



Denmark Technical College Builds Hybrid Classrooms for Remote Students

After COVID-19 hit, Denmark Technical College (DTC) wanted to welcome students back safely. Due to social distancing requirements, the director of IT services was in search of a hybrid model to accommodate students, remote and in person. DTC leaned on Sharp to provide a total hybrid solution to bring the classroom experience to students at home.

Business Environment Challenges

Denmark Technical College is a public, Historically Black technical college located in rural Bamberg County in South Carolina. The pandemic presented new challenges for the college but keeping students safe was the top priority. To maintain social distancing standards, a maximum of 50 percent occupancy was permitted in each classroom. The director of IT services, Michael Myers, reached out to Sharp in search of a hybrid classroom solution with a web-based videoconferencing system for the upcoming semester.

DTC had an unwavering commitment to finding a solution that did not sacrifice the learning experience or class participation for remote students; therefore, Michael had a checklist of requirements that Sharp needed to fulfil. He also wanted to ensure that any new technology investment would be a viable solution beyond the pandemic.

Industry

Education

Organization

Denmark Technical College

Challenges

- Social distancing required 50 percent occupancy in classrooms
- Needed a hybrid classroom solution to teach remote students
- Wanted technology that could be used after the pandemic
- Concerned remote students would miss out on in-class experience

Solutions

- Total hybrid solution in 30 classrooms and a boardroom
- Solution includes AQUOS BOARD® interactive displays with Shuttle PCs and all-in-one high-fidelity Yamaha sound bars
- Hosting virtual class on Microsoft Teams

Results

- Professors quickly adapted and enjoy teaching on the hybrid solution
- No laptop required to teach from the AQUOS BOARD display
- AQUOS BOARD overlay feature enhances student learning
- Remote students can easily join class virtually, participate and hear voices up to 30 feet away from the board

Technology Solutions

Sharp met with the IT director to determine the college's needs. After an in-depth evaluation and careful consideration, the Sharp team recommended a comprehensive plan that marked every checkbox on the director's list. Then, the Sharp team helped the college procure the hybrid classroom solution through CARES Act funding. This allowed DTC to introduce new technology on campus and bring student learning to the next level during COVID.

Thirty classrooms were outfitted with a total hybrid classroom solution, just in time for the fall semester. This included an AQUOS BOARD® interactive display equipped with a Shuttle PC at the front of each room and an all-in-one, high-fidelity Yamaha soundbar with video and voice optimization in the back. The college leveraged its existing Microsoft subscription to use Microsoft Teams for web-based classroom sessions.

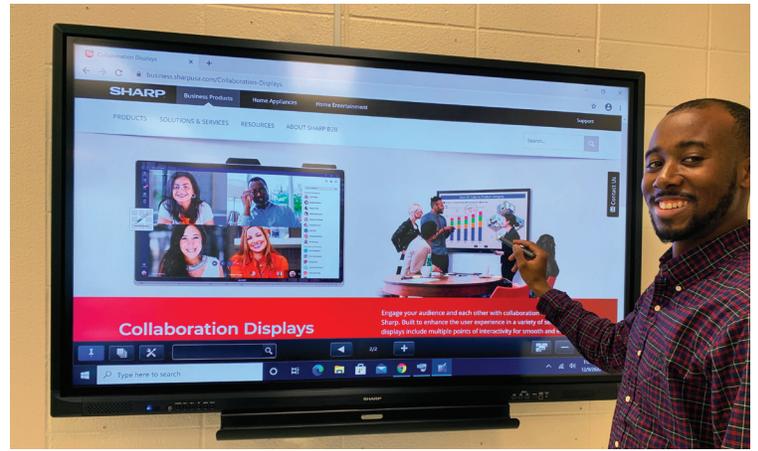
Proven Results

With some help from Sharp, the college procured the hybrid classroom technology through CARES Act funding. This allowed the college to introduce new technology on campus that would ultimately fit the unique needs of professors and students brought on by the pandemic.

The new virtual and collaborative learning experience has aided remote students and enhanced instruction inside and outside of the classroom. The audio-visual combination allows remote students to clearly see professors on screen and hear their voices' up to 30 feet away from the board. What's more, after a firsthand experience with the classroom setup, the college president had one replicated in the main boardroom for administrative meetings.

Professors and key faculty members have received ongoing training to help them skillfully conduct lessons in an entirely new way. "Training was a springboard to help teachers enhance classroom instruction," said Michael. "Professors quickly took a liking to the board. In fact, after the training, they went back to the classroom and began to play with the boards. They've actually discovered new tricks and features and incorporated them into their teaching style."

The Shuttle PCs have added extra convenience, because it turns the AQUOS BOARD display into a life-sized PC. Now, professors no longer need to bring laptops to class. They simply tap on the AQUOS BOARD display to access class lessons from the school portal and launch a Microsoft Teams session right from the display.



Michael, who also doubles as a professor, shared, "I'm a visual instructor, so I have to say that the SHARP Pen Software feature is my favorite, especially when drawing processes on the digital whiteboard. Another great tool is the overlay feature, because it lets me make annotations on top of YouTube videos to emphasize the topics at hand." He added, "I've asked my students for their feedback; so far, I've seen a universal thumbs up. I was worried student participation would fall off, but I'm happy to see students are learning and participating no matter where they are."

DTC is confident that this hybrid technology will revolutionize the way the college approaches continuing education, workforce development, dual enrollment and community outreach programs such as Upward Bound. This can help DTC make a bigger impact by making it easier for students, who would normally need to travel far distances, to attend class and engage with professors.

"Not only did Sharp bring our hybrid classroom vision to life, but the level of professionalism and communication from the Sharp team throughout this entire experience was second to none. Whenever I came to them with a question or an issue, they provided detailed explanations and worked together to quickly resolve it," said Michael. "This is why DTC continues to partner with Sharp for its technology needs."

For more information on the Windows collaboration display from Sharp, visit business.sharppusa.com/Collaboration-Displays



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