

Bacchus Marsh Grammar replaces aging laptops with versatile Chromebooks



At a Glance

What they wanted to do

- Replace 600 Windows laptops
- Provide parents an affordable alternative
- Increase student engagement through technology
- Enhance staff efficiency

What they did

- Transitioned to Chromebooks and Google Apps for Education, which teachers and students use to collaborate and share materials

What they achieved

- 1:1 computing solution for students
- Increased class participation
- Greater collaboration between teachers & classes

"The Chromebook offered the perfect fit to our selection criteria."

—Philip Pike, ICT director, Bacchus Marsh Grammar

About Bacchus Marsh Grammar

- Founded in 1988
- Situated in Melbourne Western suburbs
- 1,900 students in the senior and junior schools

www.bmg.vic.edu.au

Background

Bacchus Marsh Grammar in Victoria, Australia, provides a comprehensive, challenging, and enriching secondary education for nearly 2,000 students. In late 2014, the school had 600 Windows laptops at the end of their lifecycle. Replacing them would have cost approximately AU\$1 million, which the school didn't want to charge to parents. Likely alternatives included bring-your-own-device (BYOD) solutions, virtual desktops, tablets, and school-owned laptops.

Challenge

The school wanted to equip students with a device that was quick and efficient. It had to be lightweight, so they could easily take it to and from school. The technology couldn't get in the way of teaching, however, and had to be within the budget.

Solution

"After considering many options, we chose Chromebooks with Google Apps for Education," says Philip Pike, director of information and communications technology (ICT). "The Chromebook offered the perfect fit to our selection criteria." Bacchus Marsh Grammar rolled out over 1,000 Chromebooks to the senior school early in 2015.

Benefits

The new Chromebooks increase students' learning time with their teachers. The devices take less than 10 seconds to be fully operational and can be shut down and restarted throughout the day. "Students were losing up to 10 minutes of class time with our old procedures and long startup times," Pike says.

After easily carrying their Chromebooks throughout the day, students can tuck the devices into school bags to take home for continual access to



About Chromebooks for Education

Chromebooks for Education give students, teachers, and administrators a simple solution for fast, intuitive, and easy-to-manage computing.

Chromebooks provide access to the web's education and collaboration resources, as well as offer centralised management and low total cost of ownership.

Using Chromebooks, teachers spend more time teaching and less time managing classroom technology, and schools can deploy more computers into the hands of their students and teachers.

To learn more about Chromebooks for Education, visit:

google.com.au/edu/products/devices/

About Google Apps for Education

Google Apps for Education is a suite of communication and collaboration tools offered to schools for free and without ads.

Google Apps for Education can be accessed from any device, at any time. Products in the suite include Gmail, Calendar, Drive, and Classroom.

Google Classroom lets teachers easily create, review, and organise assignments, as well as communicate directly with their students.

To learn more about Google Apps for Education, visit www.google.com.au/edu/

lessons, teachers, and classmates. They can even work offline while on the bus (typically, for 40 to 60 minutes), then upload their work to Google Drive later at home.

Students don't bring chargers to school, and generally take the Chromebooks home for recharging. With an eight-hour battery life, the devices last all day at school, especially if turned off when not in use. If a Chromebook is accidentally left at home, a student can use one of the school's 30 loaner machines, log into Google Apps, and have all of their documents and folders right at their fingertips. An onsite technician provides repair service and the school can also swap out machines, so no students ever lack the technology they need for learning.

The school's Chromebooks are equipped with Google Apps for Education, which provides unlimited storage on Google Drive, Gmail accounts, and access to numerous other educational apps. In addition, Google Apps is platform agnostic—work that students create on the Chromebooks can be opened and graded on any browser that the staff still use.

Bacchus Marsh financed the Chromebooks program with a modest fee increase, so parents didn't need to buy expensive computers for home use. In the future, parents may also save money with a reduction in the costs of textbooks and printed materials.

Results

Thanks to the Chromebooks, many students became more interested and engaged in the various subjects resulting in improved learning outcomes. They were able to work collaboratively in a cross-curriculum setting. IT students, for example, produced podcasts that incorporated poems written in English classes.

Similarly, Year 7 geography students collaborated via their Chromebooks to create a "#go_remote!" marketing program that promoted living and working in isolated regions of Australia. "Students could rapidly share a file within the group, then work on the same file at the same time," says teacher Celia Patterson. "This approach generated significant student engagement, and the sharing of technological knowledge between students was evident." The Chromebooks have assisted learning in a new and exciting way.

A Year 9 English teacher used Chromebooks and Google Apps for Education to launch a cooperative composition project. Receiving just a two-sentence prompt, students took turns writing a progressive story. "The dynamic this exercise created was electric," says teacher Shane McNee. "I can't remember a time when the whole of the class enjoyed the collaborative, creative process so obviously." This type of activity has allowed students of all abilities to contribute to the creative process.

Pleased with such results, Bacchus Marsh Grammar now plans to expand the program by providing an additional 500 Chromebooks to the junior school.