

NVIDIA® GRID™ CASE STUDY

Saint
Lawrence
Academy

Driving Engagement in
Digital Learning



Adding NVIDIA GRID facilitated digital learning for over 300 students at Saint Lawrence Academy.

AT A GLANCE

CUSTOMER PROFILE

Company: St. Lawrence Academy

Industry: Education

Regions: California

Size: 300 students

SUMMARY

- College preparatory school
 - Implemented GRID K1 for over 300 students
 - Increased performance running graphics-intensive programs in the cloud
 - Planning to leverage GRID to enrich and expand curriculum
-

SOFTWARE

Key applications: Adobe Creative Cloud, web-based multimedia

Desktop & Application Remoting: Citrix XenDesktop, XenApp, and XenMobile

Hypervisor: Citrix XenServer

HARDWARE

GRID boards: K1

Servers: Dell PowerEdge 720

Clients: Desktop and mobile devices

CUSTOMER PROFILE

Saint Lawrence Academy is a co-educational college preparatory school in Santa Clara, California. This school is one of several dozen schools in the Diocese of San Jose. The Diocese leverages its Silicon Valley location to keep its parishes and school on the cutting edge of technology.

In 2011, the Diocese hired local systems integrator The Kanavel Group to build a Citrix-based cloud platform to serve its many churches and schools. Of these, Saint Lawrence Academy was one of the first to take full advantage of virtualization by implementing a bring-your-own-device program powered by a Dell PowerEdge R720 server running Citrix XenDesktop, XenServer, XenApp, and XenMobile that provided student access to school resources anywhere at any time.

CHALLENGE

Students generally welcomed the ability to work in the cloud using their familiar personal devices; however, students enrolled in graphics-intensive courses, such as digital photography and yearbook, often experienced frustrating lag and other issues when running Adobe Creative Cloud (Photoshop, After Effects, and Premiere Pro) and other multimedia applications. These issues, combined with the impending grand opening of the newly-constructed Tech Media Center, prompted school administrators to seek a viable solution.

“The idea behind the Tech Media Center was to maximize digital education opportunities for our middle and high school students,” explained Philip Dolan, President of Saint Lawrence Academy. “By putting all of our tech-related programs under one roof and adding accessible thin clients, tablets, projection systems, and more, we hoped to create an educational hub for all of our students across the board—whether they’re focusing on digital media, or if they just want to augment a lesson or project for a more traditional class. The fact that students were experiencing problems on the media-rich applications was certainly a roadblock, and also gave us doubts about how feasible it would be to expand our curriculum in the future.”



Once GRID was implemented, students immediately commented that their speed of access was greatly improved, that the image quality was improved, and that they were experiencing less latency. Performance boosts were particularly evident in Adobe applications, which is where students and teachers were experiencing the most frustration. Even without knowing about the infrastructure changes, as soon as GRID arrived, they noticed the difference.

Philip Dolan
President
St. Lawrence Academy

5 REASONS FOR GRID

- 1 Immediate performance boost from switching to NVIDIA GRID K1.
- 2 Student engagement improves when they can use their familiar personal devices.
- 3 Increased graphics performance enriches the curriculum and improves student engagement.
- 4 Opportunities to improve and expand the curriculum.
- 5 Increased security and ease of IT management.

SOLUTION

The Kanavel Group quickly and easily implemented two NVIDIA GRID K1 cards on the Saint Lawrence Academy network in time for the grand opening of the Tech Media Center in December, 2013.

Users immediately began experiencing much faster and smoother interactions with Adobe Creative Cloud and multimedia viewing on the web.

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An additional benefit of allowing students to achieve true PC functionality and performance on any device is that Saint Lawrence Academy no longer needs to worry about costly workstation maintenance and upgrades. Going forward, Kanavel plans to bring NVIDIA GRID to other schools within the Diocese.

It's a no-brainer to expand GRID throughout the Diocese. The Diocese initially deployed Citrix to increase flexibility and cost savings at its churches and schools. NVIDIA GRID is the final step to truly break free from costly and cumbersome desktops, regardless of which applications are in use.

Charles Kanaval
Founder
The Kanaval Group



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RESULTS

Almost 300 high school students at Saint Lawrence Academy have daily access to NVIDIA GRID technology. Increasing the graphics performance of demanding applications enriches students' current classes and allows administrators to explore plans for continued curriculum expansion with confidence.

"We hope to use the Tech Media Center to further expand our curriculum within the next few years, adding classes for coding and game development," said Dolan. "With GRID, now we know that our students will be able to handle those classes on any device, whether it's their own, or whether it's a thin client in the Tech Media Center. NVIDIA really lets us bump up what our students are able to do."

"Technology is a very valuable tool for education," Dolan continued.

"People learn in different ways, and technology can enhance learning and reach people on a different level. The more avenues to learning that we can provide, the better it is for our kids."

"It's a no-brainer to expand GRID throughout the Diocese," said Charles Kanaval, founder of The Kanaval Group. "The Diocese initially deployed Citrix to increase flexibility and cost savings at its churches and schools. NVIDIA GRID is the final step to truly break free from costly and cumbersome desktops, regardless of which applications are in use."