Eller College of Management
The University of Arizona

MIS 111 Freshman Honors Showcase

Spreecast

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Fall 2015
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Spreecast is an online interactive website that connects both video chatting with an online chat room. Up to four individuals can video chat while simultaneously typing in a chat box. The chat box can hold up to an unlimited amount of viewers to ask questions to a chat box and interact with the video chatters. Spreecast has a free version and a few paid version. Each higher version gives the creator more rights to their Spreecasts along with many other features. The entire chat is monitored by the creator of the Spreecast through the privacy settings. There are three privacy settings: private, public and unlisted. Through the public session, anyone from all over the world can connect with each other on a global level. On the private, the creator adds the usernames of the participants that they would like to join the chat. The chat is completely private. Users can have their username pop up for rights to their text, or they can come up as anonymous. This gives students the power to have a voice in the classroom without being singled out in a classroom setting. The unlisted version, the creator of the Spreecast sends a URL link to the ones that they would like in the chat. Along with who can join the chat, the creator can also monitor what is said in the chat through language control. This setting helps keep the website user friendly for all age groups. Spreecast is accessible for all smartphones, tablets and computers. Once Spreecast is connected to wifi, there are no restrictions on the usage. Spreecast is best suited for a discussion based class where students are constantly bouncing ideas off of each other and a government or public policy course would be an enriching way to incorporate Spreecast where there is a large amount of debates. Our vision for Spreecast, is to have many departments at the University of Arizona to adopt this website in their classrooms. Particularly, we would like to see classes at the school use this website for debates. In a classroom with 60 plus students, it is easy to not get your voice heard. Spreecast would allow an easy and efficient way for professors to have all of their students engage in one debate. Our group interviewed Suzanne Dovi who is an online instructor for the government and student policy department of the University of Arizona. She asked many questions concerning the restrictions on students in the classroom. Through privacy control, professors can cut off certain students from speaking too much on Spreecast to give other students a turn to voice their opinions. Many leading competitors have websites just like Spreecast, but Spreecast is one of a kind. Many may be familiar with Skype or google chat room that allow up to ten people to video chat at a given time. Well, through Spreecast, an unlimited amount of people can video chat at once. An advantage of Spreecast is the chat room. When the connection of the video chat begins to weaken, the chat room is still available to save the conversation from coming to an end. In a classroom setting, it is important for professors to monitor what their students are saying. Spreecast offers the ability to archive all Spreecasts. The video chat and the live chat will save in the system in chronological order. Students who were not able to log into Spreecast can click back on this particular Spreecast at a later date to stay connected with the classroom. Using spreecast would have the same problems that any other streaming video would have. A student with hearing problems wouldn’t be able to have subtitles or anything to tell them what is being said unless they could read lips. They would still be able to read what the is topic as it’s displayed on top of the video and read and comment in the chat room. This program could not be used by someone who was blind as they wouldn’t be able to operate Spreecast without a large amount of difficulty. Spreecast is easy to use and requires almost too little preparation to teach students and professors to use it. The steps to log in are easy and simple. Simply lock on the “make a Spreecast” button and fill out the given
information. Then Spreecast users can connect the website to facebook, twitter, facebook and more.

