St Paul's Academy:

Academy innovates with Sharp's MPS, Visual Solutions & IT Services

UK - Established in 1968, St Paul's Academy aims to provide its 1,200 students with opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge by embracing digital transformation and weaving connected technologies into every area of its premises. Specialising in sports and enterprise, the academy offers a wide range of subjects to prospective students, so any solution must integrate seamlessly into each of its distinct faculties. Sharp was called in to help the academy remain at the fore of engaging its students through innovation, and to keep the curriculum feeling fresh by immersing its pupils in one-of-a-kind collaborative products and solutions.

stpauls
The challenge

Teaching through innovation, As a leading academy whose students achieve high examination results year after year, a challenge for St Paul's was out-of-date equipment. The academy had a high number of ageing devices, which were breaking down frequently and threatened to impact the high standard of teaching and learning.

The academy also wanted to keep its brand-new purpose-built building feeling fresh, and increase student productivity by integrating modern touch screen technology into each of its 7 learning zones. Eileen Bryan, Assistant Principal at St Paul's says: "We've always been strong believers in encouraging students to become more aware of technology and how it can be embedded within processes. A main challenge is ensuring that our students are computer literate and maximise on the technology available."

Both teachers and students needed additional print functions available to them, and to be able to pick up these more advanced jobs from any capable printer in the school.

The school provides students with many educational and recreational trip opportunities, and wished to showcase and promote achievement to fellow students or visitors, but lacked the capabilities.

Moreover, the academy was in desperate need of intuitive IT systems and reliable support, to ensure that their 11 critical servers were accessible to students and teachers at all times.

The solution, Connected technologies to suit each space

Sharp's first solution was to update outdated technology being used by the school, with an initial focus on their printers and photocopiers. Sharp proposed placing multifunctional printers and light production-class devices in strategic locations around the academy. With advanced functionality, including duplex print, scan to email and booklet making, the new machines were more efficient, with improved reliability.

Furthermore, because the school needed to be able to pick up print jobs from any device, Sharp proposed setting the school's devices up on Equitrac. Equitrac print management software would not only give administrators complete sight of the print fleet, but also allow staff and students to send jobs to a single print queue and pick up their print securely from any device by using a password.

With St Paul's drive to keep ahead of the curve with innovative solutions in mind, Sharp found its BIG PAD Interactive Displays and Professional Display technology to be the perfect fit.

The strategic placement of 8 BIG PADs throughout the school's 7 learning zones has maximised their use as an accessible and collaborative tool for keeping students engaged in lessons through an immersive teaching and learning experience. As well as bringing lessons to life, the BIG PADs' compatibility with MFPs mean that printed documents can be scanned and displayed. Likewise, on screen data can be printed, simplifying information sharing and enhancing connectivity throughout the school.

The 14 proposed Professional Display screens would be used to keep the academy feeling fresh throughout, and because they are specifically designed to be on 24/7 at minimal cost, they would be the perfect tool for promoting student achievement. Intuitive signage software would integrate seamlessly with the hardware to let staff easily drag and drop announcements onto the screens.

Additionally, Sharp suggested the introduction of Managed IT Services for enhanced connectivity, including: Office 365 migration, superfast Wi-Fi with boosters in several strategic locations, and a 24/7 remote monitoring service to ensure IT systems rarely failed, and if they did, trained technicians would be available to support from the help-desk.

In all, Sharp's solution was to provide St Paul's with a range of connected technologies that worked in harmony throughout the school. Principal at St Paul's, Patrick Winston says: "When looking for the best solutions for our school we came across a lot of very good external consultants, but Sharp came through as the best provider in every way."

The result, Technology and service to rely on

An optimised print fleet and integrated technologies from Sharp have led to time efficiencies, streamlined processes and an enhanced learning environment.

The installation of Equitrac print management software has sped up the print process further. Eileen says: "You can send a document to print and pick it up from anywhere across the school at any time, it's so convenient!" The software has also allowed governing staff to take back control of print costs by providing insight into who is printing, and what is being printed, making departments accountable for any waste.

The Sharp devices have reduced downtime caused by breakdowns, and because Sharp carries out planned preventative maintenance visits during school holidays as part of its Managed Print Service, the machines are kept working at capacity, eliminating any disruption to students.

The audio visual solutions have also revolutionised the school. Sharp BIG PADs are used by teachers to encourage whole class collaboration by getting students up from their desks and interacting with the content in previously unexplored ways. Eileen says: "The students have interacted very well with the BIG PADs, they can do different activities depending on the lesson." Their cross-school versatility means that "in mathematics the touch screens are used to make angles more interactive, and in computer science they're used to bring excitement to coding."

Sharp's Professional Displays are now located throughout the building and are often the first thing visitors see. Eileen says: "We can put messages up on the screens quickly, they've massively helped with promoting achievement and fundraising throughout the academy, they always display something for our students to see and engage with."

Furthermore, any issues that arise from St Paul's IT equipment are quickly fixed. From the Domain Name Server to the File Server, technicians pick up problems using remote monitoring software, and work collaboratively with the academy's IT department to resolve them.