

“Our teachers are learning to use the Fujitsu LIFEBOOK® tablet in remarkable ways to keep students more engaged; it is a valuable tool and the pen interface gives us the versatility we need in certain subjects.”

Lisa Harvey
Principal
Catholic High School

Catholic High School rolled out Fujitsu tablets enabling teachers to incorporate new methods of learning and encourage a more student-centric approach to education.

At a glance

Country: USA
Industry: Education
Founded: 1894
Employees: 140
Website: www.catholichigh.org

Challenge

Catholic High School wanted to introduce a 1:1 computing program for students and faculty. It needed to find a technology partner that could offer a cost-effective, durable and flexible device.

Solution

After exploring how other schools operated and looking at a number of vendors, the school decided that the Fujitsu LIFEBOOK T732 Tablet PC provided the best blend of performance and versatility with enhanced functionality.

Benefit

- Devices enable a more interactive learning experience with a student-centric approach
- An internal student-staffed helpdesk handles basic repairs and equips students with valuable skills and a path to becoming a Fujitsu-certified engineer
- Precise stylus interface allows users to annotate on-screen and is invaluable in subjects such as Math
- Devices are easy to configure with critical applications including Moodle®, Rationale® and MathXL®

Customer

In 1894, the Brothers of the Sacred Heart established a school in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, under the name St. Vincent's Academy, which has since become known as Catholic High School. The Catholic High School tradition involves a holistic approach to education rooted in religious values, structured through friendly discipline, nurtured by personal attention and committed to academic excellence. Approximately 140 faculty members are responsible for the education of 1,150 students. Catholic High School has been recognized five times as a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence by the U.S. Department of Education.

Products and services

- Fujitsu LIFEBOOK® T732 Tablet PC
- Fujitsu LIFEBOOK® T726 Tablet PC

Challenge

Catholic High School must stay ahead of the technology curve to ensure its students get the best, most modern educational experience that will provide them with the tools they need to succeed. As part of this commitment, it wanted to introduce a 1:1 computing program that would see every student and teacher equipped with a personal computing device.

"These are essential skills for life so it was important for us to incorporate technology in every classroom," explains Lisa Harvey, Principal, Catholic High School. "We visited a lot of local schools to explore how they had implemented 1:1 computing and to find out what would work best for us."

The school had a number of criteria when it came to choosing the right device with battery life, durability and stylus input capability at the top of the list. In addition, it wanted to introduce a student-staffed helpdesk to handle any on-site breakages.

"We needed a device that would last all day because the current campus was built in 1957 and we don't have the electrical infrastructure for lots of people to plug in simultaneously," continues Harvey. "We also wanted our teachers and pupils to be able to make annotations with pen and touch; these requirements enabled us to narrow down the prospective technology partner."

After its comprehensive research, the school decided that Fujitsu tablet devices provided the flexibility, durability and performance it required. Unlike another leading tablet vendor it could also be supported by an in-house helpdesk.

Solution

Initially, Catholic High School rolled out the Fujitsu LIFEBOOK T732 Tablet PC, which offers the perfect blend of value, performance, versatility and mobility, to its 140 faculty staff for the first year. This gave us the opportunity to test the device in the field and find the best applications and services. The school purchased enough devices for all its students along with 50 units to serve as loaners for the helpdesk. Each device is accessorized with an extended battery to ensure it lasts the whole school day.

"The Fujitsu LIFEBOOK T732 Tablet gives us the flexibility of tablet/keyboard interface along with an advanced stylus input and extended battery," says Harvey. "They are also simple to manage; we simply ship the devices in and image them here at the helpdesk."

The helpdesk is a student-staffed operation that configures the device with applications, including Moodle, ArtRage®, and Rationale, and performs basic repairs such as replacing cracked screens. It provides these students with a path to becoming a fully certified Fujitsu engineer.

"The helpdesk is enormously important to us but other vendors have the technology locked down so tight, it wouldn't be possible," adds Harvey. "However, with these Fujitsu devices, we can turn around repairs quickly while developing useful skills for students."

Benefit

The Fujitsu devices are enabling the faculty to experiment with new ways of learning and move away from the traditional teacher plus blackboard model. It has also encouraged a more student-centric approach to education.

"Our teachers are learning to use the tablet in remarkable ways to keep students more engaged; it is a valuable tool and the pen interface gives us the versatility we need in certain subjects," comments Harvey. "Having their own devices also makes students more accountable and facilitates self-learning."

Ultimately, the aim is to give the students the tools and skills they need to thrive not just in the classroom but in college and beyond. The helpdesk offers an additional path with bona fide credentials.

"We already have two graduates who left here as Fujitsu-certified engineers. That gives them a huge advantage in applying for college or careers," remarks Harvey. "However, for all our students, the Fujitsu LIFEBOOK ensures they are fully comfortable with digital resources."

Following the success of the initial deployment, Catholic High School is keen to keep up with the latest technology. As such, incoming freshmen will be equipped with the Fujitsu LIFEBOOK T726 tablet, the latest iteration that shares port replicator, family design and modular bay accessories with its predecessor. Its solid state hard drive will also deliver better reliability and speed.

"Some people had concerns that putting children in front of a screen for much of the day would have a negative impact but our experience has been quite the opposite. It's actually enhanced the relationship between the teachers and pupils and brought learning to life. It has been a great journey and has enabled our teachers to introduce a more engaging, interactive educational experience," concludes Harvey.

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