Spreecast is an online virtual chat room, where up to 4 people can video chat at once, while an unlimited number of students can tune in to watch, and post questions or comments to the live feed. The creator of the video cast has the ability to select and display different public and privacy settings at the top of the video chat. Those who are viewing the video chat can also discuss their thoughts through a separate chat room that enforces silence participation. With this intuitive program our group is hoping to get an instructor at the University to adapt this program or at least gain intention for it, so that one day a teacher will decide to incorporate this program to their own classroom or for an entire department of classes. We hope to make more classes at the University of Arizona to have a better learning environment that will in turn help many students to better learn the content that they are supposed to learn. For the future we would love to see this program help strengthen students learning ability in the classroom as well as their desired field of work in the future. We desire to help show members of the University of Arizona how useful this program can be to create more effective learning environments, especially for online classes. One of the specific departments at the University of Arizona that we think our application would benefit is the School of Government and Public Policy. The reasoning behind this is that this department has a number of classes that have debates or would at least benefit from having debates in their class. In a traditional debate, only the debate team can input their ideas and concerns into the event. Using the livefeed, the other students in the classroom can contribute debate by commenting their ideas.
I. With Spreecast, all students in the classroom are able to feel apart of the conversation. Something very interesting about Spreecast is that you can login from anywhere. Students can debate from all over the country. It promotes fast, efficient and an easy learning environment. Spreecast would provide this department a way in which debates and discussions could happen without having to be done in the same class at the same time as it’s a online program. We hope to help students integrate their voice in any debate or discussion that they have a strong passion for in their class. Spreecast chat room would help keep students viewing a video chat interested in the video as they can talk with others as it is happening. This also allows students to be further involved and also submit questions and comments to the those in the video chat, thus allowing those students to drive the discussion. There is one privacy setting that allows students who submit questions to the video chat can remain completely anonymous as the question or comment that is displayed on top of the video does not say who posted the remark. This allows students who are shy to speak the opportunity to voice their opinion or ask a question without being put on the spot. With this feature we plan to get students who may be shy in other situations the ability to say something that will drive a discussion without having the chance to be embarrassed. If the creator turns the application to a public setting, then the students names can be shown, giving them their own voice of opinion. This is a great way for teachers to see who is involved in the classroom with participation. Also, it keeps students attentive in the classroom itself. We want to give teachers and their classes a method to have a structured and organized debate. Spreecast is very easy to use and set up that a teacher can have a seminar running in a
short amount of time with little to no difficulty. This application’s many functions give
the owner of the video cast the ability to have an organized debate without having to do
much on their own as spreecast already has many features that intended to help drive a
debate.

II. Spreecast, an online interactive website, gives users the ability to provide a private way
to post comments and ideas while they are still able to be incorporated into a class.
Professors can integrate an unlimited number of students into a debate, while still being
able to control what is said through the language monitor. There is a setting to turn off
inappropriate language to make sure the discussion is within the guidelines of the given
school's policies.

III. Spreecast can be a free service to its individuals, however, there are different plans that
can be bought in order to obtain certain upgrades and services. The free version has no
chargers for any of the buyers. It allows users to make a spreecast that is available for
anybody can watch or become added too. The next level is called the Hobbyist at $20. In
this version users have more options when publishing their video on the website: public,
private (no one can randomly join and needs to be invited), unlisted. They get rights for
commercial use: allowed to use spreecasts to make revenue or promote a business or
anything else like that. Next, the Hobbyist allows your spreecasts to be promoted on the
website’s main page. A great advantage of this level is there are no advertisements
throughout your time spent online. Podcaster is the third level at $49. Podcaster allows
the creator of a spreecast to let that spreecast be accessible on their own website, such
as d2l through Spreecast embeddable player. One would also have the rights to the
Spreecast has a business model that allows the creator of the cast to be able to choose to allow in video ads, with revenue sharing that favors the creator. Not only that but individuals are also allowed to create pay per view events that favor the creator as well.
when each person logs on and pays the fee to watch the cast. Many of the aspects of
the business model of Spreecast are still underway, but they are slowly making their
way up and building their structure as they go.

II. Spreecast is a private company, however the video that they have online can either be
made public, or allowed to be kept private as well. There are a total of 14 employees,
and the home office is located at 171 Second Street, 6th Floor San Francisco, CA 94105.

I. Video chat up to 4 people, unlimited number of viewers who can submit comments.
Comments can be brought up on the video feed to be discussed in front of viewers
(which is selected by those who are talking in the video chat being displayed, the
question or comment that has been picked is displayed on top of the video chat and can
be changed at any time). The comments or question that are sent are private (who posts
what is kept secret unless deliberately revealed), inappropriate comments can be taken
down or hidden, and those users can be muted the owners of the spreecast. Those who
are viewing the spreecast have their own non-video chat room where they can submit
their own comments for anybody to see and reply. This allows the viewers to
communicate with others who might be able to answer one of their questions or help
create an enriching conversation based on what is being discussed in the video chat. The
videos are hosted by the spreecast team, and the creator of each spreecast. The creator
holds the domain of the video while the other chatters are able to log on, and then
viewers are able to find their spreecast, and watch it live or like a newscast in playback
mode, similar to a Youtube video.
II. Spreecast is a website so anyone can access it. It doesn’t need to be downloaded and you don’t need any special applications or installments for your devices.

