

Customer Spotlight: UDLHE DigiCon

In a Nutshell

The Universal Design for Learning Implementation and Research Network sought to bring its successful work in education reform and innovation to life by launching an inaugural event in October 2019.

UDLHE DigiCon attracted 400 registrants and 300 live participants throughout the 7-hour event. The organization knew it wanted to provide live and post-event captioning of the event's videos. DigiCon selected Verbit due to its ability to provide both real-time and post-event services quickly and consolidated into one contract.

The Challenges

UDLHE had never produced a conference before, let alone one with live captioning of its sessions. The organization needed a technology partner it could trust to make a strong first impression on its engaged, paying audience. UDLHE also needed to meet the advanced needs of those joining the event digitally and globally from 12 countries and 5 continents.

"We can't just talk about UDL, we need to practice it in all we do. I am a social learning theorist. People learn by watching rather than being told [so we're] practicing what we preach. Close captioning supports retention of content. We knew we were presenting a tremendous amount of content and wanted to support people. We do not exist independent of accessibility; we're building on the foundation of accessibility."



Eric Moore, PhD, UDL Specialist and Higher Ed. Consultant, University of Tennessee, Knoxville



The Universal Design for Learning Implementation & Research Network Profile: (UDL-IRN) supports the scaled implementation and research related to Universal Design for Learning • Through collaboration, the organization supports and promotes the identification and development of models, tools, research, and practices designed to foster effective UDL implementation in educational environments • UDL-IRN is grassroots and network-based effort to promote the design of research-based learning environments.

The Solution

Verbit provided UDLHE DigiCon's organizers with an innovative three-step transcription method, consisting of an initial machine learning pass and two levels of human supervision. Verbit provided:

- **Accelerated delivery speed:** An automated process that reduced turnaround time so that transcriptions and captions were quickly provided to attendees
- **Higher accuracy:** Machine-learning algorithms allow the technology to be pre-trained with specific terms related to the conference, for precision
- **Greater efficiency:** Verbit provided its real-time CART services to allow users watching and streaming to easily follow along with the day's content

"I appreciate the Verbit folks' willingness to help and continue to offer more ways they could help [during the day]. It was surprising. A lot of companies would just want their name added in the program, but Verbit did the post-captioning, our logo, and offered more things. It was a genuine above and beyond more than necessary sort of thing for a company to do."

Eric Moore, PhD, UDL Specialist and Higher Ed. Consultant, University of Tennessee, Knoxville



The Results

✓ Positive attendee feedback

80% of attendees rated their experience at UDLHE DigiCon as 'very good' or 'excellent' and 96% want another event to be produced. The core team at UDLHE is working on quarterly meetings around themes and planning to begin broadening its event offerings globally.

✓ Diverse attendee exposure

The event attracted a diverse group of individuals with differing roles at institutions globally - from disability department faculty to structural designers to professors. This group was exposed to real-time AI technology for captioning and transcription to aid their individual inclusion and accessibility efforts.

✓ Accommodation of varying needs

UDLHE was able to provide alternative options for the event's auditory content via captioning. The conference organizers anticipated that some attendees could likely be deaf or suffer from hearing loss or even process the information better with the addition of captions.

✓ Key learnings & a true partnership

UDLHE and Verbit debriefed on key takeaways and methods to further improve the attendee experience and abilities to integrate further with technology platforms used at the conference. This willingness to adapt and build on the inaugural event's success has led to a true partnership and discussions on collaborating on future events.

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