



School in a class of its own thanks to RM and Wesleyan Bank.

St Ambrose future-proofs its IT infrastructure and transforms student learning.

Background

St Ambrose Barlow Roman Catholic High School and 6th Form College (St Ambrose) is located in Swinton, Greater Manchester. From interactive screens to multimedia apps, modern technology is transforming education and St Ambrose wanted to engage its students in new ways, with rich, interactive learning materials.

“Our aim was to create enhanced classroom environments by blending pioneering technology with the curriculum to improve learning outcomes, where students could actively be engaged in their classes and take ownership in their development,” explains Malcolm Walker, Business Manager at St Ambrose.

The vision

St Ambrose sought to transform educational outcomes by giving its students access to the latest technology, without being constrained by the time and costs associated with such a project.

With the support of the school’s trusted IT managed service provider, RM Education (RM), St Ambrose evaluated how it could future-proof its IT infrastructure. It decided to pilot G-Suite for Education to take the school’s adoption of technology to the next level.



As a Google Cloud Technology Premier Partner, RM made St Ambrose's journey to Google simple by implementing fully scalable cloud applications underpinned by technical support services on site and staff training. RM's single sign-on identity and access management platform, RM Unify, provides St Ambrose's students and teachers with instant access to G-Suite's web-based apps from school, at home or wherever is most convenient from an internet enabled device. RM Unify can also be used by staff to upload a range of resources, homework and useful internet links to help support students' studies away from the classroom.

"As leading education technology experts, RM was instrumental in smoothly transitioning the school to the cloud and supported us every step of the way. From the initial discussions with RM consultants, to carefully listening to our needs and subsequent roll-out of G-Suite, RM utilised its extensive experience to fulfil all of our ICT requirements and was always on hand to offer reassurance and timely responses to any queries," comments Malcolm Walker.

The challenge

While encouraged by the initial results of the G-Suite pilot, in order to take full advantage of the technology's capabilities St Ambrose concluded that lessons needed to be conducted in an ICT suite within the school so that all of its students each had access to their own laptops.

"After evaluating a range of options with St Ambrose, we recommended that the school should invest in HP Chromebooks to offer students 21st century benefits inside and outside of the classroom. Chromebooks' extensive security and management facilities, simplicity, good battery life and quick start-up times offered everything the school needed," says Jim Fessey, Senior Service Account Manager at RM Education.

"We also recognised that it was equally important to ensure St Ambrose could derive maximum value from its six-figure technology investment by making the school's budget stretch as far as possible," continues Jim.

The solution

To raise awareness of its technology ambitions and bring teachers, students and parents together, the school launched 'Ambrose Anywhere', a tailored Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) scheme with the goal of creating a collaborative 1-2-1 learning environment for all students. But in order to succeed, St Ambrose needed to overcome its funding challenges to make it simplistic and affordable for students to adopt the Chromebooks device and enhance IT infrastructure.

To overcome reductions in capital funding and achieve more with less, St Ambrose met with RM's recommended financing and leasing partner, Wesleyan Bank to review its options. As a specialist provider of

IT finance solutions to the education sector for over 25 years, Wesleyan Bank created a bespoke qualifying, operating lease plan in line with Government legislation to allow parents to conveniently spread the cost of the Chromebook over a three-year period. As the tailored finance solution forms part of a three-year rolling programme, St Ambrose has the flexibility to upgrade the Chromebooks at the end of this period or switch to a device from another ICT manufacturer.

Through RM, Wesleyan Bank was able to offer an additional payment over time agreement to assist St Ambrose to further bolster the school's IT network with the purchase of Aruba Instant. The controllerless Wi-Fi solution delivers superior Wi-Fi performance, business grade security and flexibility by allowing pupils to freely roam the classroom and experience uninterrupted learning.

“Together, RM and Wesleyan Bank provided us with the freedom to access the technology resources the school needed immediately without having to pay a significant lump sum upfront and dip into vital cash reserves, significantly contributing to the success of the Ambrose Anywhere scheme. Some finance solutions can be confusing but Wesleyan Bank took the time to thoroughly explain all of our options which made for a quick and simple process,” says Malcom Walker.

The results & benefits

An increasing number of schools in the UK have adopted Chromebooks integrated into G-Suite for Education to create a seamless transition to student resources with applications and school work securely stored in the cloud. Thanks to the support of RM and Wesleyan Bank, St Ambrose has fulfilled its ambition to join these leading schools by transitioning over 250 students from consumers of information to creative producers and owners of knowledge.

The feedback from students has been overwhelmingly positive. From the ability to access and edit their school work from anywhere there is an available internet connection, to receiving timely and formative feedback from teachers.

“This is just the start of our technology journey and we are already looking forward to the next exciting chapter of St Ambrose's future in partnership with RM and Wesleyan Bank. Transforming our IT environment is assisting our students and teachers to embrace transformative uses of technology, enhancing students' engagement and promoting the development of self-directed and life-long learners,” concludes Malcolm Walker.



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Please note: The 2019 HP Trade-In scheme differs slightly from the 2018 scheme that this case study is based on. To find out more, contact RM using the details above and for full terms and conditions, visit <https://2019.hpfe.com/gb/en/pages/edu/terms>.