III. Spreecast has been integrated to be user friendly on Mac or PC, Iphone or Android, and tablets. Looking into the mobility of the program, there is a spreecast app that can be downloaded for Iphones for easy access to a live or archived spreecast when one does not have access to a computer. With wifi, Spreecast can be used anywhere: on a plane, train, car, house, or beach. This encourages users to use the program on the go.

Connecting with others is always an option.

Spreecast is best suited for a discussion based class where students are constantly bouncing ideas off of each other and a government or public policy course would be an enriching way to incorporate Spreecast where there is a large amount of debates. Lower and upper division classes would both benefit from this since there is a lot of group reports and collaboration projects that could use spreecast effectively. This is a good way to present to a large number of people while they are able to interact with each other. Classes that have dual professors can use this service to integrate both instructors into the class simultaneously. We envision this happening through a video call of the two teachers with every student tuned in through the live feed asking questions to both of the educators. This can be used in a physical class but is more intended for an online course as the materials to use this program are eletronics like a computer. Being in a society that is surrounded by constant use of technology, Spreecast can easily can enrich the learning opportunities of the students. It is very easy to integrate Spreecast in both the students academic lives and the professors teaching lessons. Through the students experience, groups of up to 4 can use this to present collaborative
projects and reports to large or small classes without having to be in the same place, while the class will be able to propose questions and provide feedback on their computers and phones. In debate, up to 4 students can be having a debate or a sort of socratic seminar while the rest of the class watches and can drive the discussion with questions and comments through submitting them to those in the video chat or in a separate chat room for the viewers. On the instructor's end of the experience, classes with more than one professor can use the live feed to broadcast to the class simultaneously while giving instructions. Can also use the product to be able to monitor what students are commenting and who is participating in lectures and so on. Students can be assessed on the number of times they comment, the quality of their comments, and the relevance to the topic. This aspect could also be even more effective with having two partners who talk to each other in their chat room. After the video chat, the two partners would have to assess each other's comments and see how many times they commented. This would help the students to be engaged with the video chat as they have to talk with someone else about the video chat and track their partners actions, thus giving the students a motivation to watch the video chat to get a good grade. The application of Spreecast would make a class better by allowing a group of students the opportunity to have a discussion or debate without having to be in the same place. This also allows an unlimited amount of students to watch the 4 person video chat from anywhere with internet connection. This app would help provide the class flexibility in being able to a part of a debate at almost any place. Spreecast would definitely be able to give a rich class environment for an online class. Spreecast gives an engrossing experience for students to have further engaged learning. Test scores would likely be higher as a student is far more committed to a debate that they can connect to
through spreecast by submitting questions or comments to those on screen or through the chat room for the viewers. These features help keep a student active in the live video more so than a lecture from a teacher. Most students would have an interest in the discussion which would help the students to more effectively retain the information they learn, which is an especially hard thing to do when it comes to online classes. An online class would be ideal for this program as it’s meant to be done online for people who can’t be in the same place at the same time. This program wouldn’t work very well in a small and physical class environment as many students are already together and communicate easily in person. Meanwhile, in an online class students have to use their computer to participate in class. Spreecast is an online program that can used to have experiences that a physical class would. The program allows online classes to have discussions, debates or socratic seminars that would help engage students to the extent a discussion could have in a physical class. A specific class that could use spreecast is any online class that would need to have debates like a government and student policy class. Spreecast would be a new activity when it comes to online classes. Instead of having an online lecture where only the teacher talks, there could be an intriguing debate happening that involves the whole online class whether they one of the students in the video chat or watching. Based on what the instructor we talked to told us, most of the online classes at the University of Arizona use applications like google chat rooms to have many people talk for an online class. Spreecast further improves this activity as although it only allows of 4 people to be in the video chat, a unlimited amount of students can view the video chat. Those students viewing can submit their comments or questions to the video chatters to help further instigate a discussion or debate. Students can also also have their own discussion over the video chat in their own chat room.
This would be an original activity that replicates what a physical class could do but have even more people who can view the video chat. This could possibly be improvement over a socratic seminar as more students would be able to watch it than an actual socratic seminar.

