

Press Release

Eight California Community Colleges partner with the Cal Poly San Luis Obispo Digital Transformation Hub (powered by AWS) to enhance learning

Community college students can now access an online, hands-on learning experience allowing them to do their lab-work anytime, anywhere to train for skills towards high paying jobs

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[Summary] Eight community colleges in southern and central California have partnered with Cal Poly SLO's Digital Transformation Hub - powered by Amazon Web Services (AWS) - to provide an innovative solution that will improve hands-on training and employment outcomes for Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) California Community College students. Currently, many ICT virtual lab implementations are expensive, require dedicated classroom space with students on-site, and have a limited ability to provide flexible and timely training content – until today. With the introduction of the California Community College's [PRODUCT NAME], a diverse student population can now access affordable virtual lab training from anywhere, on any device, and at any time, to learn the skills that employers need. [PRODUCT NAME] is now available to more than 100,000 students in the South Central Coast Region (SCCRC) California Community College system.

[Opportunity/problem] The experience of taking ICT virtual lab coursework has traditionally been limited to using computers and servers located on campus in controlled classroom settings, requiring students to travel to campus to complete their lab work. Additionally, the coursework is limited to a select few virtual lab content providers that are only compatible with existing campus hardware which can't be scaled up or down to accommodate fluctuating student demand. This raises the cost of delivering the coursework and reduces the quality and convenience of the student training experience. It also creates a rigid learning experience by limiting the access options of students and the curriculum flexibility of faculty who try to keep up with industry needs in a rapidly changing technology environment – making it more difficult for students to achieve a return on their investment.

[Approach/Solution] The [PRODUCT NAME] will provide a cloud-based, virtualized lab environment for students that provides them access to a customizable application suite to perform their training on the device of their choosing – laptop, desktop, and mobile - from anywhere, 24-hours a day. The pre-loaded virtual lab environment provides students with the applications, documents, and virtualized resources (machines, networking components, 'smart' devices, etc.) they need to complete the training. Faculty members can populate and customize the environment as needed to deliver curriculum with just a few clicks, creating a seamless learning experience for students and faculty alike. The virtual lab environment will be integrated with existing learning management systems allowing students and faculty to interact via campus-wide course management tools. Faculty will also have one click access to up-to-date, educational content and curriculum via an existing content pool and an online marketplace to provide students with timely and relevant training content to build skills that employers need.

[Leader quote here]

“It is extremely difficult for colleges to continue to invest in capital expenditure and maintain the necessary equipment to accommodate the level of expertise and sophistication that is required for students to be competitive in the workplace. Virtual labs represent the full functionality of a real-world environment. This project allows SCCRC to achieve economy of scale while expanding educational offerings rather than incurring high cost for current technology at individual colleges.” Said Paula Hodge, SCCRC Director.

[Customer experience] Using a device and location of their choosing, students can click on the training module links provided by faculty – using the students existing login credentials - and have access to the virtualized environment that contains a secure training 'sandbox' (emulated network components, virtual machines, cybersecurity scenarios, etc.), content, and other educational resources that the faculty member has curated for the learning experience. This puts everything that a student needs to complete the training in one convenient place with no requirements to have a special device or even a dedicated classroom location. [PRODUCT NAME] reduces the barriers to learning the necessary skills that are needed to keep up with the accelerating pace of change in the ICT field, making California Community College students more attractive candidates to employers that offer high paying jobs.

[Customer quote] “I learned so many new skills in this technology course and was able to complete it on my own timeline. It was affordable, easy to use, intuitive, and the skills I learned are preparing me for a new job. I recommend this course to everyone. I am so excited about my new career” said Eduardo L., a student from Antelope Valley CCD.

To learn more about [PRODUCT NAME] and how it can improve your student experience go to [INSERT FAQ (or main) WEBSITE].

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