

Innovative Solutions



Czech School Seizes the e-learning Opportunity with Class Server

The doors to e-learning have opened for secondary technical school Na Třebešíně (SPS Na Třebešíně). For the first time, the teachers at the Prague-based school are discovering the potential of e-learning for innovative collaboration among both themselves and their students. They are also finding that the right e-learning tool can save them significant time and effort in such tasks as administering and grading standards-aligned tests, freeing them to devote more time to their classes. The tool they are using is Microsoft Class Server 4.0.

"E-learning is still at an early stage in the Czech Republic," says Tomáš Zachat, the school's information technology administrator. "Microsoft Class Server lets us explore e-learning concepts. It's so user-friendly, even teachers with limited computer experience find it easy to work with."

Microsoft, through its Partners in Learning initiative, is heavily involved in supporting SPS Na Třebešíně's Class Server implementation. In fact, Partners in Learning is helping the country's Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports to support all Czech schools that want to use Class Server. If a school can't afford its own Class Server solution, Microsoft is running a centralised hosted solution that any school can use for a subscription fee.

SPS Na Třebešíně was one of the first schools in the Czech Republic to invest in Class Server 4.0 when it launched in 2005. The school specialises in teaching computer-aided design and manufacturing (CAD/CAM) and computer numerically controlled (CNC) programming, so it has a large focus on computer technology. In fact, it started experimenting with version 3 of Class Server in 2003.

The school's use of Class Server has really grown with the introduction of version 4.0. One reason is its much improved support of the Czech language. It also integrates seamlessly with Microsoft® SharePoint®, which is a central part of the school's learning management system. Teachers can now work with e-learning

content directly from SharePoint document libraries, use SharePoint collaboration functionality through the Class Server's user-friendly interface and develop their own teaching materials for the Class Server.

Today all of the school's 60 teachers use Class Server in some way, with 20% being very active users. All 600 students use the system, accessing e-learning materials, assignments and tests at school or from home. "We've developed an easy-to-manage system of class communities, where teachers and students interact, share material and hold discussions," explains Zachat.

In one of the Czech Republic's largest secondary technical schools, 60 teachers and 600 students can now build active e-learning communities, thanks to Microsoft Class Server.

Expert teachers also use Class Server to show their e-learning materials to less experienced colleagues and help them work on educational plans. The result is a 'recipe book' on how to use e-learning in the classroom.

"We couldn't have done it without Partners in Learning," Zachat points out. "Microsoft gave us technical support during installation and taught us how to administer the system. They organised a training partner to show us how to use Class Server for e-learning. Microsoft partners even provided us with e-learning content to start us off."

"We now plan to develop our own teaching materials for the Class Server environment and gradually replace traditional learning methods with e-learning, to help prepare our students for the 21st-century world," Zachat concludes.

Fast Facts

Customer:

Secondary technical school Na Třebešíně (SPS Na Třebešíně)

Country: The Czech Republic

Web Site: www.trebesin.cz

Secondary technical school Na Třebešíně (SPS Na Třebešíně) believes that e-learning is the future of education and is one of the first schools in the Czech Republic to invest in Microsoft Class Server 4.0. The school is using Class Server to create and deliver e-learning materials, administer and grade tests, and improve collaboration between teachers and students.

Microsoft Partners in Learning has supported the school with technical support, training, and e-learning content. SPS Na Třebešíně is one of many Czech schools that Partners in Learning is helping to use Class Server, in cooperation with the Czech Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.

For more information about other Microsoft Partners in Learning customer successes, please visit:

www.microsoft.com/emea/PartnersinLearning

"Microsoft Class Server lets us explore e-learning concepts. It's so user-friendly, even teachers with limited computer experience find it easy to work with, and it's saving them significant amounts of time."

Tomáš Zachat, Information Technology Administrator, SPS Na Třebešíně