

Case Study

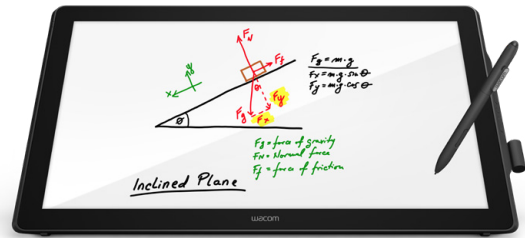
# Hybrid Learning Creating multi-functional teaching spaces with Wacom pen displays



## Case Study



## AT A GLANCE



### Wacom DTH-2452

a 24-inch, full HD pen and touch display

### Industry

Education

### Usage Scenario

Multi-location, lecture-based classroom teaching for remote and in-person students

### Challenges

Modernize teaching spaces with the addition of digital ink capability for hybrid learning opportunities

### Solution

80 classroom spaces transformed into hybrid rooms with Wacom DTH-2452 24-inch, full HD interactive pen displays using existing PCs, learning management system and video conferencing tools

### Benefits

- Easy switch between remote, in-person and hybrid learning models
- Digital ink creates an engaging learning experience
- Simple integration with existing software
- Low-maintenance, cost-effective solution

## Challenge

# Modernize existing classroom spaces for flexible hybrid teaching

Thomas More is the largest university of applied sciences in Flanders, Belgium with campuses spread throughout the province of Antwerp. With over 20,000 students and 1,500 teaching staff, it offers a wide range of bachelor degree programmes, postgraduate courses, and exchange programmes for students from partner universities.

At Thomas More, investment in technology for teaching has always been a priority. They already had a range of hardware options available to meet the needs of different faculties. However, lessons were predominantly teacher-led classroom lectures using projected presentation slides and static whiteboards for note-taking. There were limited options for teaching remote learners and this was something the university was keen to develop further. The outbreak of COVID-19 imposed restrictions on the number of students allowed on campus, highlighting the need for a solution that enabled educators to flexibly move between different models of learning.

The solution had to be simple for teachers to use to encourage maximum uptake. Tom Segers, Program Manager at Thomas More explains, "Teachers already had the task of learning to go hybrid with their teaching. We couldn't ask them to remake all their course materials too. The solution had to be easy for them to use with their existing resources." The addition of software-neutral Wacom screen devices would give educators digital ink capability while retaining the existing software and learning management system they were familiar with.

Lecturers at Thomas More rely on PowerPoint slides for lesson delivery, and Segers knew they would welcome the addition of Wacom's familiar pen devices that require minimal training to use. This would let teachers focus on how to deliver lessons effectively to both remote and in-person students simultaneously. By adding a digital pen, teachers could switch seamlessly between on and off-line teaching, avoiding duplication of content through digital documentation.