Our group interviewed Suzanne Dovi who is an online instructor for the government and student policy department of the University of Arizona. The main thoughts from the professor were general interest in the product, however she brought up many questions about just how the product would benefit her students and her as an instructor. Many of her questions related to how this application would be able to better incorporate her students into the classes and whether or not they would be able to be kept track of, such as the number of times they each participated. Her questions caused our group to look deeper into the background of the project and initiated deeper background research than we had initially completed on the report. The
feedback from the instructor changed the way we thought our product could be used and made us think of how large amounts of students would be able to all benefit from this one application. Some of the problems that she felt could happen with Spreecast is difficulties with cutting someone off if they have talked more than their allotted time. Only the creator of the spreecast can cut off a speaker so the teacher would have to create and monitor every discussion using Spreecast. We did further research on Spreecast to find that the creator can mute a speaker not only in the video chat but also in the viewer’s chat room. She also asked how students would stay participating if they are only watching the debate. To this we came up with the idea of partnering two viewers to have their own talk over the chat as it is happening. Suzanne asked us a lot of engaging questions to help us figure out ways to use Spreecast more effectively.

Spreecast has a very efficient technical setup. The use of this product is a lot simpler than most video chat platforms. The students are all able to watch the streaming video just like tuning into a newscast without having to be on a specific bandwidth. In addition, the students are not required to download certain software for the usage of this technology, they simply log onto the website and watch the streaming video. Those students that are on live feed however, must have access to a camera in their device so they can be seen through the video chat. Also, the teacher will most likely need to have a membership with Spreecast to have such features as being able to archive the videos and publish them for others to view. Only one membership is needed for each class that could potentially cost money. For the students participation, all they have to do is make their account and create a personal profile. Once this is done the student would be able to view a Spreecast created by their teacher or a fellow classmate. The easiest
way for a class to be able to utilize the options and features of this app would be for the instructor to give a short and brief tutorial on how to operate the website. The students can also learn about Spreecast on its website. The website takes you through a short tutorial if one is more interested in learning about all of the advantages of the website. This can be found under many tabs including the help tab, the learn and how to use Spreecast. This is where there are helpful tips and steps for them to be able to create, watch and search for casts. From using Spreecast to view a video a student will quickly learn the simple features of this application. A practice cast with the small tutorial would be enough to teach a student how to use spreecast.

Economically, while there is no cost for the basic use of spreecast, there are packages that can be purchased, that come with upgrades to the service and other services that are not offered to those users who have the free version. However, there are some costs involved on the user’s end if they are not equipped with the correct equipment for the use of this application. The users must have access to a computer that has a camera, and they must also have to have access to the internet. There are a few leading competitors and online applications that pose a small threat to Spreecasts abilities. In the event that there was a disruption of service, there are many other ways that activities in classes could be continued. Since this is an online video chat, there are many other online video platforms that could be temporarily used in order to get by until Spreecast was still able to be employed. In addition to this, the debates, presentations and discussions that would be held using this software, could still be held in person if need be it just will not be as convenient as if there were this online platform in place. The presentation could still be given but the other students in the class wouldn’t be able to view it live and present their ideas as it’s happening. In order to give an experience close to this the students who were
supposed to be in the video chat could have their own recorded discussion. This discussion could then be given to the other students in the class to make notes and comments on that can be turned in for participation. The instructor we talked to, Suzanne, stated that she has previously used programs such as google chats and skype to be have discussions with her students online. Those programs could be used as a substitution to Spreecast in the case the company went out of business or could not be used for an extended amount of time. Most of the instructors who have online classes with debates will already know how to use those programs and can fall back on those if need be. Spreecast does not ask for information regarding a member’s education so they would never be able to obtain that information. In this regard, Spreecast isn’t a liability for giving out student’s information. On the other hand, if a teacher were to select one of the memberships that have a monthly fee then more information might be needed. In the end though this won’t matter because in the legal page of the spreecast website, states that information can only be given out to other companies with the consent of the member or if legally required to. Using spreecast would have the same problems that any other streaming video would have. A student with hearing problems wouldn’t be able to have subtitles or anything to tell them what is being said unless they could read lips. They would still be able to read what is the topic as it’s displayed on top of the video and read and comment in the chat room. This program could not be used by someone who was blind as they wouldn’t be able to operate Spreecast without a large amount of difficulty. Someone else would have to help a student who is blind or who has a motor and cognitive learning disability. This program would be better off not being used for someone with a disability. Spreecast will not give away a student’s information and will not invade a student’s expectation of privacy.
In order to integrate this program at the University of Arizona teachers may need a brief training session on how to use Spreecast. There may not even have to be a training session due to the simplicity of the program so if there were a training session it would not have to be that strenuous. One could master Spreecast in less than an hour and a little bit of more practice from actually using Spreecast. The University of Arizona may have to buy one of the memberships that has a monthly fee to be use features such as publishing achieved videos and their chats for students to download. Aside from that Spreecast, it is one of the easier programs to adapt for educational purposes at the University of Arizona.

