Alabama College Creates High Tech Classroom by Installing InFocus Mondopad

InFocus

Underutilized Birmingham-Southern College classroom is now campus' in-demand collaboration hub

Challenge

Eliminate the clutter issues with classroom PCs and upgrade technology to all-in-one HD collaboration and display experience.

Solution

Mounted Mondopad in unused classroom, erasing need for boards, computer equipment storage, multiple machines and services.

Results

Heavy demand for from admissions, faculty, student groups and administration driving the need for additional similar solutions.

> "Once we started looking into the options of devices that did what we wanted, it was pretty clear Mondopad was the answer."
>
> - Jesse McKneely, AVP Information Technology, BSC

For two years, one of Birmingham-Southern College's (BSC) 53 classrooms sat empty and unused. The mid-sized, three-tiered room, which featured a chalkboard, a small table-like podium, at least one chair missing its back and cables hanging from the ceiling that had once connected a long-gone piece of display equipment, was merely wasted space.

But to Assistant Vice President of Information Technology Jesse McKneely and IT Project Manager Megan O'Leary the room, Olin 205, served as an opportunity to try something new that would push BSC to the cutting edge of technology in a new age of global collaboration and ease the burden of the college's IT staff.

Challenge

Most classrooms at BSC have a PC-to-projector setup to display the instructor's content. Unfortunately, having a secure space for the PCs and arranging for cords, carts and monitors is problematic. BSC needed to get rid of classroom PCs. Additionally, the Associated Colleges of the South consortium – of which BSC is a member – asked that each of its member schools have HD video collaboration capabilities, which BSC lacked.

Solution

BSC installed a 70-inch InFocus Mondopad, an all-in-one touchscreen flat-panel PC with high-definition video collaboration and conferencing capabilities.

The fully touch Mondopad facilitates annotation on files and presentations on its screen, which is big enough for students to see even at the back of the theatre-style room. It also allows an off-site presenter to control and mark what's on-screen remotely or the in-room instructor to control it from a tablet or laptop elsewhere in the room.

Results

The classroom is now the most in-demand on campus. Student groups want to meet there for projects, faculty want to teach and host off-site presenters there and administrators use it to hold video conference meetings. The admissions staff even includes it on campus tours for potential students. Plans are in place to create four similar classrooms around campus. Ultimately, the school would like to have a Mondopad in all 53 rooms.

"The increased excitement from our students and professors alone has made it worth it, but this puts us on the forefront of technology. Using collaborative tools in the classroom will really take us to the next level and allow us to expand our classrooms; which is something our students deserve."

- Jesse McKneely, AVP Information Technology, BSC