



Utah State University

Introduction

Founded in 1888, and with a student body of 28,000 spread out across 34 campuses statewide, Utah State University (USU) is easily the largest distance learning provider in the state. The school is renowned for embracing the latest learning technologies and methodologies.

The challenge

Since their very first Crestron installation more than 10 years ago, USU has focused on deploying robust learning solutions across each of its campuses. Crestron presentation, videoconferencing, and AV distribution, plus innovative room control via Amazon® Alexa® voice commands, are integral to that effort. Crestron solutions are implemented in 180 classrooms and conference rooms across the main campus in Logan, as well as in additional rooms on regional campuses across the state. This created the need for a consistent user experience in every room to maximize uptime and minimize help desk support. It also created the need for an efficient way to centrally manage and control all of the technology across these rooms and campuses.



“With Crestron and Alexa, I don’t have to stress about using a computer and can focus on teaching the material. I have more flexibility and confidence. I’m able to use all of the resources available to me, which gives students an overall better learning experience.”

Tina Haskin
Instructor
Utah State University





The solution

"We started an initiative a few years back to make the user interface on the touch screens as standardized as possible because we wanted faculty members to be able to walk into a classroom and have an effortless experience every time," says Kevin Reeve, Director of Teaching and Learning Technologies at Utah State University. "This allows instructors to focus their class time on teaching students and not waste time growing accustomed to the technology in the room."

Also delivering on the commitment to a consistent experience is Crestron Mercury® tabletop conferencing systems, installed in the Sorenson Legacy Foundation Center for Clinical Excellence, a brand-new training facility. Crestron Mercury has revolutionized meeting spaces in the facility by enabling anyone to walk in the room and easily call, present, or share content with a simple touch of a button. Kevin and team used the facility to pilot Crestron Mercury. After receiving overwhelmingly positive feedback from faculty members, they're deploying more units across the main campus.

The most unique solution on campus is Amazon Alexa paired with the Crestron control system. The Teaching and Learning Technologies team launched this project at the request of USU's Disability Resource Center. They wanted to find a solution that would enable instructors to control Crestron technology via voice commands. The project became a priority when Tina Haskin, a visually impaired graduate student teaching English 1010, needed a way to confidently manage her classroom. The team was able to write a custom skill that would allow any instructor the ability to control all of the technology in the classroom through voice control.

Named "Classroom Assistant", it recognizes an instructor's voice and communicates messages to the Crestron control system in the room to activate various control functions. The instructor simply says, "Alexa, open Classroom Assistant," and then speaks a command. Crestron Fusion® software receives the command from Alexa and then executes it in the room. Now, manual tasks such as switching the display and controlling volume can be accomplished hands-free. Classroom Assistant has been received so positively that it's being implemented throughout classrooms on campus.



Results

Standardizing on Crestron educational solutions has enabled USU to create ideal classroom environments that maximize learning time for students. Instructors, even if impaired, enjoy a simple, consistent experience in every room across multiple campuses, enabling them to focus entirely on teaching, and not on getting technology to work.

Products Used

- **Crestron Mercury® Tabletop Conference System**
CCS-UC-1
- **3-Series® Control System**
CP3
- **DigitalMedia Presentation System**
DMPS3-4K-150-C
- **AirMedia® Presentation Gateway**
AM-101
- **7" Touch Screen**
TSW-760
- **7" Room Scheduling Touch Screen**
TSS-752-B-S
- **Single-Channel Modular Power Amplifier**
AMP-1200-70
- **Microphone Pods**
CCS-UCA-MIC KIT
- **Crestron Connect It™ Cable Caddy**
TT-101-B-T
- **3-Series Room Media Controller**
RMC3
- **Crestron Fusion® Enterprise Management Software**

