CUSTOMER CASE STUDY

London Design & Engineering UTC

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James Culley
Director of Digital Operations
London Design and Engineering UTC

The London Design and Engineering University Technical College turned to Fujitsu's best-in-class laptops and workstations to enable its students to thrive.

At a glance

Country: United Kingdom
Industry: Education
Founded: 2016
Website: ldeutc.co.uk

Challenge

London Design and Engineering UTC wanted to provide its students with reliable, high-performing tools to become proficient in using cutting-edge technology. It needed to find a cost-effective technology partner to equip its three computing rooms and supply laptops for students and teachers.

Solution

The UTC deployed high-end CELSIUS workstations, ESPRIMO and LIFEBOOK laptops, as well as an underlying Fujitsu vShape infrastructure. It also became a Fujitsu Education Ambassador to promote education-wide collaboration for the benefit of both educators and students.

Benefit

- Students have access to powerful workstations that enable the creation of virtual 3D worlds
- Reliable performance ensures peace of mind for the IT team
- The Fujitsu Education Ambassador programme offers encouragement and opportunities beyond the classroom
- Digital collaboration boosts academic performance and satisfaction among students

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Customer

University Technical Colleges (UTCs) are government-funded schools that offer 14–19 year olds different opportunities to traditional schools. They teach students technical and scientific subjects in new, innovative ways and are educating the inventors, engineers, scientists and technicians of tomorrow. The London Design and Engineering UTC, located in East London on the Royal Docks, provides first-class facilities and specialist equipment, combined with outstanding staff, to equip students with the skills needed to secure employment or routes into higher education.

Products and Services

- 88 x FUJITSU Desktop ESPRIMO Q556
- 25 x FUJITSU Workstation CELSIUS
- 50 x FUJITSU Workstation CELSIUS J550
- 40 x FUJITSU Notebook LIFEBOOK U745
- FUJITSU Integrated System PRIMEFLEX vShape

Creating a beacon of IT excellence

The London Design and Engineering UTC was recently founded in East London and had a greenfield site which needed to be fitted with the best technology available. Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) subjects are at the heart of the UTC philosophy, meaning having cutting-edge equipment is hugely important. The school worked with BETT award-winning ICT supplier Joskos to scope out the requirements.

"We wanted to be industry-leading and give the students a real taste of the type of technology they might expect to use in the world of work," explains James Culley, Director of Digital Operations, London Design and Engineering UTC. "I had been working in 3D design and through a friend got introduced to the school. I also have a background in teaching, so it was a great fit for me, however, the next step was finding the right technology partner."

The UTC teaches courses in virtual reality development and 3D modelling, coding, CAD and other processor-intensive subjects, all of which require hardware with the highest specifications. It also needed a range of laptops and desktops for less demanding jobs, as well as a robust back-end infrastructure to support operations.

"Our CEO was invited to Fujitsu's Baker Street office to evaluate its educational offerings in relation to its requirements and was invited to make the UTC a Fujitsu Education Ambassador with a dedicated innovation hub," adds James. "That meant we had access to industry-leading technology at a cost-effective price. We need this technology to attract students that are already mid-way through their secondary education and already live digital lives."

Powerful workstations within a virtualised environment

Over the course of four weeks, Fujitsu and Joskos worked together at the London Design and Engineering UTC to install and wire the new facilities. This involved the installation of a range of user devices and back-end infrastructure. Seventy-five FUJITSU Workstation CELSIUS models, running NVIDIA GeForce GTX 1060 graphics cards, with dual hi-res monitors equip three dedicated computing rooms, running industry standard software, including CAD applications such as Autodesk 3ds Max, SolidWorks and 2D Design as well as Unreal Engine and Adobe Photoshop for gaming and VR. Oculus Rift headsets are also on hand to help experience immersive virtual 3D worlds.

For the staff and students, 130 Fujitsu LIFEBOOK and ESPRIMO provide portable productivity for educational collaboration and student information management. Meanwhile, FUJITSU Integrated System PRIMEFLEX vShape, which consists of Fujitsu ETERNUS DX200 S3 storage, Brocade IP switches and leading VMware technology running on Fujitsu PRIMERGY servers, is designed and optimised for enterprise virtualisation.

"We worked with Joskos, which performed the handover and installation of all the kit ahead of our first term," continues James. "We now have a dual use innovation hub and classroom with some of the most powerful workstations available."

Broadening academic horizons through digital transformation

Four-hundred users across faculty now have access to the flexibility of robust, lightweight personal laptops, which can be carried from class to class, alongside a state-of-the-art innovation hub. Moreover, as a Fujitsu Education Ambassador, the UTC has had many opportunities to deepen the relationship and offer students the chance to further their studies.

"The Ambassador programme has been a resounding success and demonstrates Fujitsu's commitment to the education sector," comments James. "It's vital from a motivational point of view to have access to such technology and it provides opportunities beyond the classroom. For example, our students have appeared at Fujitsu's stand at BETT, showing off their robotic projects which they control using Fujitsu hardware."

James has also been impressed with the reliability of the hardware and the support provided by Fujitsu: "The workstations and laptops are essentially plug-and-play, and the software runs like an absolute dream, even with demanding rendering software. I can honestly say we have had no issues since installation."

Teachers and students alike have been amazed by the performance of the Fujitsu hardware, which is always in demand. During lunch, breaktime and after school, the Innovation Hub and study zone are always busy with students creating and collaborating.

"Our students used Unreal to design a virtual reality Ethiopian village environment to explore using Oculus Rift within the dedicated VR lab in order to promote the charity WaterAid," remarks James. "It's that type of ingenuity – as well as experience with the best technology – that will serve them well as they enter the job market."

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IN COLLABORATION WITH Joskos

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