

Executive Order No. 3

Webcasting Public Meetings

SUNY Spring Wizards Conference - March 15th, 2007

Kevin Stillman

Manager of Network Planning and Operations

SUNYNet Technology Services

www.suny.edu/sunynet

Session Agenda

- Review of the Order
- What SUNY meetings apply
- OFT-issued Webcasting Standards
- Compliance planning
- SUNYNet service offerings
- Possible U-wide contracts
- Discussion/Questions

The Order...

“...Except in those circumstances where an exemption is granted, all agency and authority meetings that are subject to the Open Meetings Law shall be broadcast on the Internet commencing no later than July 1, 2007. Every agency and public authority shall submit a report to the Secretary to the Governor by December 31, 2007, setting forth the number of meetings webcast during the prior year, together with a summary of any comments received from the public regarding the webcasting, and any recommendations for changes or improvements to the program.”

The Order...

March 14th Albany Times Union Article:

“Webcasting will create a public access point ... It may not be viewed by anybody, but it will be there, it will be recorded, it's a record, and it will apply pressure in the appropriate way.”

Governor Elliot Spitzer

What meetings apply?

Memo from Nicholas Rostow, University Counsel:

“... Executive Order No. 3 defines a State agency to include ‘other instrumentalities of the State.’ The Executive Order covers meetings of entities that perform governmental functions and are subject to the provisions of the Open Meetings Law. The Open Meetings Law applies as well to meetings of the State University’s college councils. Accordingly, Executive Order No. 3 applies to open meetings of college councils”

What meetings apply?

Other SUNY meetings subject to EO3:

- SUNY Board of Trustees Meetings
 - About 8 per year
- SUNY Board Committee Meetings
 - About 30 per year
- SUNY Board Public Hearings
 - About 2 per year

SUNYNet is handling these meetings.

OFT Minimum Standards

On February 22nd OFT issued a document listing the “Minimum Webcasting Standards”

Real Time

All agencies and public authorities that currently have access to broadband service enabling real-time (live) webcasting must provide real-time webcasting to the public.

OFT Minimum Standards

On-Demand

All agencies and public authorities must make webcasts available to the public on-demand no later than two business days following the occurrence of the respective meeting.

OFT Minimum Standards

Accessibility

All webcasts must have synchronized captioning (text transcript that is coordinated in time with the audio and video tracks). Synchronized captioning must be available for on-demand webcasts no later than seven days following the meeting.

Those agencies and public authorities webcasting in real-time may provide synchronized captioning in real-time or in on-demand webcasts no later than seven days following the meeting.

OFT Minimum Standards

Time period of Availability

All webcasts must be available on-demand for a minimum of thirty days. Each agency shall retain a copy of each of its webcasts for a minimum of four months. After the first thirty days, retention can be in off-line storage (such as DVD, disk, etc.). This standard is not intended to modify any existing agency or public authority record retention schedules. Efforts will be undertaken with State Archives to develop a General Retention and Disposition Schedule for New York State Government Records to obviate the need for each agency and public authority to develop separate schedules. Agencies and public authorities may choose to adopt a retention schedule for a period longer than the General Retention and Disposition Schedule.

OFT Minimum Standards

Users

The streaming (distribution) services selected must accommodate dial-up users as well as broadband users and must support multiple software clients (Real Player, Windows Media Player, etc).

Compliance Planning

Components necessary for EO3 Webcasting

- Production:** Capturing the meeting audio/video
- Encoding:** Converting it to a streaming format
- Streaming:** Sending the unicast streams to Internet users
- Captioning:** Transcribing and captioning the media
- Storage:** Providing access to recorded and captioned media via publicly accessible web interface
- Archive:** Means for retention of meeting recordings for a minimum of 4 months.

Compliance Planning

What is needed for **Production**?

Something to capture the video and audio:

- Video camera and mics
- Videoconferencing unit
- Web camera setup

EO3 has no requirements regarding video production value. A static camera with limited panning and zooming to view speakers should be sufficient.

Compliance Planning

What is needed for **Encoding**?

