

CHIJ St. Nicholas Girls' School pilots EnVision to support its teaching and learning

A top autonomous school with an enrolment of close to 1,600 students in the secondary section, CHIJ St. Nicholas Girls' School is an all-girls Catholic school that has excelled in providing the students with an all-round education since it was founded in 1933.

In 2010, the Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore (IDA) approached the school to conduct a pilot of a video sharing service and assess if the service helps to support the learning experience of the students. EnVision, the video hosting and streaming service made available by the Singapore government for all its agencies, seeks to enable the school to use videos to support teaching and learning in the school while allowing secure sharing of video clips which is made possible through the built-in digital rights management features.

ORGANISATION

CHIJ St. Nicholas Girls' School

INDUSTRY

Education and Learning

CHALLENGE

The school was interested to explore a user-friendly and cost-effective way to use videos for teaching and learning purposes while maintaining control of digital rights management over the contents of these videos.

SOLUTION

The school pilots EnVision service to support smooth delivery of videos that are coupled with advanced digital rights management features.

BENEFITS OF CLOUD SERVICES

- User-friendliness
- Cost and time savings
- Digital rights management feature

The Challenge

As a school leading the use of educational technology, CHIJ St. Nicholas Girls' School uses video sharing service to support the students' learning.

Video service is a medium that school children are familiar with as they are well-connected to Singapore's fast broadband networks either at home or in school.

However, the school is not comfortable with simply choosing any public video services that may seem easy to use but are not able to provide the features that it requires. These features include control over the rights of the content of the videos that are uploaded (e.g. student projects) and ease of uploading of videos by teachers and students.

More importantly, the school was looking at a video service that could scale with usage (i.e. a large group of students should be able to view a video smoothly at the same time without any technical glitches).

The Solution

Fortunately, CHIJ St. Nicholas Girls' School does not have to re-invent the wheel or spend a fortune to obtain what it requires. The solution: to tap on a cloud-based video streaming service that the Singapore government makes available to its agencies.

Called EnVision, this video streaming service combines the ease of use associated with popular video sharing sites with features that enable users to control the copyright and distribution of content. It also comes in a pay-per-use model, hence, users would not have to fork out enormous sums of money upfront for the purchase of video servers or subscription to high-bandwidth Internet links that they may not fully utilise.

Most importantly, EnVision provides the required bandwidth even for peak concurrencies during video streaming. The video service piloted by CHIJ St. Nicholas Girls' School is delivered by video streaming provider Evvo Media, which partners Akamai and Alatum to provide the content delivery network services and cloud service for video hosting and streaming respectively. The other video streaming provider is ServTouch, which partners e-Cop and nGrid to provide the information security services and cloud service for video hosting and streaming respectively.

To use EnVision, authorised users in CHIJ St. Nicholas Girls' School would upload videos "into the cloud" or onto EnVision's servers. These videos are streamed to target viewers. Teacher Leow See Yong, who is also one of the teachers-in-charge of the school's Infocomm Club, shares that the two key features he considers when deciding on the service to use are ease of use and simplicity in maintenance. For a start, only teachers would be empowered to upload videos, though in future, students would be given the rights too.

A similar service from Evvo Media is used by the Singapore government's Ministry of Transport. According to its IT project manager Adrian Wong: "The service provided is efficient and cost-effective. The pay-per-view model also makes it attractive."

Benefits

The benefits of EnVision are clearest to organisations that require the robustness of a video distribution site without having to worry about maintenance or expensive upfront costs (i.e. no upfront commitment to storage and bandwidth).



For CHIJ St. Nicholas Girls' School, the system offers a smooth video service to all students.

"It is definitely cheaper than setting up everything yourself," said Mr Jack Wong, Evvo Media, EnVision service provider to CHIJ St. Nicholas Girls' School.

Mr Wong estimated that a school could pay less than \$100 a month to host some 2,000 YouTube-quality videos. The cost includes the fee for hosting and streaming of the videos.

Compared to the minimum sum of \$500 to \$600 a month that an organisation would have to pay a webhosting company to stream the videos, usually without any guaranteed bandwidth, it is clear that EnVision offers better value for the same service.

About the National Grid

The National Grid is a national effort that draws together commercial cloud service providers to offer pay-per-use access to compute, storage and software facilities. The three consortia who have been appointed National Cloud Service Providers are Alatum led by Singapore Computer Systems Ltd (now part of SingTel), nGrid led by New Media Express Pte Ltd and PTC System (S) Pte Ltd.

For more information, email ida_grid@ida.gov.sg

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