

# Kettering University

One of the nation's premier STEM institutions asks, "What else can we do with our video platform?"

"How can we better serve the needs of our non-local students and their families?"

It's a question many universities are asking these days, as they recruit more out-of-state students, expand distance learning programs, and open satellite campuses. The challenge for these universities is to help students and families located far away from main campus feel as connected as those who live on campus

Addressing this challenge requires creative thinking and a willingness to experiment — two traits that Kettering University, one of the nation's premier STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) institutions, prides itself in.

## The commencement challenge

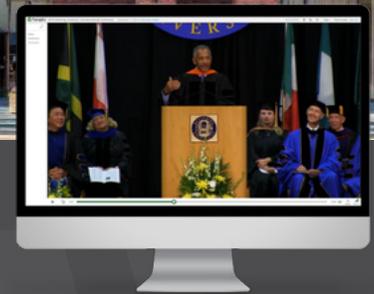
Just two weeks before spring graduation in 2015, Christine Wallace, Vice President for Kettering Global Campus, received a late night text message from the university's president, Robert McMahan: "Stream commencement. Why or why not?"

Among all university activities, commencement stands apart as an event of particular significance. Graduation is planned to be a galvanizing moment, helping students feel bonded to the university for years to come as proud alumni.

Yet as Kettering was realizing, a traditional on-location event simply couldn't serve their geographically expanding audience. Travel costs and logistical issues would make attending impossible for many online and remote students. Physical distance would also make it difficult for some parents to see their graduate cross the stage with diploma in hand.

And so at Kettering, the challenge was set.

As the team that had already been charged with streaming Kettering's courses online for students around the world, the Global Campus team was the natural recipient for the president's inquiry. Immediately, Dr Wallace and senior technologist Brian Beck set out to work on a solution.



➔ *Click to see one of Kettering's videos*

## About Kettering

Kettering University is a UK leader in experiential STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) education, integrating an intense academic curriculum with applied professional experience. Through this proven approach we inspire students to realize their potential and advance their ideas by combining theory and practice better than any institution in the world. Kettering University is dedicated to achieving the extraordinary through technological innovation, leadership and service, built on values that foster respect, integrity, creativity, collaboration and excellence in growth, global leadership, community outreach and an engaged community of stakeholders.

Website: [www.kettering.edu](http://www.kettering.edu)

With only two weeks to prepare, the Kettering team made the decision to produce and stream the spring commencement event in-house, without bringing on any outside AV specialists. Under normal circumstances, this would have been a high-risk operation. However, Kettering had already been using the Panopto video platform to deliver recorded classroom content, and the Global Campus team was confident they'd be able to use Panopto to capture and stream the graduation ceremonies.

## Live streaming a marquee event with two weeks' notice

To make sure they'd have every angle covered, the team rented a small number of high-definition camcorders, a source switcher, and a mixer for the event. They plugged everything into a standard desktop PC with the Panopto recorder installed and conducted a series of dry runs. Everything worked just as they'd hoped.

"The day of the ceremony was an absolute whirlwind," Beck recalled. "But through it all, we were never worried about Panopto."

Virtual attendees tuned-in through the university's website, where they could launch a real-time stream of the graduation festivities. Although the short turnaround time had limited the team's ability to promote the live feed, the online audience only grew as the ceremony proceeded, eventually accounting for 25% of total attendance. Said Dr Wallace, "Everything went so smoothly. It was pretty amazing."

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— **Brian Beck**, Senior Technologist, Kettering University



### Challenge:

Could STEM pioneer Kettering University find a way to live stream commencement for students and families worldwide — on two weeks' notice?

### Solution:

Kettering turned to its lecture capture and distance learning video platform, Panopto and broadcast spring graduation ceremonies without a hitch.

### Benefits:

Kettering helped its new graduates share their big day with friends and family around the world, a great win for the school's community and alumni relations that required no new technology investments.

The Global Campus team also used the feed to share the day's activities campus-wide, connecting Panopto to Kettering's own digital signage system and making the event available to students, faculty, and visitors at the university that weren't able to attend in person.

Praise for the webcast poured in. For families around the world, watching graduation in real time online brought parents, grandparents, and siblings closer to their loved ones' big day.

"We heard from one graduate student whose parents were in Jamaica and could not afford to fly to Michigan for commencement," reported Dr Wallace. "They were absolutely thrilled to be able to see and participate in his graduation."

## The foundation for success: Panopto for distance learning and teaching

Well before the commencement, Kettering had already found a valuable application for live-streamed video. The university used Panopto to deliver the university's distance learning courses to students around the globe.

"Our team's experience and comfort with Panopto made it easy to broadcast the 2015 commencement and ensure that the online event was successful," said Dr Wallace.

Prior to using Panopto, the team had enabled distance learning by mailing long-form lecture recordings on DVDs to remote students. With Panopto, there was no longer a need for the costs and logistical hassles associated with the creation and shipping of physical media.

Within six months, the team at Kettering had uploaded more than 100 courses to Panopto. Panopto's video platform automatically optimized each lecture recording so that students around the world could watch it in the highest quality on any device, regardless of their internet connection speed.

After enhancing its existing distance learning program, the Kettering team found that they could also tap Panopto to address another challenge: enabling instructors to teach remotely.

With no more than a laptop, webcam, and Panopto's recording software, Kettering's faculty can now teach from anywhere in the world, and teachers have been quick to seize the opportunity. This semester, one of Kettering's faculty will begin producing his lectures from Spain. And since Panopto automatically uploads each new video to a centralized "campus YouTube," the Global Campus team knows they can always step in to support faculty with editing and publishing, regardless of many time zones separate them from one another.

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— **Brian Beck**, Senior Technologist, Kettering University

## Looking to the future: Kettering changes the way it thinks about delivering campus events and online education

As the need for specialized engineering education grows, Kettering University continues to expand their global reach, educating students at a distance and helping the entire campus community — digital or traditional — connect and celebrate milestone moments.

After having successfully delivered traditional, long-form lecture content with Panopto to students worldwide, Kettering is re-designing their online curriculum to better suit the needs of today's students.

"Today we're going from delivering hours and hours of DVD lectures to developing shorter, more focused interactions with students," notes Dr Wallace.

With video on-demand, classroom scheduling no longer mandates the format of educational content. Instead, faculty are creating lecture videos that break along concept lines, and are including more multimedia content, demonstrations, and walkthroughs embedded inside the recordings. Leveraging Panopto's timestamped notes, comments, and ratings features, students in Kettering's classes are able to discuss the content with one another asynchronously.

By delivering video content to students and family members around the world in real time, Kettering is leading the way in not only helping reduce the barriers to education, but also to helping global students feel like valued members of the campus community.