Axis Communications goes to university.

The prestigious University of Siena chooses Axis for e-learning.

Organization:
University of Siena

Location:
Siena, Italy

Industry segment:
Education

Application:
Streaming and webcasting
of audio and video

Mission

The prestigious University of Siena, among the Italian universities with the most innovative results in research, teaching and services, wanted to strengthen face-to-face teaching, guaranteed within the area of the existing academic facilities at Siena, with forms of remote teaching that could be used synchronously by the students, offering them the possibility of interacting with the lecturer from specially equipped lecture halls.

Solution

After various studies, analysis and comparisons to find a state-of-the-art system that could be integrated with the existing infrastructure and was capable of efficiently running in historic venues that, architecturally speaking, are not optimized for e-learning, the university chose PTZ network cameras from AXIS V59 Series, designed for professional streaming and webcasting audio and video.

Result

Courses can now be followed completely interactively from specially equipped lecture halls, simultaneously with the lectures given in Siena. In addition, the recorded lectures remain available to institutional users for asynchronous consultation, together with the documentation produced by the lecturers, via the university e-learning platform, in this way extending the courses offered and making them available throughout southern Tuscany.

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> "Axis offers a series of essential features for an IT system integrator: optimal light control, even in difficult conditions, excellent image quality and the possibility of integration with a pre-existing system have provided a valid technological answer to our needs."
>
> Fabrizio Di Fuccia, University of Siena Library System Area System Manager.

A historic university that looks to the future

"In the current-day system of knowledge, Wikipedia certainly has an important role," says Professor Angelo Riccaboni, Rector of the University of Siena, who adds, "So, if we look at Wikipedia, ours is among oldest universities in the world; this is a very important aspect, as the year of founding (in our case, 1240) is often considered synonymous with quality and reputation, and so we are very proud to have no less than 775 years. This doesn't mean we neglect what's new, in fact, we are often appreciated precisely for the close relationship of very traditional and historical aspects with modern, cutting-edge equipment and systems. I think that the secret of our university and the ability to last for over seven centuries is: always put together a very strong respect for tradition with that for innovation".

In order to help the job prospects of students in real terms, the University of Siena considers everything that exposes them to digital topics and new technologies offers a decisive contribution, and that e-learning was and is a project of primary importance.

"Naturally, there are technical and structural aspects to take into account: the historic buildings do not offer a location designed with e-learning in mind," considers Fabrizio Di Fuccia, University of Siena Library System Area System Manager, who personally followed product selection.

"We have known Axis for some time: the sturdiness and versatility of the hardware are two well-known attributes," he added. Initially, for filming events, fifteen AXIS Q6045-E Mk II Network Cameras were installed; these are very useful as they are high-speed, have HDTV 1080p resolution, 32x zoom and intelligent video functions, including backlighting compensation, a fundamental feature in e-learning.

Di Fuccia explains, "In the lecture hall, there is a projector screen behind the lecturer forming a strong light source, inserted however in a dark environment because the lights are switched off for the attending students: the variability of the ambient light represented quite a challenge, to which these cameras have responded very well".

Moving to a product created for professional streaming

"The launching of AXIS V59 Network Cameras has brought another significant advantage: handling audio – now we are able to capture video and audio streams together, saving a lot of time. Where we can install the power supply, we always install these products," continues Di Fuccia. AXIS V59 offers high-definition video with resolutions up to HDTV 1080p and a powerful 30x zoom, with optimized settings to produce high quality color video and high fidelity audio, and smooth PTZ controls, which operators can easily control from the camera's web interface, making it possible to follow movements in live productions and to zoom in on details of interest; the open interface enables easily integrating other systems and sharing information with a wider public or to videoconference in peer-to-peer mode.

In cases where the structure of a building does not allow installing a power supply, the choice of the University of Siena falls on AXIS Q6115-E PTZ Dome Network Cameras, as they are compact, offer PoE, HDTV 1080p resolution, 30x optical zoom, and fast and precise pan/tilt performance to cover wide areas and provide good detail when zooming in, as well as handling audio. Different products, adaptable to different needs, one brand: versatility expressed as the possibility of integration and easy installation in an existing system, while being future-proof.

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