

The City of Sterling Heights keeps an open line of communication with residents using PEG Central

Providing streaming video-on-demand gives residents twenty-four hour access to meeting coverage and events

When looking to implement video-on-demand as a complement to the city's already up and running two-channel broadcast station, it was important that the solution was both cost-effective and conscious of the limited staff resources. The station, having recently upgraded to the NEXUS® digital broadcast server, knew that they could rely on LEIGHTRONIX for an affordable solution that catered to the government access stations' needs.

"The NEXUS had already been an extremely beneficial tool to help ease my job and get more programming out to our residents," Sturza said. "Staying with LEIGHTRONIX provided us an upgrade path that added video-on-demand to our menu of wonderful things we offer residents."

The station upgraded their NEXUS to the UltraNEXUS™ all-in-one digital broadcast server. Using dual encoding technology, the UltraNEXUS provides automatic file transfers to the city's new PEG Central™ Web portal, a LEIGHTRONIX hosted, streaming video-on-demand site. The streaming site, costing the city under \$3,000 a year, was easily integrated with the city's broadcast station, creating no need for extra staff hours.

"Now residents and nonresidents are able to access government programming from their own computer, so keeping government transparent here is no problem," Sturza said. "With PEG Central we've been able to offer a new product to the residents of Sterling Heights, without having to pay anyone extra to do it, which is a bonus."

The city's PEG Central site quickly became a go-to place where residents expected to see new government originated programming. Features of the streaming site also allow residents to find various topics of interest and even video of specific meeting agenda items easily.

"We now have the ability to index meetings so residents can just click on an agenda item and the video goes right to what they want to see," Sturza said.

"PEG Central is one of the most cost effective video-on-demand streaming services that's out there today."

- Joe Sturza

Broadcast Programming Specialist, Sterling Heights, MI



Broadcast Programming Specialist for the City of Sterling Heights, Joe Sturza, recently upgraded to the UltraNEXUS broadcast server.

"We even broadcast and publish our planning board, our zoning board, and our ordinance board of appeals, and the residents expect that. It's nice to know that people are out there watching it and taking advantage of what we offer, keeping the line of communication open."

On top of meeting coverage the station also produces city wide events and news coverage to keep residents involved in the community.

"We have a weekly newscast that we report on what's happening with the city council and city and we have a half hour magazine show that gives the inter-workings of local municipal government to our residents," Sturza said. "We try the best we can to educate people that live in this community on what this community is all about."

The City of Sterling Heights feels that the government owes it to area tax paying citizens to offer tools to keep them both educated about, and be involved in, the community. Sturza compares residents to being the city's

shareholders.

“Local governments are funded through tax dollars and residents are like shareholders,” he said. “They own a part of this community and any community across the country, whether it’s a township, a city, or village, whoever lives there owns a share of that community. It’s our duty as a government access station to educate residents of opportunities on how they can get involved and opportunities on how they can take advantage of programs being offered from their tax dollars. We couldn’t ask for a better communication tool.”

Always looking for ways to conserve the city’s funding and provide residents more for their tax dollars is one of the main reasons PEG Central was chosen as a communication tool for the city.

“Really the deciding factor for us was cost. PEG Central is one of the most cost-effective video-on-demand streaming services that’s out there today,” Sturza said. “We have people from other municipalities comment on our system who don’t use PEG Central. They say, ‘we already have a streaming service and we are paying three, four times what you are, but your service seems better.’”

On top of it’s low cost, PEG Central was easily integrated with the television studios already up and running workflow. Their new UltraNEXUS records high-quality media files suitable for television rebroadcast while simultaneously creating a digital media file optimized for Internet streaming. That file is automatically transferred to the city’s PEG Central site. Sturza then receives an email letting him know the file is ready to be published for public view. Before publishing, Sturza has the option of adding a title and corresponding metadata to the video on the city’s personalized and branded PEG Central site.

“Once the UltraNEXUS was installed here at city hall and we programmed it when to do the uploads, there was nothing else for use to do. “Once you ingest a program into the UltraNEXUS, the rest is done,” Sturza said. “PEG Central has not caused any more work for us, except for hitting the publish button. So we’ve been able to add an incredible service to our residents, without requiring additional staff time because the UltraNEXUS does all the work for us.”

The site has also allowed Sturza to gather valuable viewer statistics on what programming is being watched and for what duration it is being watch. This allows the station to produce programming that is catered to the community’s interests, keeping them updated on things that they both need and want to know.

“I think the statistics part of the administer side of PEG



The UltraNEXUS automatically transfers media to the city’s PEG Central account, creating an efficient workflow for the limited staff.



The city uses PEG Central’s easily searchable file folders and the key-word search option so residents can find desired media quickly.

Central really helps us find out what exactly the residents are looking for,” he said. “It allows us to refocus our programming based on our residents’ priorities.”

Because of the support and upgrades that come free of cost with any LEIGHTRONIX purchase, Sturza didn’t have to worry about any additional budget being placed towards the upgrade for the community.

“LEIGHTRONIX support is second to none,” Sturza said. “It’s absolutely fabulous to know that this company is out there, helping us to deliver our message, and not nickel and diming us every time that they improve their product. You could not ask for anything more from LEIGHTRONIX because they offer it all.”

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