

NEXTcast 2.6: Darren Richards and Panopto

In this episode, we talk to Darren Richards, the head of the Creative Productions team at The Centre for Teaching & Learning, about Panopto – Humber’s new educational video streaming platform.

Nathan Whitlock: Welcome to NEXTcast, a podcast about teaching and learning at Humber College. I'm Nathan Whitlock, an editor at Humber Press. On NEXTcast, we talk to some of the faculty and staff who are leading innovation at Humber, both inside and outside the classroom. In this episode, we talk to Darren Richards, the head of the Creative Productions team here at the CTL. We talk to Darren about Panopto, the new educational video streaming platform that is currently being rolled out across the college.

Nathan Whitlock: Welcome to NEXTcast, Darren. So you've been heading up the Creative Productions team at the CTL here for a while. Before we start talking about this new project that you have going, can you tell us a little bit what you do here?

Darren Richards: Sure. Absolutely. So CTL Creative, we've now been around for just over five years at the college. And our primary mandate is we support faculty with the creation of digital video and we do that in a number of ways. But primarily, it's about building capacity. And within our studio, which is a multi-function and multi-purpose studio, faculty can come in and we can show them how to use the software, how to restructure the content, and give them all the tips and tricks that they need to produce something engaging and effective.

Nathan Whitlock: And we're in that studio right now. We're literally in the midst of your domain.

Darren Richards: We're living and breathing in the excitement that happens in CTL Creative, you got it.

Nathan Whitlock: This is your territory. So you do a lot of things. Like there's the Lightboard, there's videos, there's all kinds of stuff. But specifically today, I want to talk about this new project that you've been working on for a while, this new streaming service called Panopto. What exactly is it? How does it work?

Darren Richards: So Panopto is Humber's new video streaming platform where faculty can create, upload, share, and discover educational videos that could be created from their colleagues or anyone else at the institution. And they can easily share those videos with their students using Blackboard.

Nathan Whitlock: And we had an episode in our first season where we talk about the whole idea of flipped classrooms and flipping your lessons within the classroom and videos played a big part of that. And I'm sure this Panopto platform will be a big help with that. What else can you do with this streaming service in the classroom or even beyond it?

Darren Richards: That's a great question there. So Panopto is a really well-versed tool in that it does enable faculty to do a number of things with regards to video. And what makes Panopto so great is the ability to truly innovate with Humber's ecosystem. So you can natively log in using your own Humber credentials. And Panopto will also integrate directly with Blackboard so making videos and sharing videos with the students is that much easier.

Nathan Whitlock: And that must be a huge, or that will be a huge relief to faculty that they don't have to sort of sign in to five or six different things and try to get these things to talk to each other. Is that one of the big advantages to having a streamed system like that?

Darren Richards: Totally. I don't think anyone in this world loves having multiple usernames, multiple passwords, multiple websites to remember, so yeah.

Nathan Whitlock: If it's an extra thing, it's always a bit of a pain.

Darren Richards: Totally, yeah. So Panopto brings it all home and again, using those credentials that you have already at Humber lets you kind of interact with your colleagues on a much greater level.

Nathan Whitlock: And you have had the pleasure with working with Panopto for a while before anyone else has had a chance to get involved with it, so you know it much better than anybody else. What do you find with it? What is your kind of favourite feature?

Darren Richards: So there's again, there's kind of a number of things. But again, really, all it connected from that integration standpoint. But part of the tools that make it so valuable are the ability to use your mobile phone, something that all of us have already, and use that phone to create and share those videos with your students all at a couple clicks of a button, right, or taps of your screen, if we may.

Darren Richards: Some of the other really cool features are the ability to create quizzes within your video. So once you create a video, you can easily add some multiple choice or true/false quizzes to it which better yet, will actually integrate again with Blackboard and report right to your grade centre. So again, it's about building that versatility and that ease of utility for faculty. So it's not a 3,000 click process. It's really just done with a couple quick clicks of the mouse.

Nathan Whitlock: That's actually very cool. I didn't even realize it did that, that you could put quizzes and put that kind of content right on the video and have it like right back to their Blackboard marks. That's actually really useful. That's super useful.

Darren Richards: Totally. And just one of the many features that it does offer.

Nathan Whitlock: Obviously, the biggest video streaming platform in the world right now, in 2018, is YouTube. I will admit, I sometimes lean on YouTube in terms of finding video

for classrooms. But more and more the emphasis is on creating your own content, creating more course-specific content. How does Panopto help with that or how does it help with that process of making people switch over a little bit?

Darren Richards: And that's a really good question, Nathan. Think of the world of education, when you're working with and building course content, YouTube is definitely a source. The lenders of the world are another source. So it really is about picking the content that is best fitting for your course and for your curriculum.

