

Upgrading to ViewSonic ViewBoard Displays Helps Langston University “Roll” With Remote and In-Person Learning

+ImageNet
Consulting



“If we had gone the traditional route of renovating and installing custom solutions for each type of classroom, we might still be in implementation stages. With this fully commercial-grade system on a cart, we were able to equip all 75 lecture halls and classrooms within 6 months.”

— Monica Nichols, ImageNet Senior Solutions Consultant

INTERVIEWED

- ▶ Monica Nichols, ImageNet Senior Solutions Consultant

INDUSTRY

- ▶ Education

CHALLENGE

- ▶ Quickly upgrade technology to support remote learning in classrooms with unconventional shapes and multiple sizes.
- ▶ Provide a blank slate deployment with professional-grade technology that is consistent across all classrooms.

SOLUTION

- ▶ ViewSonic® ViewBoard® IFP7550 75" 4K interactive flat panel display
- ▶ ViewSonic VPC15-WP-4 Slot-In PC
- ▶ ViewSonic VB-STND-001 mobile trolley cart

PROFILE

CONSULTANT

Founded in 1956 as a typewriter repair company, ImageNet Consulting has evolved to become one of the premier technology companies in the industry today. With services ranging from IT management to 3D printing to enterprise content, ImageNet prides itself on its ability to use technology to create solutions that maximize efficiency and lower costs for its clients. Today, the company has offices across the United States and offers custom solutions for clients in education, government, manufacturing and financial services.

CUSTOMER

Established as part of a land grant in 1897, Langston University is a HBCU with campuses located in Langston, Oklahoma City, Tulsa and Ardmore. The Langston campus offers programs that cater to its vast international student body including chemistry, nursing, urban education, international studies and technology. Through a partnership with the University Center of Southern Oklahoma, the LU-Ardmore campus offers a degree in nursing.

The LU-OKC and LU-Tulsa campuses offer upper-division and graduate courses that are ideal for students who have completed their associate degree and wish to pursue a bachelor's degree or a master's degree. Programs offered on these campuses include urban education, rehabilitation counseling and organizational leadership.

PROJECT TEAM

Monica Nichols – ImageNet Senior Solutions Consultant supporting the Langston University contract since 2007. Works directly with the University President's staff on key innovative technology enhancements that affect the campus.

Upgrading to ViewSonic ViewBoard Displays Helps Langston University “Roll” With Remote and In-Person Learning

RESULTS

- ▶ The university equipped 50 classrooms with the versatile cart-based solution, then equipped 27 more classrooms after the rousing success of the first deployment.
- ▶ Deployment was significantly cheaper and faster to install than a full pro-AV solution.
- ▶ Instructors are thrilled with the connectivity, content sharing and annotation capabilities.



IFP7550



VPC15-WP-4



VB-STND-001

Ian Ramsey – ImageNet AV Specialist supporting consultants on AV projects throughout Oklahoma.

Kent Smith – Langston University President. Project approver.

Theresa Powell – Langston University Vice President for Operations. Primary influencer for project; supported advisor for funds allocation and project development.

Dr. Joshua Snavelly – Langston University Dean of the School of Business. Primary influencer for project; supported advisor for funds allocation and project allocation. Provided hands-off support, product knowledge training and final device placements.

CHALLENGE

When the COVID-19 pandemic began closing schools in the spring of 2020, Langston University quickly shifted its resources online to support a remote learning initiative. Although plans to upgrade their aging technology infrastructure were already in the works, the university was still working on defining their needs and creating timelines for implementation. That’s when Langston University turned to ImageNet Consulting for a consultation.

“We’ve worked with Langston for many years, providing a wide range of products and services,” said Ian Ramsey, ImageNet audio & video sales specialist. “Our senior solutions consultant for Langston, Monica Nichols, has built a great relationship with them.”

Thanks to funds from the CARES Act and additional grants, the university selected ImageNet as their partner to assess and solve their remote learning challenges. Langston’s dean of business, Joshua Snavelly, and the President’s chief of staff, Theresa Powell, teamed up to spearhead the process within Langston. Working with key personnel throughout the university as well as university president Kent Smith, the team defined the project’s multiple goals:

- To install professional-grade technology that would enable instructors to connect via Zoom or other videoconferencing platforms.
- To enable teaching using an interactive touchscreen.
- To implement a new system without changing existing programs and platforms.
- To enable students to see both their instructors and content on the board.
- To implement a standardized solution that would be consistent across all classrooms.