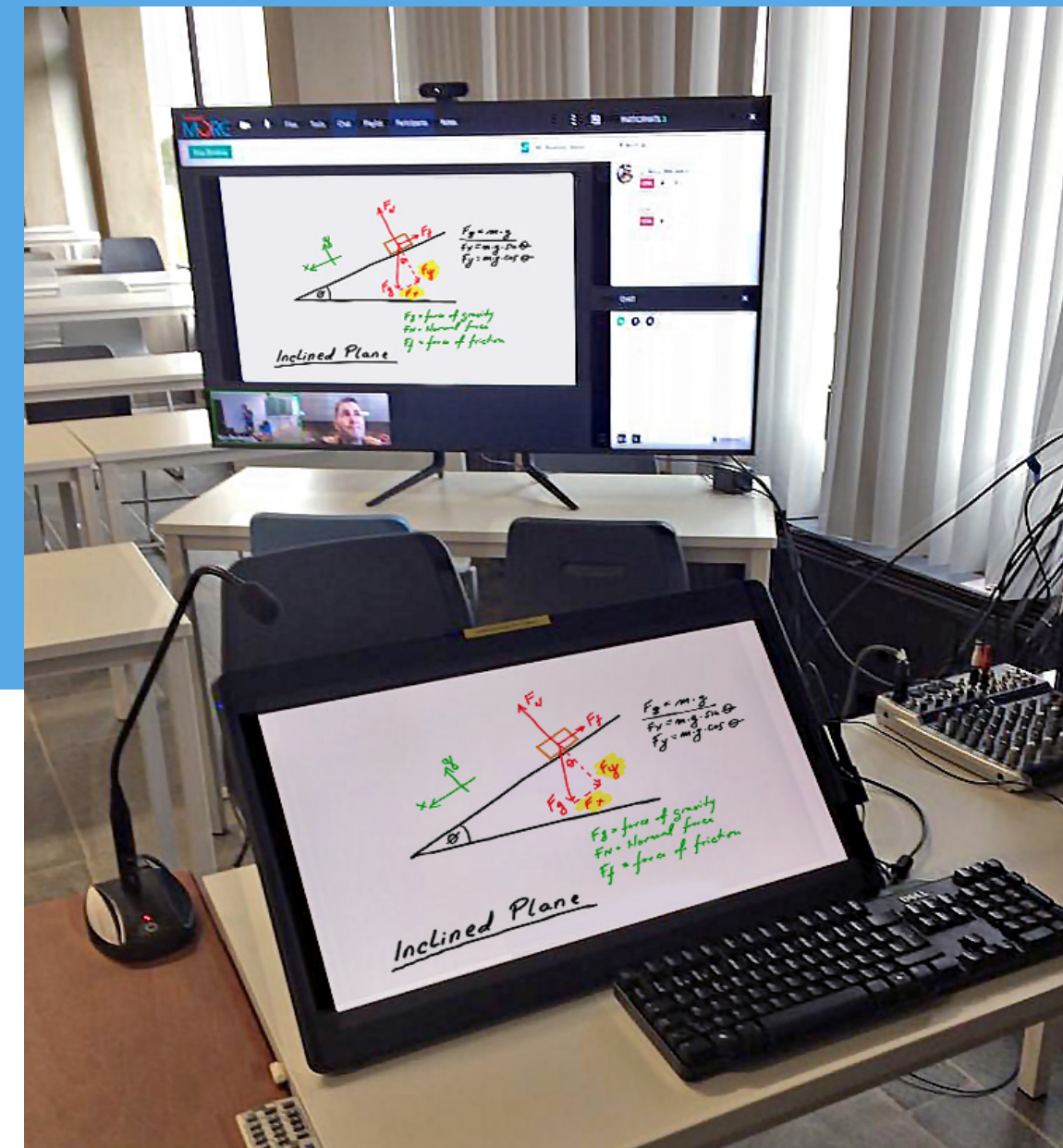
## Solution

# Hybrid classroom spaces Engaging learning opportunities

Segers and his team were already familiar with the benefits of Wacom pen devices as they use them in their large lecture rooms. They decided Wacom pen enabled screens were the perfect option to transform existing classroom spaces on each campus into hybrid classrooms. Segers recalls, "We needed a cost-effective solution, so I discussed our options with Martijn van Oers, a Senior Account Manager from Wacom, to decide which screens would best meet our needs." They agreed that Wacom DTH-2452 pen and touch displays offer the most flexibility for teachers delivering hybrid lessons.

The large, 24-inch, full HD pen and touch displays were added to teacher desks at the front of the room, connected to the existing classroom PC and projector screen. Remote learners would access lessons using the university's video conferencing software, Kaltura Meetings. They removed static whiteboards from the walls to ensure all annotations were digital and made straight onto presentation resources. This guaranteed the learning experience for remote students would be the same quality as those in the classroom.

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## Implementation

# Familiar tools Flexible teaching

From initial discussions in April 2020, Segers and his team created and tested the solution before working with 15 remote IT staff spread across different campuses to create the hybrid rooms. Alongside the technical team, colleagues from the Education Service focused on how to support teachers with the pedagogy of hybrid teaching. All 80 hybrid classrooms were complete and in use by mid-September for the Winter Semester.

Thomas More developed a comprehensive three-hour training course to train teachers in delivering hybrid lessons and show them the potential Wacom's digital ink technology offered. "There was no way of doing without the training," Segers explains, "Although it was very easy to show them how to use the Wacom pen devices, our teachers had to learn how to interact with remote and in-person learners simultaneously. That was the challenge." Because of COVID-19 restrictions limiting staff on site, the training sessions delivered in June 2020 modelled the hybrid approach faculty staff were learning to use, with only ten teachers learning in person while the others joined remotely via video call.

