Office 365 Subgroups Status Report – Stream (Video)

Compiled by Blake Markle

The **Stream Working Subgroup** has considered use cases for Microsoft Stream at U of T, investigated its existing features, and compiled questions for an FAQ (see below).

Use cases considered:

•   Lecture recordings.
•   Share 'how-to' videos with instructors, students and staff.
•   Share teaching vignettes with our UTM Active Learning Classroom Community of Practice.
•   Create videos that demonstrate an IT issue or a workaround and share them with our Portal colleagues.
•   Share promotional best practice videos (e.g., UTM Wi-Fi awareness video - https://youtu.be/bRX3NPA8J);
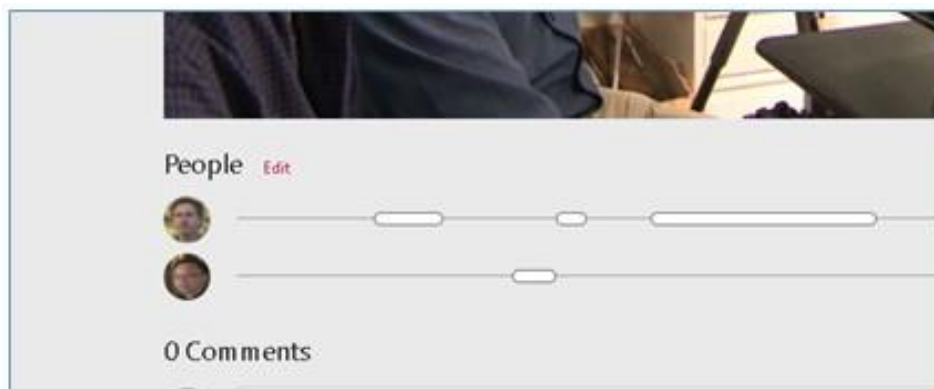•   Share screencasts of library 'how-tos' to specific classes.

Transcription / Captions:

Automatic transcripts came online sometime in December 2017. With its auto-scrolling, searchable text window next to the video, this feature can be of great use for pedagogy, information science, and accessibility. Current online lecture systems (such as UTSC WebOption) use costly and time-consuming video transcription services; Stream's is free and instantaneous. The ability to edit text to correct mistakes made by the automated transcriber (commonly: homonyms and misspelled proper names) will be of great import; there is currently a workflow to do this (see FAQ) but we could not successfully get Stream to save the corrected text file.   Others seem to have experienced this issue:
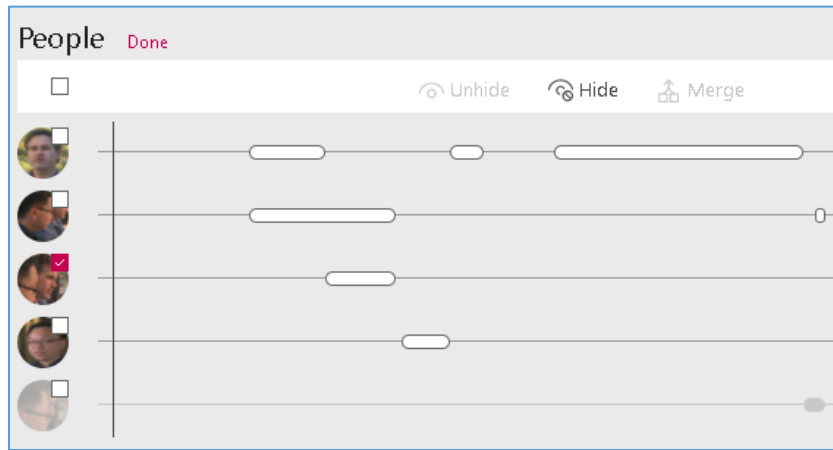
https://blogs.perficient.com/delivery/blog/2017/07/03/microsoft-stream-easy-way-to-make-accurate-video-captions/

Facial Recognition:

Facial Recognition came online at the same time as Transcripts. This feature uncannily tracks the appearance of different people's faces throughout the video, with some accuracy:

If there are mistakes in the recognition, the user can hide "false positives" to clean up the timelines. The machine recognition is capable of combining two faces, or identifying a person seen from the side as a different person when viewed from the front.

Security:

Users have full control of who can see or edit the videos they upload. If Stream were to be used as a repository for enterprise lecture recording, using Microsoft Groups could facilitate the sharing of lecture videos with the students of each class – that is, if Groups is leveraged in that way and there is a group created for each course number.

