

BOSTON
UNIVERSITY

Boston University Center for Student Services Stays on the Fast Track

Web-enabled cameras help teams maintain expedited construction schedules and enhance community relations

CHALLENGE:

How to get the job done and be kind to your neighbors

“Boston University is an urban campus interspersed with residential and commercial areas and thoroughfares and bordered by the Charles River,” explained Lauren Stanton, communications specialist for Boston University Facilities Management & Planning.

Large scale construction projects with the potential to disrupt traffic flow and cause noise garner significant community interest, so the school’s Facilities Management & Planning department works hard to involve the campus community and surrounding residents. OxBlue construction cameras have played an important role in keeping the community informed and maintaining good will.

“Sixteen years ago, when we renovated our business school, we captured time-lapsed photos of the project. This time around, we contacted our internal IT people. The camera they offered us did not have time-lapse capabilities, so we wanted to find a more advanced technology,” said Stanton. “Older technologies included an IP address where you could view the camera, but it required the installation of new software. We wanted to make it easy to see our camera views without downloading any new software.”

Stanton’s team accesses the OxBlue dashboard internally, as does the university president, senior vice president of operations and others with a stake in the project. Subscribers to the dashboard include faculty, staff, students and community members. Alumni groups tap into the dashboard for development purposes.

Benefits of OxBlue Construction Cameras & Technology

- **Complete end-to-end solution** – Camera hardware, cellular data connection, servers, software and professional time-lapse production expertise are all provided in one complete package.
- **Unlimited 24/7 access on a range of computer and mobile devices** – Allows all stakeholders to view progress from wherever they are.
- **An interface that’s complete, not complex** – Offers multiple, easy-to-use capabilities that every user needs to monitor project progress.

The OxBlue interface provides a complete solution that is not complex. Access can range from completely public to restricted with several security options. The interface allows an unlimited amount of users to stay up-to-date on project progress as well as review historical documentation.

“We also send out a project update and still shots every Friday. If we are expecting a delay in traffic or that streets will be blocked off, we include that information in the weekly update,” said Stanton.

SOLUTION:

Provide everyone involved in the project and the community with 24/7 access to the site.

General contractor Bond Brothers Inc. found the cameras to be useful in three important ways: keeping the fast moving project on schedule, staying within budget, and as an internal tool for continuous improvement.

Kevin A. Cooke, director of operations for Bond, is responsible for managing schedules and budgets, as well as constantly interacting with clients to ensure that Bond is meeting their goals at every phase of the project.

“Because of my position, my hands are on nearly every project in the company, so I have the opportunity to see a lot of products out there,” said Cooke. “The OxBlue camera is very easy to use and the clarity is tremendous.”

Cooke also served as the project executive for the Center for Student Services.

“Being a fast-track job, there were people in the industry who told me that this building could not be built in the time frame that was required,” recalled Cooke. “As we were racing toward the finish, I used the time-lapse video to rally the troops. I was able to show them where we are today, where we had started and all that we had accomplished in a relatively short period of time.”

Although the job ran for extended hours and Cooke lives 35 miles outside of the city, he was able to maintain control and forward momentum without added site visits and without compromising the aggressive construction schedule.

“In the time it would take me to get to the jobsite to address an issue, I could log into the camera and see what was happening and call the right people based on what I was seeing. It enabled timely responses to situations that occurred after hours.”

Kevin A. Cooke, Director of Operations for Bond

And from a budgeting standpoint, a picture can be worth a thousand dollars – or more.

“Right now we’re in the midst of closing out some contractors and dealing with a lot of the costs associated with expedited work,” said Cooke. “We’re actually using the camera now to remind people what the status of the job actually was. If there were materials that came late and it cost us money to keep the job open, we can utilize that information to more accurately negotiate final costs on the job.”

In addition to holding external team members accountable, Bond is using OxBlue archived video to hold themselves accountable and learn from the experiences of completed projects.

“We use the time-lapsed footage to share lessons learned and evaluate the entire project after completion. Our project teams regularly get together to make presentations to other members of the company in a lunch-and-learn format. In two or three months, we will regroup and have a meeting about this Boston University project,” predicted Cooke. “The OxBlue camera was a terrific tool and the best construction Web camera that we have encountered to date.”



Everyone on the project and in the community had access to the OxBlue camera, which provided numerous benefits.

About OxBlue: OxBlue is a leading construction camera service provider, giving numerous Fortune 500 companies the hardware, connectivity and expertise to enable constant access to jobsites through high-resolution, time-lapse, Web-enabled construction camera images. OxBlue’s cameras connect people on and off site, and help measure variables such as labor, risk, quality and materials. The cameras provide accountability and increase communications between construction companies and clients.



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