Case Study – BPP

Summary:

- Client in education sector
- Online learning webinars needed to be made accessible for students with profound hearing difficulties.
- Liaised with client to get detailed timetable information for the students' webinars and log in information so that we could access the webinars.
- Liaised with transcribers to identify suitable transcribers for the project.
- Identified "desktop sharing" software that would enable the transcriber, working remotely on her own computer, to type a live transcription of each webinar onto the desktop of the students' laptops while they watched the webinar.
- Identified software that would allow us to record the audio from each webinar so that a 100% accurate transcription could be provided to the students after the webinar had finished.
- Client and students very happy with the service which continued until the students' studies were completed.
- Two of the students are hoping that we can offer the same service now that they have enrolled at different online learning institutions, pending agreement with the institutions themselves.

Client:

Established in 1992, BPP University is a private university and UK degree-awarding body with four schools: BPP University School of Business and Technology, BPP University Law School, BPP University School of Health and BPP University School of Nursing. The university has study centres in a number of UK cities including London, Bristol, Manchester, Birmingham and Leeds but also offers online courses where students can learn from home via live streamed, fully interactive video webinars. BPP educates around 80,000 students every year.

Project:

We were approached by BPP Learning Support Services to support some of their online students with additional learning needs. They informed us that they had a number of students who had profound hearing problems and had registered for their online courses. They required a transcription company to help make the webinars accessible for these students.

Challenges:

The challenges for this project were that the students not only needed a full transcript of each webinar for their records after the event but would also need the webinar to be transcribed live, in real time so that they could fully take part in the webinar, engaging with the tutor and other students in the live online "webinar discussion". This was obviously going to be difficult with the webinar, the students and the transcriber all being in separate locations.

Solutions:

To find the solution to the problems we firstly liaised with BPP Learning Support to get accurate, long term timetable information for the students' courses so we would know exactly when all relevant webinars would be taking place for the whole academic year. We also needed to get log in information so that we could access these webinars. We then liaised with our transcribers and identified two transcribers who would be available for the webinars and be able to assist. One was to be the first choice transcriber for the project and the other to be the back up transcriber should she ever not be available for a webinar. Next, we identified a piece of "desktop sharing" software (TeamViewer) that would allow a transcriber to remotely open a window on the students' laptops so that she was effectively typing live subtitles on their laptops next to the window on their laptop that contained the webinar itself. We then liaised with the students and the transcribers to ensure that all parties downloaded the software and that it was set up so that the transcriber could remotely access the students' laptops. We also identified another piece of software (NCH Debut) that would allow me to record the audio of each webinar which I could then send on to the transcriber straight after each webinar finished. The transcriber would then produce a 100% accurate transcription of the webinar in Microsoft Word format which would be sent to the students within 24 hours so that they would have a fully accurate transcription for future reference.

Outcome:

After a few teething problems with TeamViewer that we managed to iron out prior to the first webinar, the system worked extremely well. All students got their live subtitles for each webinar and this allowed them to fully engage in the learning process. We also managed to provide all students with a full, 100% accurate transcription of the webinars either by the evening of the same day of a webinar or for evening lectures first thing the following day. Both BPP University and the students were very happy with the arrangement and we continued to work on this project until the students concerned completed their studies. Two of the students were so happy with the service that we offered that they have asked whether we will be able to assist when they enrol on online courses at different universities. We need to liaise with those universities to make sure that they are happy to work with us but we are hopeful that we will be able to assist these students again in their future studies.

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