



Classroom Makeover

Brings 21st Century Learning to Life with ViewSonic Displays and MeTEOR Education



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— Jon Corippo, CUE Chief Learning Officer

INTERVIEWED

- ▶ Jon Corippo, CUE Chief Learning Officer
- ▶ Sean Baum, SVP MeTEOR
- ▶ George Porter, Language Arts Teacher, Sage Creek High School

INDUSTRY

- ▶ Education

CHALLENGE

- ▶ Remake a classroom to align furnishings and technology with best practices in 21st century teaching/learning
- ▶ Achieve makeover in a cost-effective way, minimizing costs related to equipment, implementation and PD

SOLUTION

- ▶ Combining a ViewSonic IFP7550 75” ViewBoard interactive touchscreen display with two 55” ViewSonic CDE5510 displays and the existing IWB provided four-wall visibility

PROFILE

A 501(c)(3) nonprofit educational corporation, CUE (formerly Computer-Using Educators) has an active membership of more than twenty-five thousand educational professionals. Its mission is to foster community, personalize learning, infuse technology, develop leadership and advocate for educational opportunities. CUE furthers these goals through the execution of events that bring educators together to learn, share and grow. Among these is the CUE BOLD Symposium, which takes teachers, administrators and district leaders on a deep dive into the latest and best practices in technology and teaching, beginning with its namesake specialties of blended and online lesson design.

CHALLENGE

The 2019 CUE BOLD event focused on the symbiotic relationship between learning environment design, digital learning systems and the need to rethink traditional lesson design. To demonstrate how these essential components of the 1:1 learning environment are converging, CUE BOLD 2019 set out to revamp a classroom based on the latest design advances.

“We wanted to take a standard classroom and build it out to better support 21st century education,” said Jon Corippo, CUE chief learning officer and mastermind behind the project. “Classroom design and the way technology is used has a big impact on how kids learn, and whether they’re learning in a way that best develops their skills for future success.”

Thinking that the classroom environment doesn’t make a difference in learning outcomes is outdated, said Corippo, referring to evidence from Rebecca Louise Hare and Dr. Robert Dillon. Hare and Dillon are the authors of *The Space*, a teacher-focused guide to adapting classrooms to amplify brain-friendly learning.

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- ▶ Simple setup using HDMI cabling eliminated specialized labor needs and enabled simultaneous viewing on all screens
- ▶ Robust content sharing using integrated ViewSonic ViewBoard feature and Chromecast facilitated intuitive screen sharing by teacher and students to one or all screens
- ▶ Flexible furnishings from MeTEOR enabled easy transformation into active learning groups of various sizes

BENEFITS

- ▶ Dynamic, flexible design enables easy collaboration, student choice, aesthetic appeal, and the flexibility to meet changing classroom needs
- ▶ Students can easily view content from any location, without twisting or neck strain
- ▶ Rolling lectern and content sharing capabilities enable instructor to seamlessly move around the room
- ▶ Students and teacher can quickly share content from their devices to one or more ViewSonic display, enhancing collaboration and engagement
- ▶ Simple setup required very little IT staff time and no specialized labor
- ▶ Minimal training was needed for teacher and students to begin leveraging the basic content sharing and interactive capabilities

"There's so much evidence that new ways of teaching work. Engaging students as a part of the learning process rather than lecturing to them. Challenging them to collaborate to solve problems. Flipping the classroom. Whether we call it 'active learning' or 'constructivism' or SCALE UP learning, we know it increases engagement and learning and test scores," said Corippo. "And, as [Hare and Dillon] say, the furniture and the design of a room isn't neutral in this process—it either improves or inhibits learning."

For the CUE BOLD project, the selected classroom belonged to Carlsbad, Calif.-based language arts teacher George Porter, who teaches at the Carlsbad Unified School District's Sage Creek High School.

The room's "before" state would have felt familiar to many educators. Connected chair-desk combos designed for use in rows in a teacher-centered classroom were arranged in awkward groups of four. Made for solo use, with curved fronts, the desktops butted awkwardly against one another, leaving unattractive, space-hogging gaps. Standard-issue wood-grain desktops and black chairs gave the room a dull, homogenous feel. The front-of-room AV equipment was an aging, projector-based interactive whiteboard (IWB). Porter's home base was a desk adjacent to the IWB, where he spent most of his time operating the system.

Corippo's goal: Redesign the room to support today's teaching strategies and provide students with a dynamic, appealing environment—in a way that would be cost-effective and easy for schools to implement.

To achieve his vision, Corippo enlisted the help of learning spaces provider MeTEOR Education—specialists in creating environments that foster teacher-learner engagement—and display leader ViewSonic, a trusted brand in education with more than 35 years in the visual solutions business.



SOLUTION

A foundational step in transforming Porter's classroom into a dynamic learning space was to eliminate the room's single-direction, forward-facing orientation. Technology and furnishings both played a key role in the change.

"To maximize both the budget and the visual reach, we left the older projector-based IWB and added on from there," said Corippo. "We wanted to show that we could extend the use of existing tech and achieve our goals in a cost-effective way."

The team selected a ViewSonic® IFP7550 75" ViewBoard® interactive touchscreen display and two ViewSonic CDE5510 55" displays, which were mounted around the room to provide visibility on every wall.

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"We ran HDMI connections from the main ViewSonic 75" display to the two 55" displays, as well as to the existing IWB," said Corippo. "This gave George the ability to share images on all four screens at once. That's a big deal because now kids don't all have to be looking in the same direction."

The dull, constraining furniture was replaced with a range of flexible seating options in a lively color palette.