An encoding server:

- Windows Media Server, Real Helix server, VBrick ... etc
- There are many options available...

This is a device that converts the video and audio to a format suitable for streaming on the Internet.

Compliance Planning

What is needed for **Streaming**?

A streaming server:

- Most encoding devices stream the content and encode
- If the device is handling direct connections it should be able to handle the expected load

Internet Bandwidth OR a Streaming Provider:

- Depending on the expected audience, bandwidth needs to be considered. A lot of Internet based viewers means sufficient Internet bandwidth is needed.
- Consider a streaming service provider. You send one stream, they stream it to the world.

Compliance Planning

What is needed for **Synchronized Captioning**?

- Transcription of the meeting
- For Closed Captioning, a captioning file (SMIL or SAMI) to accompany the meeting video file.
- Open Captioning can be added to the video with video editing software.

Services are available that transcribe and provide the necessary add-on files for closed captioning.

Compliance Planning

What is needed for **Storage**?

Archives need to be available in a format or formats viewable by various media players (Real, Windows Media, QuickTime). The meeting video can be “transcoded” to multiple proprietary formats OR to the MPEG open standard (.mpg).

The files need to be made available on the web either via streaming or download, so a website will need to be made available for directing users to content.

Compliance Planning

Key Date

System Administration is requesting that each State Op campus send their plan for July 1st compliance to Dave Powalyk by March 23rd, 2007.

SUNYNet Service Offering

In an effort to assist campuses with limited resources to meet the requirements of EO3 for College Council meetings, SUNYNet is offering the following suite of services:

Production

A College Council may use any of the 4 University videoconferencing facilities to hold meetings requiring EO3 compliance. This service provided at no charge to SUNY campuses from 8a.m. to 5p.m. Monday through Friday. There is a \$69/hr per room charge for use outside this timeframe and on State holidays.

SUNYNet Service Offering

Encoding

Variable bit rate video and audio encoding service for video and audio sent by a campus using IP or ISDN videoconferencing technology.

A campus may use their own videoconferencing facilities to host the meeting and “transmit” the video and audio via videoconferencing to SUNYNet’s encoding server.

There is no charge for this service unless SUNYNet is required to originate a videoconference using ISDN, in which case the cost of the call will be passed on to the campus.

SUNYNet Service Offering

Streaming

Campuses may use the webcast data transfer service at a charge of \$.01/MB transferred. SUNYNet will provide a web link for the campus to publish for the public's access to the webcast. A typical meeting's data transfer may cost around \$45 given the following variables:

Length of meeting: 60 minutes

Bit rate of encoding: 100Kb

Number of viewers: 100

$3600 \text{ seconds (60 minutes)} \times 100,000 \text{ bits/second} \times 100 \text{ viewers} = 36,000\text{Mb}$
transferred

$36,000\text{Mb} / 8 = 4,500\text{MB}$ (bit to byte conversion)

$4,500\text{MB} * \$.01 = \45

SUNYNet Service Offering

Captioning

We are working to develop a U-Wide contract or aggregated-buy situation for synchronized captioning services.

So far the expectation is that captioning is only required for on-demand meeting video – NOT live webcasts.

We are talking to both New York Network and Automatic Sync Technologies about services. Cost is currently about \$30 to \$70 per media hour for only captioning services and about double that if transcription of the meeting is also required.

SUNYNet Service Offering

Storage

SUNYNet is considering a service for storing media for streaming as a service to campuses. We are looking to gauge campus interest in this kind of service.

Archiving

Like storage, we are considering a service and would like to get a better sense of campus interest.

U-Wide Contracts

Opportunities exist for vendor contracts or aggregated buying:

- Captioning – NYN and Automatic Sync Technologies
- Streaming, Storage: AudioVideoWeb.com
 - 300MB server space, 1GB Download - \$29.95/mo
 - 300MB server space, 10GB Download - \$39.95/mo

10 views of a 60minute meeting at 220kb is about 1GB

Better rates possible at aggregated pricing.

Discussion/Questions