

## Crestron DigitalMedia™ Becomes the Standard at Top Ranked University

**University of Rhode Island builds classrooms with all-digital infrastructure**

### Background

The University of Rhode Island (URI), deemed New England's best educational value by the Wall Street Journal, is in the process of upgrading all of the AV systems on four campuses to an all-digital infrastructure using Crestron DigitalMedia™ switchers and components.

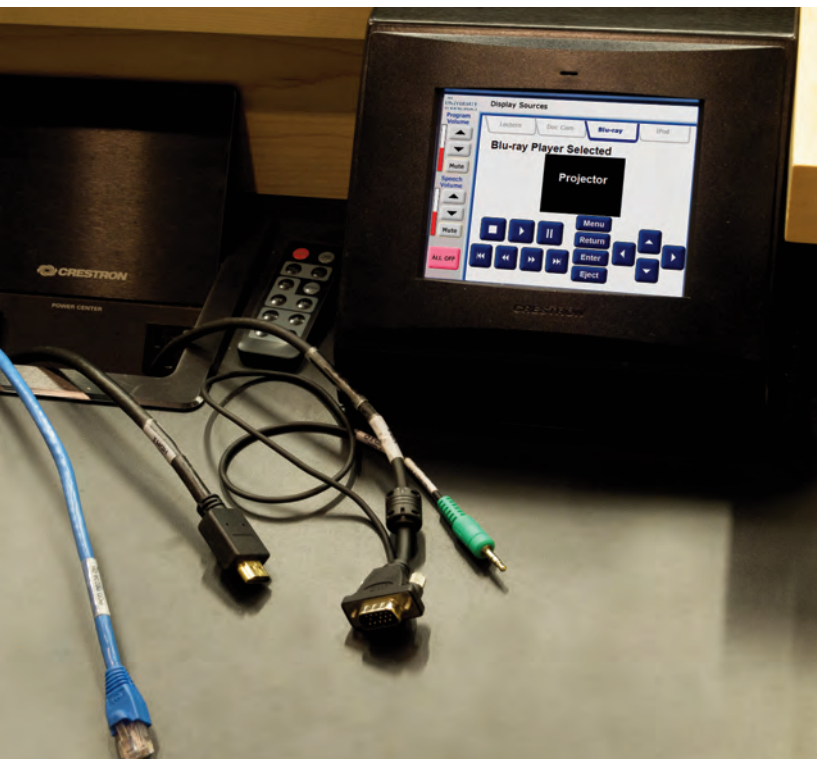
David Porter, Director of Media and Technology Services at URI explains. "We need to transport digital content and remain

compliant with HDMI® standards so we can show copyrighted materials. We need to ensure our systems are fully compatible with the technology faculty use in class including laptops and media players. The technology needs to be compatible with analog systems as well."

The university began the digital upgrade last summer with a project that installed digital AV systems in 52 general-assignment classrooms.

### Switching to Digital

Porter says the ranking, which appeared in the August issue of SmartMoney, highlights URI's ability to provide a top-notch education with limited resources.



Editors calculated what they call the “Payback Score,” a measure of the median salaries of recent and mid-career graduates from universities across the country divided into the total tuition they paid. It’s an economic measure of the value a university offers its students. On SmartMoney’s Top 50 list, URI scored the highest Payback Score in New England and the thirteenth highest in the nation.

Porter believes that the digital standards they adopted are crucial to the school’s ability to maintain its high educational standards in the face of evolving technology. “There’s a huge push to build a strong online presence,” he explains. “The focus is on how students learn, where they learn and how instructional materials are created. The DigitalMedia platform allows us to deliver any media to the classroom and create content that is available to students anywhere at any time, even after hours.”

Analog media is no longer enough. “It’s not like the old days where you could just push out a signal,” Porter explains. “There’s two-way communication that ensures copyright and different types of functionality are taken care of. We needed to get to that level.”

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**David Porter**, Director of Media and Technology Services at URI

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### Building the systems

According to Mike Bohan of New Haven, CT-based HB Communications, who lead the AV design and installation project, each of the 52 new classrooms include a ceiling-mounted Epson high-definition projector, wide aspect ratio Da-Lite screen, JBL Control 23 speakers, Crestron MPC-M20 push-button controller or TPMC-6L touch screen, a wall-mounted rack with Blu-ray Disc® player, DVD-VCR combo and Crestron control processor, plus a podium or instructor’s table with HDMI and VGA inputs for laptops.

Some of the larger classrooms and lecture halls also include gooseneck microphones, Crestron MP-AMP30 amplifiers, assistive listening systems and document cameras. One of the larger classrooms features an on-screen annotation using a Crestron DVPHD multi-window video processor.

Each classroom includes a DM-MD6X1 or larger DigitalMedia switcher, Crestron HDMI cables and, in the larger rooms, Cresfiber® cabling. “Crestron is the industry leader in digital systems,” says Joe Fuscaldo, University of Rhode Island Network Facilities and Operations Manager, “Deciding on DigitalMedia was the easy part. We also have Crestron RoomView™ software installed, so we can see what’s going on at all times and troubleshoot as necessary.”

### Next Steps

In addition to the 52 classrooms installed last summer, URI has upgraded an additional 30 rooms on their four campuses. “We plan on upgrading all of our classrooms to the new technology standards, as funding becomes available,” Fuscaldo says.

Many of the rooms include telepresence systems, class recording and webcasting, student response systems, or collaborative systems with multiple screens. The new Level Two, Three and Four standards are also based on a DigitalMedia infrastructure and use Crestron control.

“The faculty love the rooms,” Porter adds. “The response has been tremendous.”

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