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Coleg Gwent Transforms Education with Citrix

Institution leverages digital workspace solutions to fuel new models for learning, deliver superior experience for students and staff in face of COVID-19 pandemic

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FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. – October 13, 2020 –COVID-19 is transforming the way education is delivered. And Coleg Gwent, one of Wales' largest colleges, is leading the way, using digital workspace solutions from Citrix Systems, Inc. (NASDAQ:CTXS) to fuel new models for learning and create a superior digital experience for its staff and students.

"The global pandemic has forced us to rethink the way we operate and find ways to future-proof our teaching," said Evan Smith, ICT Infrastructure Manager, Coleg Gwent. "With Citrix®, we can easily adopt new ways of working and learning and better support our students and staff whether they are on campus or at home."

A Modern Approach

The shift to modernize education began at Coleg Gwent long before the pandemic struck. "We wanted to move away from the traditional model of dedicated IT labs and old-fashioned classrooms with fixed furniture, a whiteboard and everybody facing the front," Smith said.

Last year, the college put the wheels in motion to make technology more integral to all learning environments and create multi-purpose learning spaces that enable different ways of teaching and learning, including role play, group discussions, online research and class presentations. So, when COVID-19 reached the shores of Wales and lockdown orders were issued, Coleg Gwent was ready.

"Citrix enabled us to respond quickly and relatively easily to the COVID-19 pandemic, so that we could continue to function and support our students remotely," Smith said. "The critical thing was that staff could be instantly effective and concentrate on what they do, supporting students at a difficult time."

A Seamless Transition

With the help of Citrix Gold Solution Advisor ET Works, Coleg Gwent amped up its use of Citrix Virtual Apps and Desktops to provide access to the systems and data its staff and students would need to continue learning without missing a beat.

"We serve a wide region that includes some economically depressed areas, and students may find it difficult to work effectively from home," Smith said. "So, it was important that teachers and other staff were available to provide all the support required."

It was equally important that the experience be consistent and simple. "We wanted students to simply turn devices on, log in and get access to their desktop," Smith said. "It wasn't about virtualization, it was about delivering superior services to the classroom."

A Secure, Reliable Experience

As bedrooms and kitchens became classrooms, it was critical that Coleg Gwent had a secure and reliable way to do this. And Citrix provided it.

"When the lockdown happened, staff simply logged in from home, accessing their Citrix desktop from a web link," Smith said. "Performance was excellent, much better than the VPN solution that we had previously used."

Security was exceptional as well. "Using Citrix Virtual Apps and Desktops gives us peace of mind because the data never leaves the college network, and our remote network traffic all goes through Citrix, which we can monitor with Citrix management and analytics tools," Smith said. "We're more secure now than we would be if we were all on site."

Citrix delivers a comprehensive range of solutions that educational institutions can use to deliver a better way to learn. Click here find out more about these solutions and the value they can deliver.