"The original space was inflexible. George wanted a multimodal environment with the flexibility to easily reconfigure the space for different sized active learning groups," said MeTEOR SVP Sean Baum. "He also wanted to be able to clear the floor and have as much open space as possible, and we needed to align the furnishings to maximize flexible use of the visual technology."

Every piece of the new MeTEOR furniture is mobile and configurable—a bit like a Lego set, said Baum. Distinct chairs and "puzzle-piece" tables enabled combinations ranging from circular discussion groups and horseshoe huddle spaces to two-person teams and independent workstations. Height adjustment capabilities and whiteboard-surfaced desktops added flexibility for creativity and comfort. A round standing table and modular couch offered coveted space for downtime and impromptu conversations.

A rolling lectern, along with robust content sharing capabilities, untethered Porter from his desk. To facilitate collaborative, active learning, students were likewise empowered to share content from their devices to the classroom screens.

"All three of the new ViewSonic displays were equipped with Chromecast, and the 75" ViewBoard interactive touchscreen display comes with an integrated module that delivers streaming capabilities," said Corippo. "For those familiar with Apple TV, it's just like AirPlay. It makes it really easy to stream your webpage from your computer to the screen."

RESULTS

The extent of the transformation is apparent with a glance at the "before" and "after" pictures. Visually, the makeover resulted in a cheerful, dynamic-looking space that's clearly more aligned with what students encounter in their after-school hours.

"Kids are trained by McDonald's and Starbucks and the mall to expect options, choice and a certain aesthetic," said Corippo. "Outside of school they get to pick what's optimum for them. Not only is this comfortable and engaging, kids are developing executive functions when they get to make choices, when they have to ask, 'where do I want to go, what do I do now?'"

In the redesigned classroom, students and teacher alike appreciate the ability to easily see a screen from every vantage point. With a display on every wall and chairs that move with ease, no one is left out, or left with a sore neck from twisting for a view.

"It's a huge benefit to have screens on every wall," said Porter. "With the ability to display information and instructions on all screens, I get fewer questions like, 'when is this due,' and 'what are we supposed to be doing.'"

Because the ViewSonic® IFP7550 75" ViewBoard® interactive display has built-in Android, running Chrome is seamless, noted Corippo. With Chromecast on every display, different groups can use different screens at the same time.

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"I plan to use the screens for station rotation, with each group working on something different," said Porter. "Those at the touchscreen will be able to display work and annotate text. We do lots of close reads—it's perfect for that. In the past I've used a document camera, with students watching me do the annotations. Using the touchscreen creates a student-centered approach."

The rolling lectern and the ability to dynamically cast content to the screens has made a big impact on the way he teaches, said Porter.

"I don't have to stay at my desk when I'm presenting," he said. "I'm moving around more, which makes it much easier to interact with the kids."

This mobility can have a big impact on classroom management and offers the ability to maintain proximity to students who need added assistance, with less disruption to the lesson.

Easy content sharing by all has created an environment where students can also seamlessly share their screens. This, says Corippo, is a key to active learning, which develops skills that kids need to thrive in the workplace.

"If a student says, 'you know what I just figured out...,' the teacher can say, 'why don't you show us?' There's no need for the teacher to walk to the student and look over his shoulder to see his work," Corippo said. "Then, when a classmate says, 'you know what, that made me think of...,' that student can show her work on the screens. It's a totally different interaction than in traditional classrooms."

Importantly, achieving this collaborative flow doesn't require advanced IT knowledge, added Corippo.

"You don't need to be a techie to do this. The only thing you need is to be in a Chrome browser. There's an icon you click that immediately sends what you're doing to the screen. The only requirement is that Chromecast and the device be in same network."

While it's possible to stream with any HDMI device, such as Chromecast, Apple TV or Roku, Corippo noted that the ViewSonic system makes it simple and seamless.

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▶ IFP7550



▶ CDE5510

“ViewSonic makes content sharing so easy, with the integrated feature on the 75” ViewBoard interactive display that essentially makes the display think that it’s a Smart TV or an Apple TV,” he said. “It’s easy and cost-saving. Schools don’t have to buy an Apple TV or any other streaming device. The ViewSonic display provides the “casting” capacity for streaming. In addition to being easy, there’s no Apple license needed.”

Minimal need for teacher training is one of the many ways this streamlined solution saves schools money, said Corippo. Equipment savings is yet another.

“With the ViewSonic LCD displays, you don’t need an expensive AV system like Extron or Crestron, just a couple of HDMI cables and a splitter. And the sound from the integrated speakers in the ViewSonic IFP7550 75” ViewBoard interactive display is more than enough for a standard classroom. That’s a big cost savings and the system is so much more accessible.”

Easy setup saves IT time, getting classrooms up and running quickly and conserving IT resources, Corippo said, adding that for many districts the use of HDMI cabling is far less costly than requiring specialized labor to do electrical work.

Completed just eight weeks before the end of the school year, the impact of the CUE BOLD classroom makeover is just beginning. Porter anticipates an ongoing transition to greater collaboration and student-centered active learning, as he and his students find more ways to integrate the ViewBoard interactive display into the curriculum.

Along the way, he looks forward to continuing to use the boards to promote mindfulness and alleviate anxiety.

“It seems like a small thing, but using the displays to create a vibe in the room can really support what we’re doing,” said Porter. “For example, if students are reading, or doing a more passive activity, I’ll put on video like a fireplace or a shoreline with gentle waves and display it on all the screens. It’s a great way to promote mindfulness.”