamlessly integrate with our security stack and our campuses' single sign-on authentication. The last thing we wanted was to add extra work for the end-user — not only would it be an extra layer of difficulty for students and staff, but my team would be the ones having to take the time to explain how to sign into a different system."

Once they decided to make the migration a reality, there was one last piece to consider: timing. To minimize the impact on student learning, it was important to fit the migration into the university's downtime. In this case, that was winter break. "By

the time we had the approval to move forward with the project, it was the week before winter break,” Perrin said. “And, the spring semester was actually starting one week earlier than normal, which gave us four weeks to get everything switched over.”

The countdown begins: four weeks to migration

With that, Perrin already had Mediasite on speed dial. “The goal was to have everyone come back for the spring semester with no perceptual changes as to where Mediasite content was coming from,” says Jarrett Shafer, Solutions Engineer at Mediasite. “Dayton and his team were ready to go, so even with the tight timeline, the project ran smoothly.”

Perrin echoes that sentiment. “Jarrett, Brian, and Steve at Mediasite were great to work with, and I thought the communication was strong. With a project like this, there are at least a dozen email threads flying around between five or six people at all times. I really appreciated how they kept things organized. And, I appreciated that they set up a project management site for the work, so I could go in, see what was being done on their side and what needed to be done on our side. I could go in and say ‘I did this’ and everyone would automatically get notified. It was cool to see the entire process laid out from the beginning.”

After completing the migration, which also included transferring over 10 terabytes of video, Perrin sent an email message to the Mediasite team on January 10, 2022: “I think we are officially into the cloud!”

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The benefits: more time, less stress, and additional features

Less than three months into utilizing the cloud environment, Perrin says he’s already seen a change in the way his staff can use their time. “It’s as if we have another staff member,” he says. “The team doesn’t have to worry about security updates. It runs so seamlessly that we’ve forgotten about some of the issues we used to have.” The team has been freed up to do the

tasks that move the needle and keep the school at the top of their technology game, such as coordinating in-class and event technology and having time for classroom upgrades.

And, there’s a lot less stress on the team overall. “My team will literally come up to me and say, ‘I can’t believe we don’t have to troubleshoot this anymore,’” Perrin says. If students have issues with accessing content, it’s almost always a permissions issue — not a technical one.

There are also other benefits. Because of the new compression and video standards built into Mediasite Cloud, any video getting captured and stored is automatically converted to smaller file sizes without losing quality. “We’ve been able to bring down our overall media footprint — which is helpful for the hundreds of videos from remote classes we’re storing,” Perrin says.

One last benefit: sleeping better at night

The cloud migration has also made a tremendous difference in Perrin’s day-to-day life at Rawls College. “I’ll admit that I’m able to sleep better at night,” he says. “I know our content is housed in secure data centers, with multiple backups and plenty of security. Over the holidays, I used to worry — what if the system goes down? Knowing that I don’t have to stress over that anymore has been refreshing.”

When asked what his experience with Mediasite’s Customer Care team has been since the migration to the cloud, Perrin laughs. “It’s worked so well that I haven’t had to talk to anyone. At a minimum, the whole process met my very high expectations — and now that I’ve seen how smoothly everything has been running, it’s exceeded them.”

So, what advice does Perrin have for other universities or entities that are looking into migrating to Mediasite Cloud?

“It’s the best investment you could make. I’ll say it again — it’s like having an extra staff member,” he says. “It’s reliable, and the Mediasite team will take care of you. Don’t be scared to jump in.”