BLACK BOX®

Leading Business School Uses KVM Extenders to Enhance Remote Learning During COVID-19

- **Industry:** Higher Education
- **Client:** Canadian University
- **Region:** North America
- **Solution:** KVM Extenders
- **Products:** KVX Series KVM Extenders

THE BACKGROUND

The COVID-19 pandemic forced one of the top business schools in Canada to stop holding classes in their lecture halls. However, they still needed to teach their students who had already paid tuition. Their plan was to extend live video streams of their professors teaching in empty lecture halls to remote students. To deliver live video lectures that would provide an interactive learning experience, professors would need to be at their podiums at the front of the lecture halls with all of their normal teaching tools, such as their smartscreens and whiteboards. Instructors would also need access to the PCs that control the school's videoconferencing system and cameras.

These PCs and the AV system were currently located in a communications room that was far away from each of the lecture halls. The school's IT staff would need to move the PCs to the lecture hall podiums and run new cabling between the PCs and AV system for everything to work. Moving these PCs would be a difficult challenge.

THE CHALLENGE

When the IT staff tried to move the PCs to the lecture halls, they ran into a major issue: They could not extend PC cabling from the communications room to the lecture halls because they were so far apart. To make matters worse, they had to solve this issue before students returned from spring break in just a few weeks.

To fix this problem fast, the IT staff needed a plug-and-play solution that could extend smartscreen, keyboard, video, and mouse controls (USB, PC, and microphone) to the AV system in the communications room over their existing multimode fiber cabling. Additionally, they needed the solution to support 4K video and not break the bank.

THE SOLUTION

The university called Black Box for a solution because they currently use some of our KVM and cabling products and have been pleased with their performance. Our technical experts recommended our new KVX Series KVM Extenders because they can extend smartscreen, keyboard, mouse, and 4K video signals reliably. These extenders also offer the economical price point the customer required. In addition, Black Box provided SFPs for the extenders that support the multimode fiber the university already had installed.

RESULTS

The university's IT staff has installed KVX Extender solutions in four lecture halls so far, and the school is very satisfied with the results. The extenders enable the professors to teach in the lecture halls with their whiteboards and smartscreens while giving them full control over the AV system in the communications room. Most important, the remote students still get the interactive and engaging learning experience they would in their regular classrooms. The university was also thrilled that our technical experts were able to build a KVM solution that could meet all of their needs so quickly. Additionally, they were pleased with the rapid ordering and delivery process that got them their KVX extension systems well before students returned from spring break. Because of our exceptional service and how well the solution works in each lecture hall, the university plans to install more KVX Extenders in the near future.