



Business school embraces integrated learning, remote teaching to accelerate outcomes

European School of Management and Technology (ESMT) seeks to give its students the optimal learning experience. The school began testing Microsoft Surface Hub, a team collaboration device that makes it easy to hold lectures with remote experts, work together on group projects, and bridge the technology gap between education and industry. Using Surface Hub, ESMT promotes integrated learning, delivers engaging curriculum, and encourages students to take an active role for a more collaborative classroom environment.

European School of Management and Technology (ESMT)

www.esmt.org

Employees: 200

Germany

Education





Based in Berlin, Germany, the European School of Management and Technology is an international business school that was founded in 2002 by 25 German companies and institutions from multiple sectors.

Tomorrow's leaders

European School of Management and Technology focuses on leadership and social responsibility, European competitiveness, and the management of technology for its Master's in Management, full-time Master's in Business Administration (MBA), and Executive MBA programs. It also provides executive education for leadership development. Each year, the school serves hundreds of students from more than 40 countries, bringing a true international flavor to its campuses in Berlin and Cologne, Germany.

Founded by 25 German corporations and institutions, ESMT aims to develop entrepreneurial leaders who think globally, act responsibly, and respect the individual. The school strives to stay at the forefront of technology management while fostering a collaborative environment. "We always think about where education is going and how we can help it get there faster," says Professor Catalina Stefanescu-Cuntze, Dean of Faculty at ESMT. "For example, we would like to see more of our professors integrate technology into the classroom environment, but that integration will only happen if the tools are easy to use."

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—Martha Ihlbrock, Head of Communications and Marketing, European School of Management and Technology

In addition, the school continuously seeks opportunities for students to learn from experts outside the school and in the faculty; however, logistics and costs limit students' exposure to that outside knowledge.

ESMT also understands that its students lead busy lives. Some students juggle full-time jobs while studying, so the school would like to support efficiency and flexibility wherever possible. "Finding better ways for students to catch up on missed classes and giving them new tools to use for collaboration certainly improves the experience for everyone involved," says Nick Barniville, Associate Dean of Degree Programs at ESMT.

Connected learning

To explore enhanced technology in the classroom and continue to support its students, ESMT decided to test a Microsoft Surface Hub team collaboration device. Surface Hub is a large-screen, ultra high-definition (UHD) touch device that provides integrated videoconferencing through Skype for Business and Dual 1080p cameras, along with digital whiteboard and note-sharing capabilities. A Windows 10 operating system-based device, Surface Hub offers Microsoft Office 365 applications such as PowerPoint, Excel, and OneNote, and it includes Skype for Business, which the school has in place to support communication and collaboration.

ESMT has established an "ambassador program" in which several faculty members, executive education program directors, and student work groups use Surface Hub to discover the various ways that the device can augment the education experience.

The results have been positive. "Interaction in the classroom with Microsoft Surface Hub has the potential to enliven my teaching, with the added value that I can send the annotated session to students directly at the end of class," says Per Olsson, Professor of Accounting at ESMT.



Students appreciate that Surface Hub offers a more connected collaboration experience for group work. "Microsoft Surface Hub is brilliant in its simplicity. It's intuitive to use and has many features that support group work, especially when not all students can be on campus at the same time," says Katiso Seeiso Letsie, a Master's in Management student at ESMT. He adds, "Using Skype for Business, my mates can work together in a group meeting, and wherever I am, I can present my desktop to them and even give them access to modify my calculations in real time. Surface Hub has the invaluable ability to smoothly connect to, project to, make presentations through, or run applications from the connected devices. Best of all, one does not need to be a technology expert to use its features."

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—Robert Wilke, Head of Information Technology, European School of Management and Technology

Active education

ESMT recognizes that students learn in many different ways and that it can use Surface Hub to provide completely differentiated and flexible options for learning, whether it's viewing embedded videos, annotating a presentation through responsive touch and ink input, or engaging experts from other countries to demonstrate new approaches.

The benefits of Surface Hub also extend beyond those to students. “Currently, an outside expert may attend a video call in which the students can see him, but it is difficult for him to know whether what he's saying is making an impact,” says Robert Wilke, Head of Information Technology at ESMT. “By using Surface Hub, remote lecturers can see and interact with participants, and the live feedback of students' expressions and gestures results in a more rewarding teaching and learning experience. Plus, it's more convenient and cost-effective for us to involve outside experts when they don't have to travel to one of our campuses.”

Wilke also notes that students will be encouraged to take a more active role through frictionless connections among personal devices, from smartphones to tablets and personal computers. “Today, if a student has a piece of information or analysis to show on her personal laptop, it's usually too much of a disruption to connect all the cords so the rest of the class can see it,” says Wilke. “But with Surface Hub, students can easily pull up the relevant information on their own devices and display it wirelessly via Miracast technology, which promotes greater participation. With everyone able to share their ideas—and that the work can be saved to Microsoft OneDrive for Business for access later—is a huge improvement in the way our faculty and students can work together.”

Smooth adoption

By using Surface Hub, ESMT makes it easier than ever for faculty members to integrate engaging curriculum in the classroom and to create a technology focal point. “We're emphasizing the 'T' in 'ESMT,’” says Ihlbrock. “We have lots of technology that hasn't been adopted because it's considered too cumbersome, but we've seen an outpouring of enthusiasm about Surface Hub from faculty and students. I'm truly excited about what it can add to the classroom environment.”

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By offering a collaboration device that provides so many opportunities for learning without added complexity, ESMT is setting itself apart as a forward-thinking institution with its students' needs in mind. “It’s so easy to use and intuitive that it nurtures creativity and increases efficiency,” says Wilke. “I believe that it will be easier to encourage the interweaving of interactive technology in the curriculum now that faculty members have seen the possibilities available to them with Surface Hub.”

Microsoft Surface Hub

Surface Hub is a collaboration device designed to unlock the power of the group, powered by Microsoft software and services like Windows 10, OneNote, and Skype for Business.

For more information about Microsoft Surface Hub, go to: www.microsoft.com/surfacehub