

# Penn State Turns to Z-Band for TV & Video Distribution

## Challenge

Gary Field, Operational Manager for the Penn State Smeal College of Business, was looking for an effective way to incorporate RF broadband video using CAT 6 cable into the design of a new campus building. Upon the recommendation of a New York based AV design firm, he met with Z-Band of Carlisle, PA for a demo of their video distribution system.



*The Penn State Smeal College of Business is one of the largest business schools in the U.S. with more than 73,000 graduates since 1953*

## Solution

The Penn State Smeal College of Business operates its own cable broadcast system featuring 72 analog and 60 digital channels. The signal is provided via a feed from the local cable company. The 210,000 square foot facility consists of 20 conference rooms, 40 classrooms, and dozens of offices. As designed for Smeal College the Z-Band system has the capacity for 150 drops, with

55 TVs currently in use. One main distribution closet holds Z-Band's master video hub, and four sub-closets were used to house additional hubs that serve the video distribution needs of the entire building.

## Design & Installation

The installation also includes two 55" TVs in the lobby areas that distributes CNBC, Headline News and FOX NEWS on a 24/7 basis. The Smeal College of Business holds tailgate parties where students can gather to watch Penn State football games, and students from throughout the campus also depend on the TVs during crisis situations. Additionally, the college uses the Z-Band system to distribute advertisements for its MBA program. In the Roger's Family Trading Room, the system is used to distribute CNBC and Mutual Funds programming during regular school hours.

*"I thought the video hubs might fail and what was I going to do if one failed, but I haven't had a failed unit in seven years. As the Administrator, I don't have to think about it."*

Gary Field  
Operations Manager, Penn State Smeal  
College of Business

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*University of the South Continued...*

## Results

An excellent illustration of the Z-Band system in action was its superior performance during the Smeal College “Leadership in Focus: Executive Insight” speaker series in 2012. WPSU, the local PBS affiliate, recorded an event that featured an interview with Jeffrey Immelt, CEO of General Electric. Z-Band’s modulator and channelizer took in the WPSU live feed, and using the system’s 2-way capabilities the feed was inserted into channel 4 on the Penn State network which broadcast the event live throughout the entire building.

According to Field, the primary benefits of the Z-Band installation have been a reduction in labor costs and the ease of use. The system is so flexible and user-friendly that additional staff members were not required to maintain it. Units can be added quickly when needed, and a connection can be made to provide plug-and-play TV virtually anywhere in the building without having to run additional cable.

Field also points out that the reliability of the Z-Band system has been nothing short of remarkable. “In seven years, we’ve had zero problems — no service calls to Z-Band. Between the reliability and their support people ... unbeatable,” says Field.



*Penn State Smeal College of Business Installation, University Park, Pennsylvania, 2012*