

Total Cost Of Ownership In Deploying 21st Century Education



Zayed University

Originally founded for United Arab Emirates (U.A.E) National Women in 1998, Zayed University has become an educational centre of excellence in an emerging and evolving nation. Proudly bearing the name of the nation's founder, the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, it stands for innovation, inspiration, and education. Today, Zayed University is fully accredited in the U.A.E. and with the Middle States Commission on Higher Education in the U.S.A.



جامعة زايد
ZAYED UNIVERSITY

As a premier university committed to providing free learning for all local national students, Zayed University is an innovative institution based on an international model of higher education. With 600 faculty and staff serving 4,500 male and female students across its Abu Dhabi North, Abu Dhabi South, and Dubai – Al Ruwayyah campuses, its academic programme is taught in English and prepares talented, ambitious and enthusiastic students for success in government, the arts, business, media and IT.

The Challenge:

Determining which VLE was most ideally suited to deploy a 21st century education model – comparing open source alternatives and Blackboard Learn

Committed To 21st Century Education

With an outstanding academic ethos throughout the last decade, Zayed University is, today, committed to 21st Century education with a defined strategy to deliver interdisciplinary and integrative pedagogical educational programmes across its five colleges. It incorporates extensive use of leading edge educational technology into the student's daily life; enables best of breed communication between students and staff and ensures learning systems, its course materials and syllabuses are accessible to all students, 24/7, whilst on and off campus.

Blackboard Learn Selected After Rigorous Audit

To empower e-learning at Zayed University and therefore elevate it to compete at an international level, the university recognized as early as 2001 the need for the most cutting-edge learning solutions to facilitate its students and lecturers. KPMG was appointed to undertake a rigorous audit of Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs), to provide a unique proposition for Zayed and help solve the institute's current needs while providing insight into the future challenges it may face. The outcome was that KPMG proposed the Blackboard Learn™ platform as the most resilient, reliable and feature led solution for



Blackboard

deploying and managing an enterprise-wide teaching, learning and assessment environment both now and in the future.

“Despite being just 12 years old, Zayed University is seriously committed to establishing Dubai and the United Arab Emirates as major players on the world stage and is aware that offering the highest standards of education to our citizens is vital in making this happen. That’s why we have chosen the Blackboard Learn platform over open source alternatives due to its superior levels of support, flexibility and functionality,” comments Steven Kitching, Systems Development Manager, Zayed University.

Blackboard Learn Most Cost-Effective

Having used the Blackboard Learn platform for three years across its campuses, Zayed University decided to compare and contrast Blackboard with a popular open source alternative. After a thorough and extensive evaluation it was concluded that the open source alternative’s integration was more complicated and time consuming than Blackboard. Despite open source professing to be free, it was universally agreed that it was, in real terms, expensive; it needed staff for its implementation and the

management of the system was intrinsically complicated, taking one to two years to streamline and for faculties to become familiarized. The pilot concluded that with such a steep and long learning curve, combined with its cost, there was no point in applying another e-learning system. Subsequently, a substantial amount of time and effort went into developing and deploying the Blackboard Learn platform across Zayed’s campuses, thus rendering the introduction of an alternative solution obsolete.

“When people say open source is ‘free’, either they haven’t worked with it or they haven’t actually implemented it. Firstly, you need to employ an open source expert to implement and maintain the system. Secondly, when they leave, all the knowledge goes with them. There is a cost to it and this cost continues for a period of time. But with the Blackboard Learn platform, the resources are there – as a formal company we have Blackboard consultants on call to help with implementation and upgrading. However, with the open source alternative, it’s community driven so there’s no office or sales person to contact,” comments Samit Lotlikar, Senior Project Lead, Zayed University.

For More Information

If you are interested to learn more on how Blackboard can help you and your organization increase the impact of education, please contact your account manager or visit us at www.blackboard.com

www.blackboard.com/learn

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