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UNIS Taps RoomReady to Equip Classrooms with Technology Enabling Hybrid Learning

The COVID-19 pandemic forced many sectors to radically alter their operations overnight – and elementary, middle and high school administrations found themselves in a particularly complicated spot. Remote learning became the only option, but unprepared for such a scenario, many schools had to manage with the technology they had until the end of the 2019-2020 school year. But what if remote learning, or even hybrid learning, would continue into Fall 2020?

The United Nations International School, which serves more than 1,500 K-12 students in the New York City boroughs of Manhattan and Queens, decided to tackle the challenge head-on – and adopt advanced technology that would be viable both during and after the pandemic. Rather than looking for a quick fix, UNIS wanted to invest in technology that would advance the learning environment, as well as improve the quality of its curriculum – regardless of where students learned or teachers were located.

A hybrid approach – to both learning and technology

Before the 2019-2020 school year even ended, UNIS administrators began planning their ongoing approach to COVID-19. The school started with an intensive search for classroom technology solutions that would enable a remote/hybrid learning option in time for the fall session, as administrators had no idea how long remote learning would last. The solution needed to be simple to learn and use, as well as give participants – teachers and students alike – a next-best-thing-to-being-in-the-classroom experience.

In addition, UNIS did not want to scrap the tools it had. Instead, it sought a vendor that could integrate new technology with in-place investments like laptops and wall-mounted smartboards, creating a solution that would still positively impact the classroom environment once the pandemic had subsided.

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Integrate existing and new technology

UNIS ultimately selected managed service provider WPG, which turned to RoomReady for an AV integration solution that could deliver a superior hybrid experience – and RoomReady didn't disappoint.

RoomReady equipped the school with mobile carts that support 55-inch displays, allowing educators to see all student participants on the screen via a Brady Bunch-like grid view. The interactive solution also included 29 Poly X30 and 131 Poly X50 all-in-one video bars – depending on the size of the room – equipped with a speaker tracking camera, as well as microphone, to ensure students can hear the teacher as if they were in the room. As a result, remote learners could see their in-classroom cohorts and be heard clearly when they spoke. And teachers could share lesson plans from an existing laptop in the room, enabling students – both in classrooms and remote – to interact with content on the display.

Simple solution improves learning experience

RoomReady took just three weeks to install technology that enabled successful hybrid learning in 150 classrooms. The integrator installed 110 solutions on carts, and it mounted 40 on existing wall displays. The simple solution allowed UNIS to save money by leveraging technology it already had rather than replacing equipment.

Although COVID-19 concerns continued to impact school operations across the country, RoomReady's AV solutions helped UNIS prepare for the unknown. Now, its teachers can educate effectively and its students can interact seamlessly – whether in school or remote.

The Results

150 classes set up for simultaneous remote and in-classroom learning

160 Poly all-in-one video bars installed

Full installation complete in just 3 weeks

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