

LACMA

Industry Education

Daily Use

- Distance learning

Solution

- A Polycom® HDX® 4000 room telepresence solution allows LACMA to deliver programs featuring nearly a dozen art-related topics to schools and seniors facilities throughout North America
- LACMA ties into Internet2, the high-speed network, to extend its ability to reach more students in Los Angeles County and beyond

Results and Benefits

- More than 5,700 children and adults have attended LACMA distance education classes via video
- LACMA's use of Polycom telepresence allows LA County schools to take art classes at no charge—and schools outside of LA pay only \$100 per class
- By conducting classes via video, LACMA saves cash-strapped schools transportation costs
- Standards-based Polycom HDX systems enable the program to deliver content to any facility equipped for video conferencing

Los Angeles County Museum of Art Finds Polycom Telepresence Offers a Way to Bring 100,000 Works of Art to Budget-Strapped Schools

Overview

Since 2007, thousands of students, teachers, and senior citizens have perused the vast collection at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) without setting foot in the seven-building complex. They've been able to study some of the museum's most famous pieces and others that are not even on public display. And they've learned about the essential role art has played from the time of ancient Egypt to the present day.

Using the latest Polycom telepresence solutions, LACMA delivers interactive educational programs to K-12 schools and seniors in retirement villages throughout North America. Polycom telepresence allows the museum to connect face to face with classrooms, giving any group with video communications capability a way to take a virtual field trip to LACMA.

LACMA relies on Polycom to achieve "location liberation" by using high-definition (HD) audio and video to interpret its collection for students and art enthusiasts throughout the United States, and most recently in Canada and Mexico. For schools and arts organizations struggling to provide well-rounded experiences even as they watch their budgets grow ever smaller, the award-winning distance learning program at LACMA is a work of art all its own.

Overcoming the Limits of Time and Distance

For years, a visit to the local art museum was a popular and enlightening way to augment classroom lectures. But budget shortfalls and a growing emphasis on performance testing have threatened to make the school field trip an endangered species. Fewer teachers today can justify the cost—in time and in dollars—of a half-day museum visit. And in smaller communities lacking a museum of their own, a trip like that isn't even an option.

Overcoming these hurdles frequently requires the ingenious use of technologies that dissolve the limitations of time and distance—technologies that can make Memphis third graders feel as if they're right around the corner from a 100,000-piece art collection in LA.

That's what LACMA achieves every day by offering nearly a dozen real-time, interactive art lessons to any school or senior facility equipped with a video conferencing system and a broadband IP network. More than 5,600 children and adults engaged with LACMA's distance learning program from its inception in 2007 through mid-2010.

"Our goal is to promote our collection and interpret it for the public, and it just wouldn't be as effective without Polycom telepresence. With Polycom, we can teach from the collection beyond our institutional walls."

Jane Burrell, Vice President of Education and Public Programs, Los Angeles County Museum of Art

“With Polycom, we’ve never had problems with compatibility. Polycom systems just work, and they work great.”

Antoniette Guglielmo, Education Coordinator for Distance Learning, Los Angeles County Museum of Art

“Our goal is to promote our collection and interpret it for the public, and it just wouldn’t be as effective without Polycom telepresence,” says Jane Burrell, vice president of education and public programs at LACMA. “With Polycom, we can teach from the collection beyond our institutional walls. It’s a way to reach people who can visit us in person, and those who never will.”

Saving Time and Money for Schools

Antoniette Guglielmo, Ph.D., education coordinator for LACMA’s distance learning program, notes LACMA programs are free to LA County schools, and cost just \$100 for schools and facilities outside of LA. For a school located a few hours away—let alone in another state—visiting LACMA would cost far more, and in many cases may not even be feasible. “Here,” says Guglielmo, “we can engage students on a face-to-face basis, answer their questions, lead them in activities, and even see and talk about some of their work. And it costs \$100 for one hour. The efficiencies speak for themselves.”

But it’s not just about savings. LACMA classes are designed to meet a range of curricular standards. “We define specific connections to various subjects, so our American Art and Patriotism class, for instance, relates to U.S. history, language arts and visual arts courses,” says Guglielmo. To make the most of every connection, she provides preparatory materials and consults with teachers before each class.

The impact on educators hasn’t gone unnoticed. In 2009, LACMA won an AFFY Award from the Alliance for Distance Education in California (ADEC). And several of its programs have received exceptional ratings from the Center for Interactive Learning Collaboration (CILC), which connects LACMA classes with educators. Educators can also

find LACMA programs in Polycom’s online content database. Carmen Borne, an educator in rural Arkansas, says interacting with LACMA’s art experts is “especially valuable for students who do not get the experience of visiting galleries or museums.”

Engaging Audiences Face to Face

LACMA delivers its programs using a Polycom® HDX® 4000 room telepresence solution, which allows Guglielmo to present using HD video, audio, and content for maximum impact. And the standards-based Polycom HDX platform allows easy interoperability with other video conferencing solutions—to the point where Guglielmo doesn’t worry about what system a school is using. “With Polycom, we’ve never had problems with compatibility,” she says. “Polycom systems just work, and they work great.”

The Polycom HDX 4000 system at LACMA taps into Internet2, the high-speed backbone available to educational and research institutions. That ensures plenty of bandwidth for many calls. Still, some schools lack high-bandwidth connections, which can limit the quality of their experience. Fortunately, the Polycom HDX family is the first to support H.264 High Profile technology, which transmits high quality voice and video at up to half the bandwidth of typical video conferencing systems.

That, says Guglielmo, is good news. “The better our audience can see and hear, the more the program will resonate with them. That’s what we get with Polycom.”

Learn More

To find out how Polycom solutions can help your organization, visit us at www.polycom.com or speak with a Polycom Representative.

Product Listing

Real-Time Communication and Collaboration

- Polycom HDX 4000 room telepresence solution

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