



Asbury Theological Seminary

PARTNER CASE STUDY - WILMORE, KY, USA

CLEARONE SOLUTION SUCCESSFULLY DELIVERS EXCITING NEW HYBRID CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION DELIVERY METHODS

CHALLENGES

Distance learning is a daily focus for Asbury Seminary and improving the audio quality of classroom meetings was a high priority.

“Audio conferencing is the most difficult problem of any video conferencing application and we need to be able to deliver the best possible classroom technology,” said Charlie Fiddler, Technical Events Specialist at the Seminary.

“We needed to capture instructors’ voices with or without lapel microphones, based on individual preferences, and the questions from students regardless of whether they are located on campus or calling in from other locations. It was key that everyone could clearly hear everyone else.”

Fiddler needed the audio conference solution to easily integrate with the other AV equipment within each classroom negating the need for instructors or students to learn how to use a new system.

Initially, the Seminary considered upgrading the audio conferencing solution in just one classroom but this changed in April 2020 when the Seminary invested in 15 hybrid instruction rooms (teachers and students are in one classroom, joined by students in a remotely located classroom) to allow further hybrid instruction during the Fall 2020 semester. While each of the 15 rooms received the same upgrade, each room had its own acoustic tendencies.

ABOUT

Asbury Theological Seminary (asburyseminary.edu) is a multi-denominational graduate school committed to teaching the unchanging truth of orthodox Christianity. Although traditionally Wesleyan, Asbury Seminary welcomes more than 1,800 students from 84 denominations, 44 states and 50 countries.

The Seminary currently has locations in Memphis, Tenn.; Tulsa, Okla.; Wilmore, Ky.; Orlando, Fla.; Colorado Springs, Colo.; and online. The Seminary offers classes in a variety of formats—on-campus, online, and on-site—to afford students the ability to pursue their degrees in a residential, cohort, hybrid or online environment that incorporates on-campus intensives. The Seminary currently has more than 600 online students.

President Timothy C. Tennent currently leads Asbury Seminary in its mission “to prepare theologically educated, sanctified, Spirit-filled men and women to evangelize and to spread scriptural holiness throughout the world.” The Seminary has more than 11,000 graduates serving in every time zone around the world through social justice initiatives, government, art, mission organizations, education and the church. Alumni of the Seminary serve in 76 countries, all 50 states, and in more than 148 denominations.



CLEARONE SOLUTION

ABOUT CLEARONE

ClearOne is a global company that designs, develops and sells conferencing, collaboration, and network streaming & signage solutions for voice and visual communications.

The performance and simplicity of its advanced, comprehensive solutions offer unprecedented levels of functionality, reliability, and scalability.

More information about the company can be found at www.clearone.com

Having previously deployed a ClearOne CONVERGE Pro 2 with ceiling pendant microphones in just one classroom, the Seminary was already aware of the superior quality of ClearOne's AV solutions.

"The CONVERGE Pro 2 DSPs do an exceptional job in providing flexibility and power without the need for the end user to have to think about it," continued Fiddler. "They can be installed and configured and just work for anyone who wants to use the classroom!"

The successful deployment of the CONVERGE Pro 2 drove the Seminary's choice in deploying this ClearOne DSP again and was instrumental in the Seminary looking at the ClearOne Beamforming Microphone (BMA) to improve the audio quality to be delivered.

"Not only did the BMA CT sound better than any of the competitive solutions we had researched, it was easy to install and looked great in the drop ceiling which was already in each classroom we were looking to upgrade," continued Fiddler.

The Seminary also liked the integration between the BMAs and the CONVERGE Pro 2, particularly that it handles the gating and beamforming of the BMAs as well as the gating and mixing of other wireless and wired mics.

"The CONVERGE Pro 2's breadth of output options and connections over USB was also a huge benefit that saved us a lot of time and energy," Fiddler commented.

When the project began the Seminary's product of choice was the BMA CT, but after the new BMA 360 was announced with new features and functionality, the Seminary ordered 11. Five of these are already in operation.

"The BMA 360's deliver exceptional audio quality even in classrooms with loud A/C units which normally make capturing classroom discussions extremely difficult," added Fiddler.

The Seminary is also deploying ClearOne's Unite 20 Pro videoconferencing platform.

