

Sandwell Academy

Overview

Sandwell Academy is part of the Thomas Telford Multi Academy Trust (TTMAT), established in September 2017 and comprises of three secondary schools and one primary school across the Midlands in England. The principal objective of the trust is to provide an academic environment where students can maximise their potential while enjoying the benefits of a wide range of subject matters. Opened in 2006, Sandwell Academy is home to 1,200 students and boasts state-of-the-art facilities and technology and specialise in Physical Education and Sport and Business Enterprise.

Modernising the classroom

In 2016, Sandwell started the process of replacing their existing projector and whiteboard estate due to regrading image quality which was impacting on the delivery of lesson content, mainly as the use of video was prevalent across the school. IT Manager for the Academy, Daljeet Kangh started the process of looking for a superior, replacement solution.

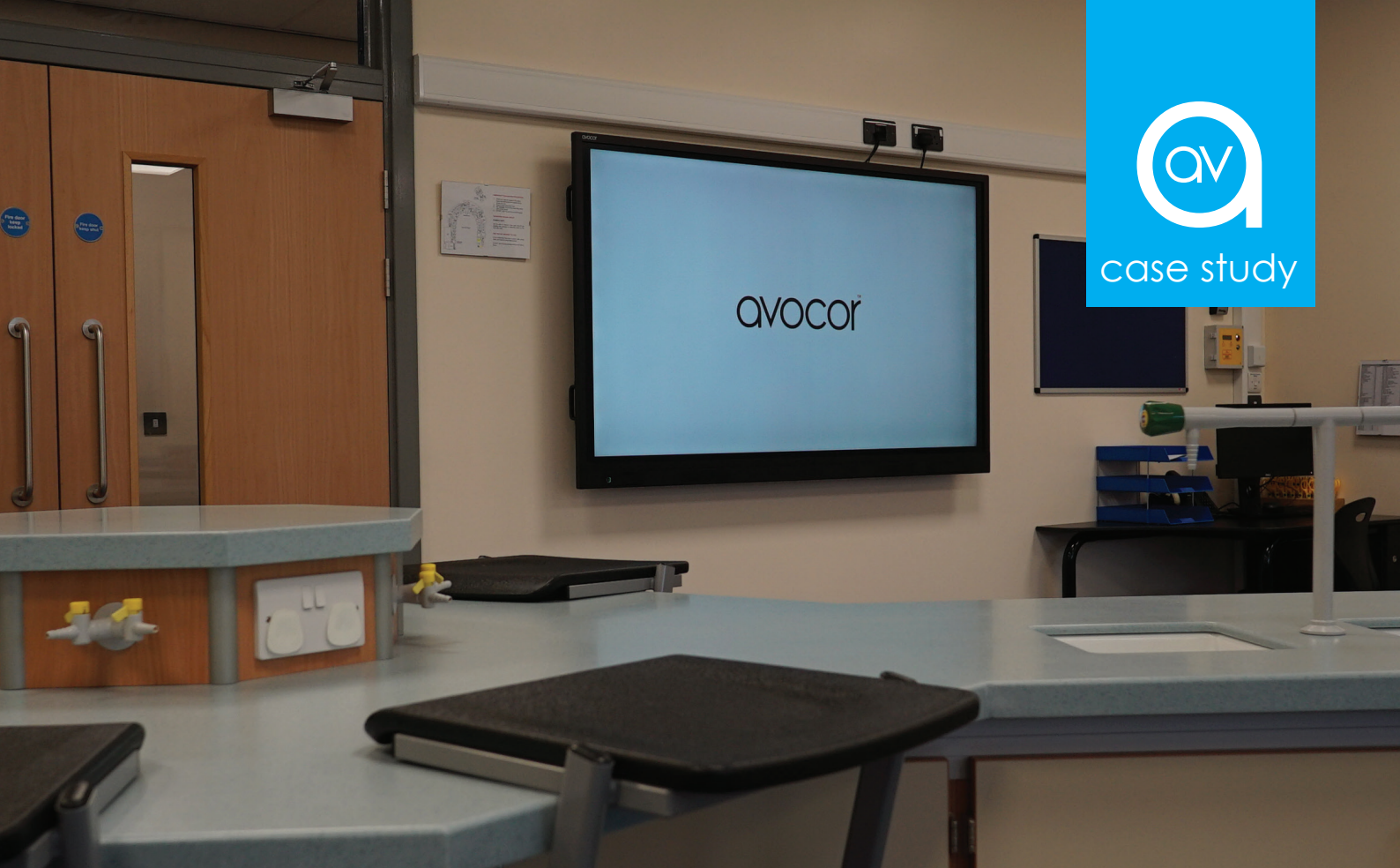
"The ongoing cost associated with projection-based technology was unpalatable for the Trust, and we found that we were constantly replacing lamps and filters, we wanted to upgrade our front of classroom display solution that met the needs of the school today but also futureproofed our investment. I was aware that interactive touchscreen displays were becoming popular within the education market, so, together with my Audio-Visual provider, we started to look at credible alternatives to projection."

Future-proofing learning environments

Daljeet had core objectives from the upgrade project, precisely that the replacement solution needed to be affordable with no ongoing maintenance costs, completely intuitive and a supplier that provided excellent post-sales support and warranty.

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Daljeet standardised on the Avocor F series, the flagship model in the Avocor product range. Leaders in display innovation, Avocor were first-to-market with InGlass™ touch, a technology that delivers an incredibly smooth and responsive user experience, optimised for use with Microsoft Windows applications.

“We particularly loved the crystal-clear image displayed by the Avocor F series displays which delivered high definition, 4K image quality, and our teachers loved the simplicity of the Avocor solution, the fact that they could just pick up the pen and start annotating directly into lesson content made lessons more interactive and ultimately saved valuable lesson time.”

Avocor is partners with Qwizdom, education software specialists and provides each Avocor display with a free subscription to OKTOPUS, content creation software that also enables users to open ‘legacy’ whiteboard content that may have been created in bespoke software such as SMART Notebook.

Advocates of natural to use technology, Avocor solutions are created to be incredibly intuitive. Users will instantly feel comfortable with the Microsoft interface, opening a world of familiar content such as PowerPoint, Excel, and Microsoft Whiteboard.

The Avocor F series also includes a connect and control bar at the front of the display, giving instant access to USB ports for guest users, reducing the need to connect laptops via the rear connectivity ports. The bar also includes control functions that remove the need for remote control devices which inevitably get lost, rendering the technology useless.

A collaborative partnership

Daljeet has continued to be impressed by the team at Avocor, citing that the company is flexible and agile enough to respond to end user needs and requirements, implementing changes in product development if required.

“We feel as though Avocor indeed hears our feedback and we have seen changes in the product roadmap that reflect our feedback. Deploying the Avocor solution across Sandwell Academy has meant that we have ultimately saved time and money and we are more productive as a result. We no longer have to calibrate the solution before we can start lessons, we don't have additional maintenance costs, and the technology has a longer lifecycle than our previous projector estate, meaning we have invested in technology that will be future-proofed and provide excellent return-on-investment”.