# DELLTechnologies



# Creating effective spaces for meeting and learning

University of Tasmania provides highly collaborative, more productive learning and meeting room environments with Dell Technologies.
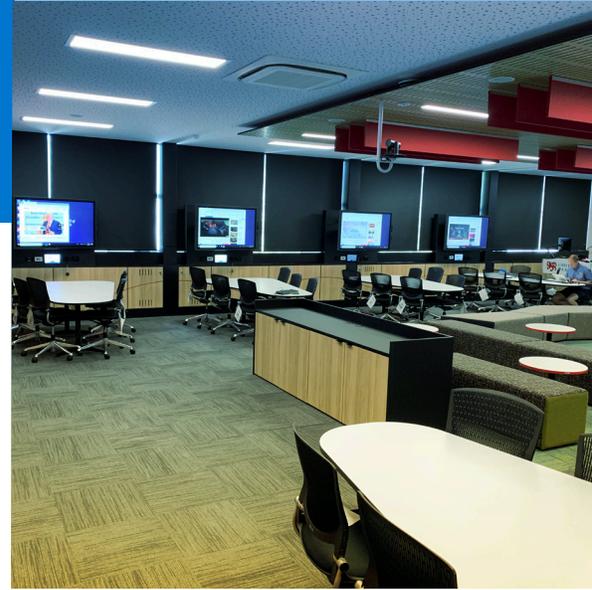
**UNIVERSITY**of**TASMANIA**  Higher Education  |  Australia

## Business needs

The University of Tasmania wanted to introduce class-leading, audiovisual (AV) technology across 70-plus rooms, comprising learning and teaching spaces as well as meeting room environments to increase effective collaboration.

## Solutions at a glance

- Dell Large Format Monitors

- Dell OptiPlex Micro PCs

## Business results

- Helps students and staff increase engagement and collaboration.

- Enables greater productivity with video conferences launched in seconds.

- Increases meeting room utilization rates.

- Reduces the time to set up AV systems.

- Lowers cost of interactive learning and working environments.

- Gives students the high-grade IT experience they expect.

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Brad Boron,
Manager, Unified Communications, UTAS

The University of Tasmania (UTAS) is one of Australia's leading higher education institutions. It is ranked in the top 2 percent of universities worldwide and serves a student body of approximately 29,000.

## A vision of greater collaboration

UTAS wanted to create a collaborative environment that keeps students and teaching staff engaged, and enable administrative staff to communicate effectively. The university looked to create interactive audiovisual (AV) solutions across the 70-plus rooms in learning environments tailored to group working. Brad Boron, manager of Unified Communications at UTAS, says, "The technology inside our meeting rooms was non-standard because each department chose its own AV solution." The complexity of connecting devices to screens, for example, meant it could take 7–10 minutes to launch into a meeting, reducing productivity.

## A solution for multiple space sizes

UTAS sought to standardize the AV technology for learning and meeting room environments. The university assessed solutions that could meet its varied needs from multiple vendors including Dell Technologies, which had been providing UTAS with large-format monitors (LFMs) as well as PCs for years. Richard Quinn, team leader of unified communications at UTAS, says, "During testing, feedback was particularly good on the touch features built into the latest interactive Dell LFMs. UTAS saw that the LFMs could meet the needs of both meeting rooms and learning environments." Furthermore, the environments already contained Dell OptiPlex Micro PCs. Says Brad, "The Dell LFMs' built-in computer housing complemented the Dell PCs. This meant better cable management, with cables safely, neatly and securely stored."

Dell LFMs' touchscreen functionality connects easily to Logitech, Polycom, and Crestron systems, as well as Dell OptiPlex PCs, to successfully deliver conferences through Zoom or Microsoft Teams. The range of standard and interactive LFMs also allows the university to cater to standard classrooms, as well as large-scale, "café style" interactive collaborative spaces with many student Pods. In the case of its meeting rooms, the LFMs can cater to different room sizes: from huddle spaces for 1–6 people to large meeting rooms accommodating more than 12 people.

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## A choice for each department

To ensure that university departments have the information they need to select meeting rooms and teaching environments according to their needs and budgets, UTAS designated six sizes of meeting rooms and nine sizes of teaching environments. It detailed the LFMs and hardware peripherals for each room size along with the software and compiled the information into menu guides. The guides are then distributed among the departments. So far, the university has installed several Dell LFMs in multiple learning spaces, including the collaborative rooms, which typically have four interactive Dell LFMs and Crestron systems that allow teachers to control all the screens centrally. Learning pods are integrated within the rooms, where small groups of students collaborate using their own devices, presenting their content wirelessly on the Dell LFMs for sharing.

## Helping students achieve their potential

Today, students and teachers can develop ideas during classes with people both in the same teaching space and in other connected campuses, annotating presentations on the fly via the Dell LFMs touchscreen. This ability to collaborate in real time is creating more productive environments, allowing students to excel. Says Brad, "Feedback from students has been excellent. Such a great response is highly valued because of the importance students place on technology in education nowadays."

## Saving valuable hours and cost

Teachers and staff using the Dell-enabled meeting rooms no longer have to wait 7–10 minutes before a video conference begins. Now they walk in and touch a launch button on a desk device such as a Logitech Tap controller, and a Zoom or Microsoft Teams meeting starts. Comments Brad, "Because personnel can collaborate more effectively in these spaces, room utilization has increased significantly, and often the meeting rooms must be booked in advance to guarantee a slot." Most importantly for UTAS, standardizing the room builds on Dell has helped reduce the cost of its facilities. "Meeting rooms are now quicker to set up—saving valuable hours—without any support from AV specialists."

## Delivering an effective response to a pandemic

Though UTAS didn't know it at the time, the learning and teaching spaces, as well as meeting room environments, would become increasingly important because of COVID-19. Says Brad, "COVID-19 changed teaching and meeting experiences as we knew them. Meetings, for example, were no longer room to room but room to many remote participants. Plus, in an education context, the touchscreen capabilities of our Dell LFMs working with Zoom would allow teachers to mark up and annotate students work in real time, regardless of where the students are based."
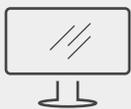
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