

Customer Spotlight: Virginia Western Community College

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In a Nutshell

Virginia Western Community College was offering captioning and transcription to a small number of students who required accessible materials to meet ADA requirements. However, COVID-19 and the need for remote learning presented an opportunity for the college to implement more technology and live CART tools to move toward the direction of universal accessibility for all of its videos. Different stakeholders from VWCC are banding together around this initiative and pacifying the fears of less tech-savvy faculty by partnering with Verbit to seamlessly drive their vision of an accessible campus forward.

The Challenges

VWCC's team wanted to find an accessibility solution to meet both ADA requirements and today's evolving viewer expectations that captions be offered on all video content. They wanted a product that would be easy to use, with an ability to translate the ease of use down to their seasoned professors who often fear technology and change of processes. They also needed a solution accurate enough to meet multiple degree levels of hearing impairment and support different reported learning needs of their students as they learn in hybrid environments.

“Verbit brings people together and I can't stress that enough. It just brings departments together. It brings faculty together. It brings faculty and students together. It's just been a great experience.”

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Hillary Holland, LPC, Disability Counselor & ADA Coordinator, Virginia Western Community College

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Virginia Western Community College is a two-year public institution of higher education operating under the Virginia Community College System. Virginia Western is located on a 70-acre campus in Roanoke, VA. The College was established in 1966 and has grown from an initial enrollment of 1,352 to its current annual enrollment of over 9,000 students in credit courses and more than 1,400 enrollments in fast-track workforce and continuing education courses.

The Solution

This fall, with two VWCC students in need of live accessible materials, VWCC leaders were able to implement CART services, a vision of theirs for quite some time. They have been able to showcase the benefits of on-demand captions and transcription, rather than consider them as Band-Aid solutions to service one-off reported disability needs. They were also able to caption a backlog of 63 recorded course videos within a few weeks. Verbit offered:

- **Live CART services:** Meeting the needs of both hearing impaired and additional remote students
- **Seamless integration:** Quick connection with Panopto to service video captioning needs quickly
- **Ease of use:** Product that could be easily explained to instructors and implemented into courses
- **Guidance:** A dedicated point-of-contact to educate stakeholders and address them on technical terms, use cases and challenges

“Regardless of what [students’] hearing needs are, Verbit’s services wrap around and can meet all of them...It’s just that accessibility on every level. It brings comfort in knowing that our students are not missing any aspect of the spoken word in the classroom.”

Hillary Holland, LPC, Disability Counselor & ADA Coordinator, Virginia Western Community College



The Results

Joseph Bear, CTS, Media Department Lead, Virginia Western Community College, has been responsible for incorporating products like Panopto and Zoom into the school’s workflow. As a result of the need for greater technology due to COVID-19’s impact and the continued partnership with Verbit, he said he has been able to showcase the importance of captions for education as the standard, not just as an accessibility measure.

✓ Seamless Process

“It was very seamless and very easy to get up and running. We really didn’t have any issues onboarding. Working with the reps has been absolutely fantastic... Any technical issues that I had were answered almost immediately, and if not remedied right there on the spot within a day or two.”

✓ Integration for Efficiency

“Verbit reached out to me and we did a test onboarding with Panopto, and it was instantly working... It took no time at all, and it also did wonders for our post-production.”

✓ Key Differentiation

“Verbit presented itself. This was the best product when I did the comparisons at the time. The issue that I really wanted [to address] was just ease of use. It’s basically sign in, press a button and go. That’s about how simple this product is. The instructor signs in and presses go and they get up and running... Given my designs that I have in my classrooms, this product was instantly attainable.”