Darren Richards: Where Panopto really come in is that ability to create and share the content that you really want to build that's customized for your course. So we're not out there and saying reinvent the wheel and create something new that's already ... or create something again that's already been created. What we really want to do is kind of say what is the specific need that you need in your course that you can't really achieve elsewhere that is really going to elevate the experience for your learners and use Panopto as that mechanism to get it out there to your students.

Nathan Whitlock: Right. Let's say you come to the CTL and you create the videos, you get some support helping making videos for your course. But someone else in another course could actually use it. Is it specifically for your course or does anybody get to use your videos? And you might even want to share them with people who are also teaching the same course in another section.

Darren Richards: Yeah. And that will really all be up to the faculty that is uploading that content. We're not asking you to go and create and share everything that you're creating. Panopto does have a number of different kinds of folders that are really going to be custom tailored to how you want to get your content out there. You have your personal folder, which, of course, we're all creating content that we might not want the world to see, that really might just be for the students that are in your particular course or section.

Darren Richards: So for anything you really want a tight grip of control on, you want to upload that to your personal my-folder. But Panopto-

Nathan Whitlock: It be your cat videos, your-

Darren Richards: Yeah. You know, you might be tempted to upload some videos of your cat.

Nathan Whitlock: Primarily, for educational purposes.

Darren Richards: Primarily, for educational purposes. I mean, if your videos of your cats do apply to your curriculum in some way, shape, or form, then you probably want to upload it onto Panopto.

Nathan Whitlock: Sure.

Darren Richards: But if their cats do not apply to curriculum, then maybe YouTube might be your better choice that way.

Nathan Whitlock: Sure, yeah.

Darren Richards: But you can choose a variety of different folders that you can pop it into and share that content out. So the main levels here are share it with just me and my students. I can share it with perhaps my own school or faculty or department or I can share it with the entire organization.

Nathan Whitlock: Oh, nice.

Darren Richards: So you've got that great flexibility with regards to how you can get that content out there.

Nathan Whitlock: Right. Well, before you can share with anybody, you have to get on it. You have to actually be on the platform.

Darren Richards: You do. You do.

Nathan Whitlock: Yes. And right now, I mean, we're recording this sort of second week of December. Panopto, it exists, it's in the world. Select few are starting to use it but where are we in the rollout, where are we in its lifespan?

Darren Richards: Yeah. And that's a great question as well. So Panopto is currently in use at Humber but it's kind of to a little select audience. So those that are getting this exact message that we're kind of relaying right now can sign up to some sort of exclusive opportunity, which we're calling the Panopto Early Access Program. And by the time January rolls around or February rolls around, that might change. But there is an opportunity for those that do want to get in and play with the tool to connect and sign up. And to do that, you can email Panopto. That's P-A-N-O-P-T-O @humber.ca and just ask to join.

Darren Richards: But in terms of the final launch where we're really going to open up to that Humber community and do that full public launch, right now what we're saying is Winter 2019.

Nathan Whitlock: Okay. And when we hit Winter 2019 and it becomes available to everybody, will there be workshops or will there be ways for people to sort of learn more about how to use the platform?

Darren Richards: You bet. Once Panopto does launch, we're going to have a number of workshops that will be offered throughout the semester and ongoing. And those workshops will be offered in part by [Lisa DiBarbora, who works in the library and is co-leading this project with myself and has helped a great deal in getting this project moving forward.

Darren Richards: In addition to that, we'll have some drop-in sessions that would be led by the two Waterloo students, both at North and Lakeshore campuses. And in addition to that, there'll be on-demand resources available at panopto.humber.ca. But again, if you go there today, that website won't work because we haven't launched. But come Winter 2019 when we do announce that full launch, you'll have all kinds of support available to you. And again, we'll meet you every step of the way. And if anyone needs one-on-one support, we're also happy to help as well.

Nathan Whitlock: That's fantastic. Well, thank you so much for telling us about this, Darren.

Darren Richards: You're very much welcome and thank you for having me on board and helping to get the message of Panopto across to the Humber community.

Nathan Whitlock: NEXTcast is produced by Humber Press for The Centre for Teaching & Learning. Special thanks to Kristin Valois and Santino Pannozzo. To suggest stories for future episodes of NEXTcast or just to let us know what you think, email humberpress, all one word, @humber.ca. That's humberpress@humber.ca. To learn more about the many workshops, teaching certificates, research opportunities, and other support offered through The Centre for Teaching & Learning, go to humber.ca/centreforteachingandlearning. To listen to previous episodes of NEXTcast and to read issues of NEXT Magazine, go to humberpress.com. Thanks, and see you next time. That's still not a pun.