The product that we were given to present was a application called Spreecast. This program allows up to four people to talk in a video chat while an unlimited amount of viewers can watch. Those who are viewing the video chat can submit comments or questions to those in the video chat and can be displayed on top of the talk for all of the others to see. This helps provide the viewers an idea of what is being discussed. On top of this the viewers can talk with others watching the same video with a chat room. As a discussion is happening those who are watching have the ability to talk about the content with someone else who is doing the same thing. These features of Spreecast are important in the fact that they give the University of Arizona an enriching experience for its students that are taking online classes. What can be done in a physical class environment can now be done online with Spreecast. The program gives a online class the materials to have a discussion or debate. Beyond debate classes, any professor can use this website for a socratic seminar that engages the whole class in one chat. Students do not all have to be in the same place, enforcing the freedom of mobility. Although through privacy and public settings, the creator or the professor, can monitor who participates
and who logs on and off throughout the duration of the chat. Also, because Spreecast allows an unlimited amount of people to watch the video chat live, more people can watch the seminar close then could happen in an actual classroom. Furthermore, the application would allow more students the opportunity to voice their opinion through the previously mentioned chat room or by submitting a question or comment to those talking on screen. Spreecast could be an improvement upon socratic seminars in a regular class environment as Spreecast allows more people to watch and be a part of it. Spreecast would also be an improvement over other live streaming video services such as google chats and skype. This is because more people can view the videos with our application, far more than the amount of people that can be in a google chat room or on skype. On top of that, students would be able to make comments with spreecast which can not be done on a good chat or with skype. More students could be involved with a discussion on spreecast than with google chats or skype. Spreecast could help improve online classes that involve discussions. There is now an incredible way to engage all of the students in one class. Silent participation is the key in large classes these days, so the application Spreecast makes it very easy for a professor to implement this teaching style into their classrooms. Students will feel more safe, thus creating a relaxing learning environment. Spreecast is the ultimate video chatting experience.
Bibliography


S. Dovi, Personal Communication, Nov. 12, 2015
Appendices

Interview with Professor: In order to propose our thoughts and ideas on how to incorporate this new app into classrooms, we video chatted with professor, Suzanne Dovi, of the Government and Public Policy Department, while she was on sabbatical in Norway. During our chat, we discussed the different ways that this technology could be implemented into the classroom such as use through group presentations, and in order to include many students in class debates even when they can not be physically present. The professor has a few questions surrounding the way that she would be able to keep track of which of her students participated which she can do through viewing the chats and the users that logged on. Not only that, but she was curious as to how she would be able to monitor the things that the chatters say, to ensure that nothing inappropriate is being said. The more she learned about our application, the more she was able to appreciate all of its features and ways that it could help her students to better learn. Not only this, but she told us that she would love to think further on the use of this technology in her classroom in the future.