Together the ImageNet and Langston teams walked through the main campus to assess the spaces.

Nichols and Ramsey quickly recognized some hurdles that would need to be addressed during installation. Due to the unusual configurations in many classrooms and variety in classroom shapes and sizes, a full teardown and installation would be difficult. And because there was no existing technology that could be integrated into a new solution, this would have to be a blank slate deployment.

Upgrading to ViewSonic ViewBoard Displays Helps Langston University “Roll” With Remote and In-Person Learning

SOLUTION

The ImageNet AV team put their heads together and recalled a previous solution they had considered for another client – a basic conference room AV setup on a rolling cart. Langston wanted a system that delivered more complexity, including more robust functionality and longer-lasting professional-grade materials.

“We asked ourselves whether we could create a mobile rolling cart that would be everything they needed,” said Ramsey. “We had never done that but thought it was possible. The critical factor would be delivering an outstanding user experience and for that we would need the right equipment.

“With all the chaos going on with COVID, we didn’t have time to waste. It came down to our relationship with ViewSonic. We knew that they make a great product and our ViewSonic reps have always been great – their support has been second to none for us.”

This, he said, along with ViewSonic’s history of being on the mark with pricing and inventory, makes it easy to put the ViewSonic product line in front of clients.

The right product for Langston University, said Ramsey, turned out to be the ViewSonic® ViewBoard® IFP7550 75” 4K interactive flat panel display, combined with the ViewSonic VPC15-WP-4 Slot-In PC and a just-released beamforming microphone, mounted on a ViewSonic VB-STND-001 Mobile Trolley Cart.

Based on a wish list that the Langston University team had put together, the AV team built a proof-of-concept model and placed it in the president’s office. After testing and putting the demo unit through its paces, the trial run was deemed successful and the project was given the green light.

RESULTS

The trolley units were a success. Both teachers and students reported outstanding user experiences and the university was able to rapidly equip their learning spaces with a fully functional professional-grade solution at a very reasonable price point.

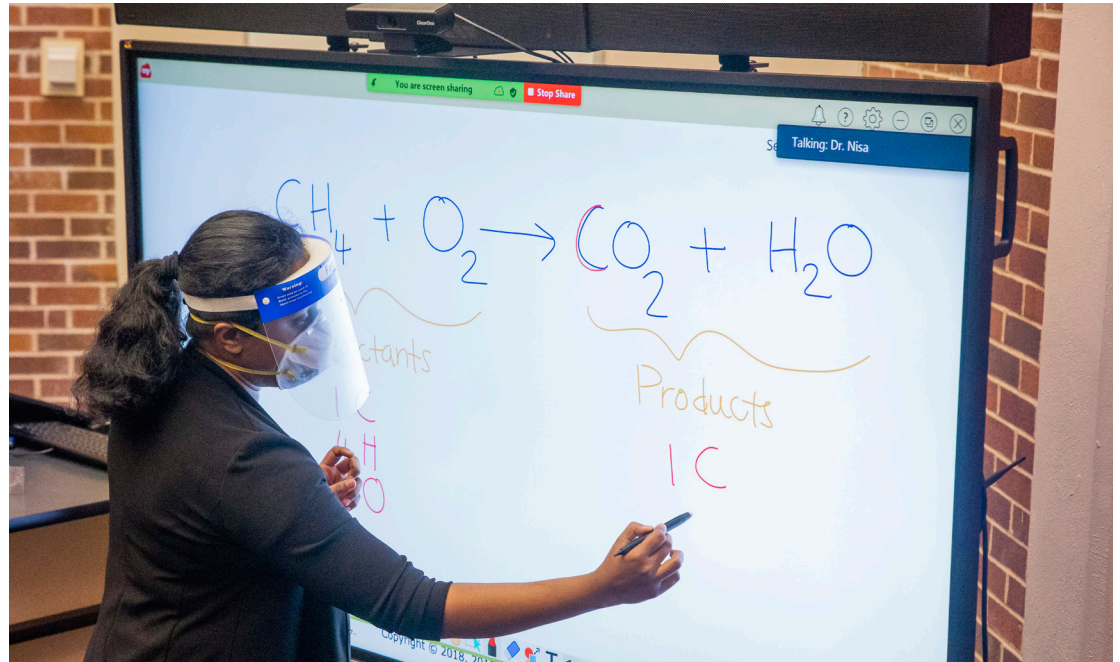
The university ordered 50 mobile cart solutions over the summer of 2020. By the end of October, they had ordered another 27, for a total of just over 75 solutions across three campuses.

