Instructional Video Hosting Solution Group Report

Members
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(Kevin Hegg, D. Lee Beard, and Dick Johnson were invited to these
meetings as well, but attended one meeting or less)

Mission
Our goal as a group was to find potential instructional video
solutions that will host both licensed content and user-created or
fair-use content. This system should, as much as possible, replace and
improve upon JMUtube and the Online Video Collection.

Process
The group met on a bi-monthly basis. We initially collected a list of
many possible solutions and divided them amongst the members of the
group to decide which solutions were worth further investigation.
Details are available in the group's Basecamp site.

https://basecamp.com/2121593/projects/2706921-video-hosting

This includes a list of features that an "ideal" solution would
include.

Below is a brief list of options we declined to further investigate
and the primary reasons we declined to investigate further.

 • Youtube or Youtube EDU - Security concerns, many missing
features
 • Islandora - Not a complete solution. A platform to build on,
but would require a lot of time and money.
 • Project Hydra - Not a complete solution. A platform to build
on, but would require a lot of time and money.
 • Cisco's Show and Share - Security concerns, poor user
interface
 • http://repository.usc.edu - Focus on long-term storage rather
than user access
 • http://www.brightcove.com - Not a complete solution. A
platform to build on, but would require a lot of time and money.
 • http://www.heywatchencoding.com/pricing - Not a complete
solution. A platform to build on, but would require a lot of time and
money.

It is possible that some of these could be good solutions, especially
those that are platforms, but our group did not feel empowered to

evaluate a solution like that and chose to focus on complete solutions.

Also worth noting is that after surveying the cost as well as talking to our users, simply updating JMUtube to include its missing features (authentication, captioning, HTML 5 player, better file management, LMS integration) does seem like a very compelling option on paper especially when considering the hassle of migrating content. That said, this option has been well known to the organization and on the table for over three years now without the proper time or resources being dedicated to it and so it was difficult to consider it a genuine option in our investigations.

Below are options that we either became aware of too late in the process to evaluate or simply failed to schedule a demo.

- ShareStream
- Equella
- Avalon

Below is a list of the options we did attempt to investigate more closely and a brief summary of our findings. They are listed roughly order of preference without taking cost into account. Any pricing numbers should be considered ballpark numbers for something in the neighborhood of the kind of storage we would need. Also worth mentioning is that any hosted option (which is most of them) would fail to leverage out existing investment in local storage (i.e. the L&ET SAN).

- MediaCore
    This was one of the most compelling options we viewed. It included nearly all of the features we could reasonably expect to find (including an excellent Canvas LTI, a full-featured API, and mobile apps) and unquestionably the best overall user-interface. Unlike many of these options, they are a very education focused company . Cost is a big issue here though, as it would be about $30k/year for 1.5TB of storage, which is only about half of what's currently stored in JMUtube currently, and not including the OVC. Additionally, they do not have the collection tools that Media Resources would like to see for the OVC and as with any hosted solution, we are limited in our integration to what they make available through the API.

- NJVid
    NJVid was in many ways the opposite of the other solutions, in that it was built around serving licensed-content like the OVC first (including built in relationships with publishers that provide

titles directly to them) and treats user-uploaded content (i.e. the JMUtube side things) as a secondary value-add for the product. As a result, they have some very compelling features for dealing with licensed collections as well as by far being the most price-competitive of all the hosted options. For $9k per year plus 6 per title we could upload nearly all of the OVC and then get unlimited user uploaded content for free. It's also worth noting that we may be able to recoup at least some of this cost by reducing redundancy in our licensing. The user interface is inferior to MediaCore, but better than just about all the other options. This seems like the option that merits the most careful further consideration when coupled with the assumption that MediaCore is out of our price range.

- Ensemble

    This is the only solution we explored that has a viable local-host option and also offers a perpetual license option (rather than a yearly subscription). The upfront cost would be about $40k (which includes them coming and setting the system up for us on our hardware) and then $5k/year for maintenance and upgrades. From a feature standpoint, Ensemble is a education-focused product that really meets nearly all of criteria and provides a laundry list of features, checking nearly every box on our list (including many of the collection management options needed for the OVC). That said, the user-interface suffers for this power and the non-technical members of the committee found themselves immediately overwhelmed by all of the options available. A UI overhaul could make this a very enticing option. It may also be the case that some of the UI complexity could be hidden from the users and certainly bears further investigation by any group considering these issues. Also worth noting that Ensemble is built from several existing, off-the-shelf components, not terribly unlike we we currently do. This has advantages (it would be easy for us to create custom integrations, it's possible we could improve the UI on our own) and disadvantages (many points of failure and Ensemble being dependent on these other products for upgrades).

- Kaltura

    They have a very strong position in the market, however they are very aware of this and are priced accordingly (something like $70k per year). They are clearly focusing their energies on the enterprise market rather than education. In the demo, they seemed to have a tough time even articulating what it is that they were offering from their array of services and products. In talking with many of their customers, few of them seemed like happy customers and are looking to jump ship (similar to Blackboard a few years ago). They do not offer file-level security, nor streaming options, nor a Canvas LTI currently. They are the most expensive options we explored.

Conclusion
There was no clear single product that met all our needs. There a
several viable options, however this group did not have the ability to
make any real recommendations since we had no real way to evaluate our
ability to afford these options. However, we did come to a few
conclusions.

- The needs of the OVC and JMUtube really are quire different and
likely require two entirely separate solutions.
- If money were no object, MediaCore would serve as an excellent
replacement for JMUtube.
- NJVid was very compelling to Media Resources as an OVC
replacement and should be strongly consider at least for that piece of
things.
- Simply upgrading JMUtube to include the missing features and
refinements still seems like the most theoretically compelling option
(see above) for user content.