

NJCU's New Student Union Features StrandVision Digital Signage

New Jersey City University recently renovated its student union adding a number of amenities. One of the first is a digital signage system from StrandVision. The new system, installed by the IT Department and administered by Student Affairs, raises student communications to a new level.

New Jersey City University recently reopened its renovated Michael B. Gilligan Student Union Building (GSUB) designed to offer a gathering place for its more than 8,000 day and evening, undergraduate and graduate students for years to come.

The building was pre-wired to support advanced communications, so NJCU was well-positioned when it came time to research digital signage. Rob Scire, Associate Director, Telecommunications and Data Networking, was responsible for researching, selecting and overseeing the digital signage installation. The system would support the Student Affairs Department, which was looking for a state-of-the-art way to augment its traditional student communications.

Rob researched alternatives. One digital signage vendor offered an elaborate, expensive system that would require an onsite server and ongoing IT staff attention.

Other initial options were also too expensive and unnecessarily complex. He Googled "digital signage" and found StrandVision. There he saw several endorsements and installations with similar goals, particularly Warren County Community College, also in New Jersey.

He called StrandVision and liked what he heard. He especially liked the low subscription price, remote hosting and use of off-the-shelf PCs, TVs and networking gear. Compared to the other quotes, "It was a no-brainer." Ongoing IT support would be minimal -- StrandVision would handle the rest.

Rob checked references, talked with other StrandVision customers and then presented his recommendations.

Commented Assistant Director, Student Affairs Victor DelValle, "We wanted a new, cleaner form to match the new student union -- something to augment the bulletin boards that always look so cluttered. StrandVision was exactly what we were looking for."

The IT Department installed five 42" or 52" flat screen televisions in the new student union and an additional display in a classroom building.

Once installed and tested, the system was made available to the Student Affairs Department for day-to-day administration and updating.

Training was a breeze. "The system is so user friendly that we were able to start using it right away. We set up a test run on our office computers and just played with it," said Victor.

The administrators, primarily Victor and another Assistant Director, use the Internet to log onto StrandVision's servers. There they insert notices and graphics into their template. Pages are updated on the next refresh -- generally within a few minutes.

Postings include class schedules and changes, meeting notices, special events, athletics schedules and notices from NJCU's 40 student organizations.

"The student organizations simply email their flyers and notices in a digital format. Then we log on and post every couple of days," explained Victor.

Student Affairs also accepts notices from NJCU's Office of Public Information and the Office of

Communications and Marketing for larger university and community events, as well as emergency notices for school closings and on-campus situations.

The StrandVision digital signage has been a success both technically and for communications.

"I would definitely make the choice again. The investment is minimal, it's completely hosted by StrandVision, and we're not locked into expensive proprietary technologies," Rob said.

Victor concluded, "The students, faculty and staff love it. We've had requests from Deans to expand in the classroom buildings, so we're looking at that."



NJCU's Rob Scire (l) and Victor DelValle (r) at the GSUB StrandVision digital sign display.