“LU named them ‘CTUs’ for ‘Classroom Technology Unit,’” said Ramsey, adding that at ImageNet they like to think of them as Conference Technology Units for the broader possibilities. “It’s been an incredible solution for them.”

The units have met the critical need to connect remote students and gone beyond even that, noted chemistry professor Dr. Nisa Ganewatta, who uses the CTUs in all her classes:

Upgrading to ViewSonic ViewBoard Displays Helps Langston University “Roll” With Remote and In-Person Learning

“The CTUs are very useful in teaching subjects like chemistry and physical sciences, which have lots of calculations that need to be explained and worked out on the board to support student understanding of the materials. All the content, visualizations and videos are clearly visible and audible to both the students who join via Zoom and the students who attend classes in-person,” said Ganewatta, adding that “The myViewBoard app in these CTUs is tremendously helpful in the above tasks. Powerful speakers, microphones, and the camera in the unit completes its job!”



The university has so much faith in their ViewSonic-powered CTUs that they now use them for everything, including connecting remote participants for their Board of Regents meetings, said Nichols.

Department of English Professor, Wonderful Faison, points out the ViewSonic ViewBoard display's central role in remote learning:

“The CTUs give instructors a more realistic face-to-face classroom feel during remote learning. The size of the display lets instructors see their entire class, which makes the lecture more organic. Other CTU functions also allow instructors to write notes and highlight specific material to focus student's attention on specific ideas or concepts.”

Biology professor, Dr. Julia Reed, praised the ViewSonic CTUs for their ability to share lab class content with remote students.

“I use a CTU for every Human Anatomy class, and they're critical for lab classes,” said Reed. “The wide-angle camera enables my virtual students to see the bones, models and other objects that I present to the students that are present in class. I can walk around the classroom and students at home can see exactly what I'm doing.”

Upgrading to ViewSonic ViewBoard Displays Helps Langston University “Roll” With Remote and In-Person Learning

Not only does the innovative solution meet and exceed instructor needs, but its unique form also allowed the university to deploy it in time for the freshman class re-entry for the 2020-2021 school year.

“If we had gone the traditional route of renovating and installing custom solutions for each type of classroom, we might still be in implementation stages,” said Nichols. “With this fully commercial-grade system on a cart, we were able to equip all 75 lecture halls and classrooms within 6 months. We are very grateful to President Smith, Mrs. Powell, and Dean Snavely for their hard work, diligent efforts and prowess – and most especially for their partnership and trust to award ImageNet such an exciting and monumental project!”

The only thing a room needs, added Ramsey, is a wall outlet and available Wi-Fi. Outside of that, the mobile cart is an entire professional, commercial-grade videoconferencing system on a rolling platform.

“We’re thrilled that Langston has been so happy with it,” said Nichols, noting that they’ve already had interest in the solution from other clients. “The ViewSonic ViewBoard IFP7550 75” 4K interactive flat panel display with slot-in PC alone gives clients an entire computer and with all the controls built-in on the cart.”

Despite the speed of deployment, Ramsey noted that this in no way represents a compromise in quality.

“There are some great ‘icing on the cake’ outcomes from this solution as well,” he said. “Langston University got all the upgraded professional-grade technology that they needed at an excellent price point. This increased the number of units they could place and assures them a long-term return on investment, with a high-quality product that will be long lasting and adaptable.”

What’s more, he added, these commercial-grade mobile technology units could be easily transformed into stationary, professional wall-mounted solutions at any time, for just the cost of additional labor.

“If Langston ever wants to create a clean, seamless, wall-mounted environment in any of the rooms, we can do that with a few ancillary parts,” said Ramsey. “On the other hand, the cart solution will never be useless. This solution represents a big value to all education sector clients with ‘technology on wheels.’”