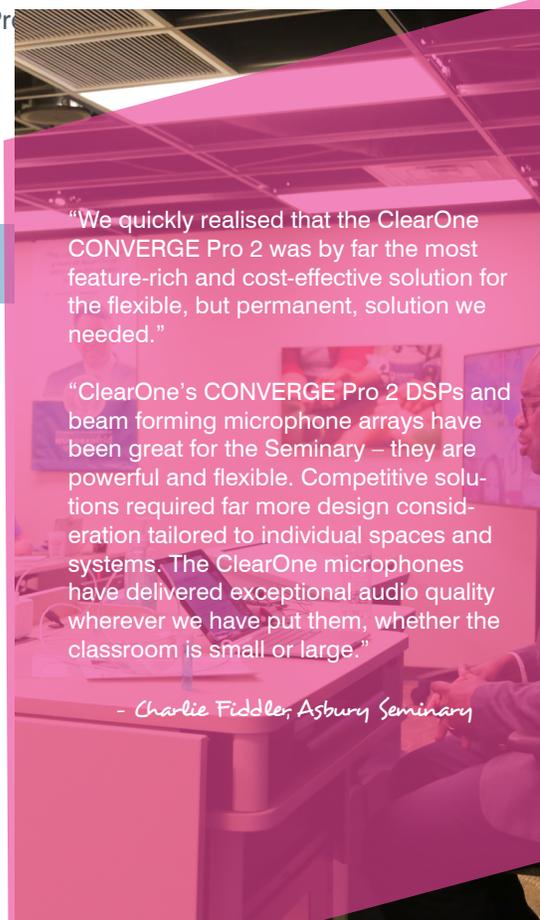
CHOOSING CLEARONE OVER OTHER VENDORS

The features and functionality of the ClearOne solutions fitted the AV needs of the Seminary.

"ClearOne and in particular, Jim Mergens, Senior Sales Director, Midwest, was extremely responsive which enabled us to move quickly to design and install many new systems in just a few months," said Fiddler.

Mergens offered the Seminary access to training via the ClearOne University and made sure that the Seminary team also had access to ClearOne's tech support.

"Jim has been extremely engaged with us even after we had placed our orders and has provided invaluable help, advice and guidance ensuring that the installation and integration of our new ClearOne solution went as smoothly as possible," said Fiddler.



"We quickly realised that the ClearOne CONVERGE Pro 2 was by far the most feature-rich and cost-effective solution for the flexible, but permanent, solution we needed."

"ClearOne's CONVERGE Pro 2 DSPs and beam forming microphone arrays have been great for the Seminary – they are powerful and flexible. Competitive solutions required far more design consideration tailored to individual spaces and systems. The ClearOne microphones have delivered exceptional audio quality wherever we have put them, whether the classroom is small or large."

- Charlie Fiddler, Asbury Seminary

RESULTS AND BENEFITS

Critical to the success of the ClearOne installation was the exceptional audio quality delivered and the ease of use of the solution's components.

"ClearOne has met our expectations on both of these fronts. The audio quality delivered has been phenomenal and that delivered by the BMA 360 has been even better than we expected would be feasible within the spaces they have been deployed," Fiddler continued.

"There is no question that ClearOne's solution has providing an improved learning experience for hundreds of our students, and has improved the instruction experience for our faculty members."

The success of this installation has meant that the Seminary has already purchased additional ClearOne solutions to install more systems later this year.

The Seminary currently has 11 classrooms on its Kentucky campus and one at each of its extension sites in Orlando, Tulsa, Memphis, and Colorado Springs.

"The Seminary is very excited about the new options the ClearOne solution has given us around our hybrid instruction delivery methods. We can reach out to any student regardless of their location and provide an excellent learning experience," concluded Fiddler.

EQUIPMENT LIST

- » 14 x CONVERGE® Pro 2 (4 more pending installation)
- » 15 x BMA CT
- » 11 x BMA 360
- » 20 x UNITE® 20



BMA 360

The world's first truly wideband, frequency invariant beamforming mic array with uniform gain response across all frequency bands.

FiBeam™ technology gives users the ultimate in natural & full fidelity audio across all beams and within a single beam. Deep Sidelobe Beamforming, DsBeam™, provides unparalleled sidelobe depth, below -40 dB, resulting in superior rejection of reverb and noise in difficult spaces for unrivaled superb clarity and intelligibility.



BMA CT

ClearOne's patented Beamforming Mic Array Ceiling Tile

The BMA CT blends in perfectly with today's drop ceilings, with integrated features that significantly reduce system design complexity, simplify installation, consume less rack space, and lower project cost.



CONVERGE® Pro 2

An advanced microphone automixer with the latest audio DSP algorithms and a VoIP interface.

Part of ClearOne's family of powerful Digital Signal Processors available in multiple versions with different combinations of audio inputs, audio outputs, network interfaces, peripherals, and software for configuration and control.



UNITE® 20 Pro Webcam

Pro Webcam with 120° ultra wide-angle field-of-view for use on your PC or laptop display to provide a full 1080p30 image - create your ultimate personal workspace!

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