Analytics:

Simple analytics – number of views – is currently in place. More sophisticated statistics features such as view trend, which part of video has been viewed, are planned for 2018. Detailed portal and channel analytics are also planned for the future. These will be useful for instructors to gauge which of their content is being viewed and by whom. Mandatory class content can also be enforced using this.   A storage-monitoring tool for Stream admins is also in the works.

Issues:

A few of the subgroup members still cannot access Stream from their app launcher menu in utorontoqa.ca

Future Steps:

We will continue to monitor the new features as they emerge. In particular, live streaming, in-depth analytics, the planned mobile apps, anonymous external sharing, and Skype Meeting Broadcast integration will be interesting features to investigate further.

Microsoft Stream FAQ

Questions compiled by subgroup members. Answers provided by Greg.Milligan@microsoft.com

Q: Is it possible to edit closed caption text once the video is uploaded? For example, if the name of a professor is rendered incorrectly.

A: You can download and then re-upload the transcript to fix any spelling issues. This is done on the Edit page for the video; only the owner can do so. The steps are detailed here:

https://techcommunity.microsoft.com/t5/Microsoft-Stream-Forum/Closed-Caption-vtt-edit-in-Stream/td-p/82609

Note: as they mention in the link, an inline transcript-editing tool is in the works that will eliminate the need to download, edit, and re-upload.

Q: Is it possible to batch upload/import videos?   We have departments at U of T with dozens of videos already hosted on YouTube, it would be great if they didn't have to re-upload one by one to Stream.

A: There isn't a batch upload feature yet (we do it in Azure Media Services, but not in Stream). It's a requested feature, but I don't have a date.

Q: Where are the Stream videos hosted? We are aware that the university's O365 tenant is hosted on Canadian servers, but our Sharepoint admin pointed out that Stream is not hosted in that tenant. There were many concerns chiefly from our faculty members about intellectual property being hosted outside of the country.

A: Stream is hosted in Azure, not Office 365, which means it doesn't count towards your SharePoint storage quota. The Azure storage that Stream uses is in the US for now, but Stream will be moving to Canada in early 2018. We won't migrate any user's Office 365 Video content until we have feature parity and until we can make sure that data residency is maintained.

Q: Is it possible to share a video with a non- U of T person? If they have a Microsoft account? What about if they don't?

A: External sharing is a well known requirement and is being worked on, but we don't have a date for it. It'll likely be authenticated external users first vs. anonymous external users (i.e. not a YouTube experience).

Note: there is a Features Breakdown comparing Stream and O365 Video, which mentions the expected timeline of this and other new features expected in the near future:
https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/stream/office-365-video-feature-breakdown

Q: Is there a timeline for live video streaming functionality in Stream?

A: Live video streaming is on the roadmap as well, although I might suggest using Skype Broadcast for that in the short term.

Note: Skype Broadcast is not currently enabled in our O365 license.

Q: Is there a timeline for storage monitoring on the admin side? I.e. a way of seeing how much storage you are using, what's consuming it, etc.

A: There is an admin portal and admin settings, but I don't see an easy way to look at storage. The storage pool is 500GB + .5GB per user in the tenant, which is huge for a tenant the size of U of T, but I agree that having tools to view usage would be handy. It's in development and as of the beginning of November, we were showing off a preview of the UI. You can see it here: https://techcommunity.microsoft.com/t5/Microsoft-Stream-Forum/Stream-Storage/td-p/79182

Q: Will Stream continue to be offered as a free preview, or will it be added to the services included in our A1+ license?

A: Stream is part of A1 (and A1 plus), so every U of T user will have access to it.

Q: Is O365 Video going away, "replaced" by Stream, or remaining as a feature? Currently we have access to both.

A: Stream will eventually replace Office 365 Video. As I said earlier, we won't do it until Stream content is fully resident in-country. You can read more about it here: https://stream.microsoft.com/en-us/blog/microsoft-stream-and-office-365-video/ In the meantime, you're free to use both systems. Stream has a better UI and leverages Groups, provides transcripts, etc., but Office 365 Video sits on top of SharePoint, which means the content is stored in Canada.

A running wish list of Stream features is maintained here: https://techcommunity.microsoft.com/t5/Microsoft-Stream-Ideas/idb-p/StreamIdeas