The training came just in time as another national lockdown came into effect. Thomas More had to move to an effective remote-learning model overnight. Segers recalls, "Classes of 60 had to quickly change to 20 students on site at one time with the rest of the students accessing learning remotely. Because of the Wacom pen displays, we could cope with the rapid change. 100% of our students kept learning though the lockdown."

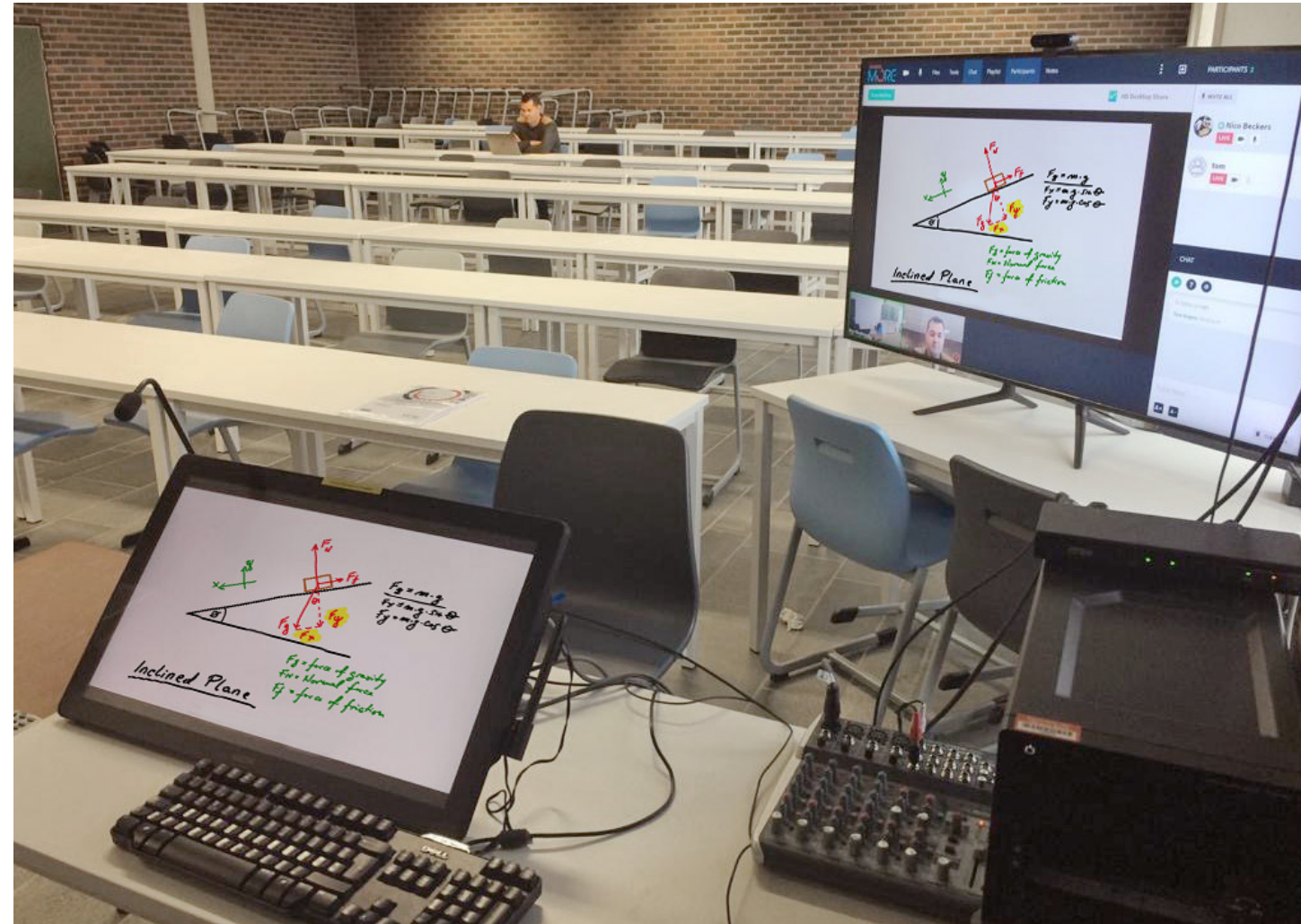
Outcome

# Progressive teaching Wider potential

With Wacom pen displays, teaching is as good for remote students as those learning in person. The addition of hybrid classrooms allows Thomas More to offer a range of in-person, remote, and blended learning options with the specific functionality different faculties require. As normality slowly returns to education, Segers reflects, “Would I do it again? Yes! Now the challenge shifts from getting all staff using the hybrid classrooms quickly, to refining the model for their specific needs.” Thomas More can see that although COVID-19 forced universities into crisis mode, remote education is here to stay.

Staff found it easy to use Wacom pen displays in the hybrid rooms because they worked with the existing platforms and programs they already know well. That gave them more time to explore how to deliver hybrid lessons effectively. Most teachers continue to use PowerPoint slides for lessons and now adapt them for digital ink with white space left for whiteboarding and annotation. Slides are now less text-heavy, using keywords and digital ink to offer students an engaging learning experience.

Thinking about the future, Thomas More is excited about the possibilities hybrid classrooms offer for remote learning. As Segers comments, “If students are only on campus for two hours a day, they’ll wonder why they can’t do the same learning remotely without all the travel.” He sees exciting potential for mature students with families, learners with disabilities or needing medical treatment, and lifelong students with career commitments that restrict time available to be on campus. “We could attract a lot of new students this way,” he adds. With Wacom technology in hybrid classrooms, learning is made inclusive and offers huge potential for Thomas More to expand their current provision.



