Streamline Multi-Campus Collaboration

SAINT LEO
UNIVERSITY®

wacom®

Remote Collaboration for 21st Century Learning

Industry

Education

Usage Scenario

Integrated Wacom interactive displays into teaching stations in support of Zoom software for improved collaboration between on-and-off campus faculty and students.

Challenge

Improve collaboration between faculty and students across the United States taking in-class, hybrid, and online courses with Saint Leo University.

Solution

Wacom 24-inch devices with pen and touch capabilities embedded into on-campus teaching stations and integrated with video-conferencing technology.

Benefits

- Easy user adoption with software neutrality
- Improved collaboration efforts with video conferencing integration
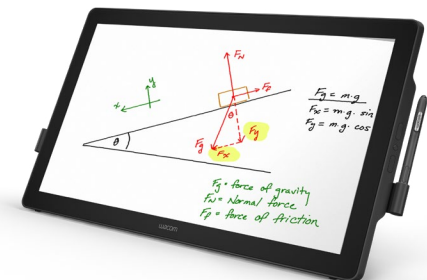- Standardized learning and teaching experience across centers

Challenge
How can Wacom improve information sharing for remote learners?

Founded in 1889, Saint Leo University is a leading Catholic teaching institution with both on-campus and online learning experiences. The university specializes in using video conference solutions, or Video Teaching Teleconferencing, a term that they adopted after receiving a grant from the Navy to provide education to the military overseas.

An efficient and effective learning environment is key to student retention and engagement. It's already challenging to keep the attention of students and faculty in classroom settings. It's exponentially harder when classes are conducted 100% online or in a hybrid course. While Saint Leo University has its main campus in Tampa Florida, they also have 32 education centers across the US, many of which are hosted on military bases. Out of the nearly 11,000 students enrolled at Saint Leo this fall, about 8,600 attend classes at education centers or study entirely online. Because both staff and students are in a variety of geographic locations, this adds another layer to the existing challenge of maintaining student engagement.

Saint Leo University wanted to leverage video conferencing and interactive pen displays to improve communication and information-sharing between faculty and students across the United States taking in-class, hybrid, and online courses.

Solution
Remove the learning curve with a flexible, familiar tool

Gideon Schnog, Director of Client Technology Services, along with their technology department, started testing Wacom's 24-inch devices in on-campus teaching stations, as well as integrating them with their standard video-conferencing technology, Zoom.

Wacom devices were an attractive solution for Saint Leo University's use case for several key reasons. The digital pen and touch screen options provide a familiar user experience for students and faculty.

Schnog explains, "The way to success is to stick to what people know. It's hard to bring in new software and get people to use it. If they don't have easy access to it in their personal lives, they're less likely to use it in education. With Wacom, everyone is familiar with the ink tools already built into programs such as those from Microsoft. There was no need to re-invent the ink wheel and instead, we gave end users an intuitive tool that required minimal training."

Because people are accustomed to using features like stylus and touch screen technology on personal devices like tablets, cell phones, and laptops, bringing those same functionalities into the classroom is critical for user adoption.

Further encouraging user adoption, Wacom devices are also a software neutral solution. Meaning, faculty and students can continue using well-known programs like Microsoft Office suite for annotation and information-sharing purposes. This was critical because many collaboration devices on the market for the education sector require proprietary software to use to its full potential.

Saint Leo University is also assessing the option of running the Zoom application and control interface directly via the 24" Wacom. Although not a configuration needed in all locations, it shows the flexibility of the hardware.

Schnog commented, "Zoom and Wacom work well with each other. Together, they enable the interactivity component that is important to effectively capture courses and live video conferencing in a virtual environment."

Because Wacom doesn't require the use of proprietary licensed software, the university can leverage video conferencing technology with screen capture and annotations to enrich their student's learning experience, regardless of geographic location.

Effective teaching podiums designed for video conferencing

Because of all the centers that they manage, Saint Leo University is heavily invested in video conferencing. The university has started the transition to Zoom in order to benefit from lower operating costs, easier deployment, maintenance, and user adoption. From the device side of the equation, Wacom displays have proven to address these exact same challenges.

Schnog explains, "We use touch technology in many classrooms. Wacom has a very specific niche in that, and it's a niche that Saint Leo is looking to develop because of its flexibility, deployability, ease of maintenance, easier user adoption, and cost benefits."

For on-campus applications, Saint Leo University is embedding the 24-inch devices into teaching podiums on an ergonomic arm. In addition to making the technology more accessible, the placement and smaller size make it easier for staff to install and maintain, in contrast to cumbersome wall displays. Especially when managing centers and students in disbursed physical locations, easy maintenance is essential to reduce burdens on university IT staff. Wacom devices are durable and have an intuitive interface, meaning they have a longer product lifecycle, and faculty and students can learn to use them with minimal training so IT can focus their efforts on other projects.

From a design standpoint, Saint Leo University wanted a screen size and form factor that perfectly fit their minimalist podiums, while still providing a large writing surface for users. The 24" writing area is more than adequate, and the low-latency pen offers a pleasant writing experience with the added benefit of not requiring a battery. To accommodate their video conference needs, the university is working towards using the Wacom device as a large monitor and integrating it with Zoom and annotation capture software. Their minimalist approach to technology allows for a more straightforward user experience and reduced their integration and maintenance costs. For this reason, Zoom and Wacom complimented each other well and enabled student interactivity, which is critical to course capturing and live video conferencing in the Zoom Room environment.

Outcome

A smart education solution for comfortable everyday use

By integrating Wacom interactive displays with video conferencing technology, Saint Leo University took major strides to improve collaboration efforts. Wacom enables them to video capture notes and classes to create shareable videos for virtual storage on their Learning Management System (LMS). More importantly, Zoom enables them to connect their Education Centers via video conferences, and annotation allows remote students to see and interact with the instructor. Additionally, with students and faculty scattered across the nation, implementing Wacom devices standardized teaching procedures, which provided students with a more cohesive learning experience.

Especially with their need to accommodate remote students, they want to encourage instructors to utilize digital solutions, rather than traditional whiteboards. If an instructor uses a physical whiteboard, that information can't be easily shared with online students. Wacom devices are software neutral, which allows the university to integrate the devices with its standard educational programs like Microsoft Office. This capability, along with other modern characteristics such as touch screen, offers students and faculty a smart education solution that aligns with their everyday technology use.

In contrast to heavy wall displays, Wacom devices can be embedded into teaching stations, which makes them more comfortable for instructors to use and adjust. The device's design ensures accessibility for anybody who needs ADA-compliant technology. Due to its compact size, Wacom devices are more manageable for IT staff to swap out for servicing than its bulky, whiteboard counterpart.

Streamline annotation capabilities, optimize student and faculty experiences, and increase student engagement with Wacom technology.

Connect with Wacom today to demo electronic annotation solutions for education:

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• Reduced device downtime
• Share data in real-time

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