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# Global reach. Local impact.



## Japan (HQ)

For more information please contact:

Wacom Co., Ltd. · Sumitomo Fudosan Shinjuku Grand Tower 31F, 35F,  
8-17-1 Nishi-Shinjuku, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 160-6131, Japan  
[education.jp@wacom.com](mailto:education.jp@wacom.com)



## Americas

For more information please contact:

Wacom Technology Corporation · 1455 NW Irving Street, Suite 800,  
Portland, OR 97209 USA  
[education@wacom.com](mailto:education@wacom.com)



## Europe, Middle East and Africa

For more information please contact:

Wacom Europe GmbH · Völklinger Straße 1, 40219 Düsseldorf, Germany  
[education@wacom-europe.com](mailto:education@wacom-europe.com)



## China

For more information please contact:

Wacom China Corporation · 518, West Wing Office, China World Trade Center,  
No. 1 Jianguomenwai Avenue, Chaoyang District, Beijing 100004, China  
[education.cn@wacom.com.cn](mailto:education.cn@wacom.com.cn)

## Hong Kong

For more information please contact:

Wacom Hong Kong Ltd. · Unit 1610, 16/F, Exchange Tower, 33 Wang Chiu Road  
Kowloon Bay, Hong Kong  
[education.hk@wacom.com.hk](mailto:education.hk@wacom.com.hk)



## Australia

For more information please contact:

Wacom Australia Pty. Ltd. · Ground floor, Building 1, 3 Richardson Place,  
North Ryde, NSW, 2113, Australia  
[education@wacom.com.au](mailto:education@wacom.com.au)

## Korea

For more information please contact:

Wacom Korea Co., Ltd. · Rm #1211, 12F, KGIT Sangam Center, 402 Worldcup  
Bukro, Mapo-gu, Seoul 03925, Korea  
[education@wacomkorea.com](mailto:education@wacomkorea.com)

## Singapore

For more information please contact:

Wacom Singapore Pte. Ltd. · 5 Temasek Boulevard, #12-09, Suntec Tower Five,  
Singapore 038985  
[educationsea@wacom.com](mailto:educationsea@wacom.com)

## India

For more information please contact:

Wacom India Pvt. Ltd. · 426, Tower B, DLF Building Jasola District Centre,  
Mathura Road, New Delhi 110025 India  
[education.india@wacom.com](mailto:education.india@wacom.com)

[wacom.com/education](http://wacom.com/education)

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