OVERVIEW

Customer Need
As part of its commitment to creating a technologically advanced learning environment, Seton Hall University provides every undergraduate student a laptop as part of tuition and fees. The university had been experimenting with tablets for several years. Student feedback from its latest pilot of Android tablets indicated that while students liked the tablet’s portability and long battery life, they missed the productivity experience of using Microsoft Windows on their laptops. Seton Hall needed a technology partner that could provide not only the power of Windows on a tablet but also reliability, service and support.

Samsung Solution
Offering the full Windows experience in a slim, powerful tablet form-factor, the Samsung Series 7 Slate was the natural choice for Seton Hall. Of its options, the Series 7 Slate was the only tablet that could offer true mobility and provide the Windows environment that students needed to be equally productive on the tablet as they had been on their laptops.

Results
The Samsung Series 7 Slate’s unique capability to fully replace student laptops enabled Seton Hall to adopt a one-device strategy. It also achieved standardization, key to providing students with long-term services and support for their tablets for successful learning. In the summer of 2012, in partnership with Samsung, Seton Hall successfully distributed 600 Series 7 Slates integrated with Windows 8, becoming the first educational institution to deploy the new operating system ahead of full commercial availability.
Founded in 1856, Seton Hall University is a private, Catholic school in South Orange, N.J., some 15 miles from New York City. Its sprawling 59-acre campus houses nine colleges and schools, including the nationally ranked schools of business, nursing, and law and diplomacy. The university has 450 faculty members and 5,300 full-time undergraduate and 4,500 graduate students. Recognized for academic excellence, Seton Hall combines the resources of a large university with the personal attention of a small liberal arts college.

In 1998 Seton Hall pioneered a mobile computing program as part of the university’s strategy to build a technologically advanced environment for learning and to increase graduates’ competitiveness in the workforce. The program provides a mobile computer – traditionally a laptop – to every faculty member and every undergraduate as part of their tuition and fees. Enrolling freshmen receive new laptops, which are replaced in their junior year. Aimed at bringing state-of-the-art technology to faculty and students, the program had been experimenting with tablets and slate PCs for a number of years. “It fits well with the academic use of technology both inside and outside the classroom,” said Stephen Landry, Seton Hall’s chief information officer.
THE CUSTOMER NEED
Innovative technology at the right price, and services and support to back it up

In response to student feedback on its latest pilot of Android-powered tablets, the Seton Hall mobile computing program set about identifying a slate PC that would provide both true mobility and full access to Microsoft Windows. “It was valuable feedback,” Landry said. “They liked the tablet form-factor, they liked the portability and the long battery life. But they missed the Windows environment they had on their laptops. They wanted to be able to use the Microsoft Office suite on their tablets, not something that worked like it.”

While providing students with the same productivity environment they were used to was a priority, there were other significant needs to consider from an administrative perspective. According to Landry, innovative technology, price, reliability, services and support were crucial to the decision. Seton Hall was also looking for a long-term partnership.

“When we look for a technology provider for the mobile computing program, we’re not just looking for a transaction,” Landry said. “We’re not only interested in buying the best technology at the best price. We’re also looking long-term at services and support, and the reliability of the device.”

Landry underscored the importance of standardization and commitment to support for the successful implementation of the mobile computing program. “We have to support the devices very heavily so that they remain effective teaching and learning tools for several years,” he said. “Standardization is key to making the program work. Delivery, logistics, support, warranty repairs – all that goes in the package. Few technology providers met Seton Hall’s stringent requirements for deploying 3,000 to 4,000 devices.”
THE SAMSUNG SOLUTION
Samsung Series 7 Slate

To find the right tablet solution Seton Hall explored many different options, but all of them were supplements to a laptop, not true replacements. “Samsung was in front of the pack,” said Landry. “We could not find any other device that would be a replacement for the laptop. The Series 7 Slate made our decision very easy.”

Experimentation with several devices highlighted the Series 7 Slate’s edge over other tablets. According to Landry, while the team found other tablets impressive for consuming content, watching videos and looking at websites, they fell short of students’ needs in producing content, writing papers, developing presentations and doing calculations. “What we get with the Series 7 Slate is a full computer, not a supplement,” Landry said. “The students can take it to the classroom, and take notes using the pen or keyboard. When they get back to their rooms, they dock it, and it’s their computer.”

Only a half-inch thin and weighing about two pounds, the Samsung Series 7 Slate was one of the first devices on the market to offer the full Windows experience in a slim, powerful tablet form-factor. It features built-in Wi-Fi® and Bluetooth® 3.0 connectivity. And, importantly, it provides a variety of input methods, including a responsive touch screen interface, digitizer pen and optional Bluetooth keyboard. When connected to a docking station, the Series 7 Slate operates as a notebook PC, with all the power and productivity that its Intel® Core™ i5 Processor and genuine Windows operating system provide.

In deciding on the Series 7 Slate, the mobile computing program chose to partner with Samsung instead of its long-term provider. Seton Hall and Samsung also worked with Microsoft to integrate Windows 8 in the Series 7 Slate, making the university the first and only higher-education institution to deploy the new operating before it became publicly available.

As a pilot program, the Samsung Series 7 Slate running Windows 8 was distributed to 600 faculty and students in sciences and business, as well as the arts and sciences honors program. It also distributed 1,600 Samsung Series 5 Notebooks to other faculty and students as Seton Hall looks to transition gradually to tablets.
THE RESULTS
Windows 8 on Series 7 Slate leads to one-device strategy

By fully replacing faculty and student laptops with the Series 7 Slate, Seton Hall achieved tablet standardization. And by meeting the students’ expectations of having Microsoft Windows in a tablet form factor, the mobile computing program was able to focus and streamline to one device. “The Series 7 Slate was the best Windows tablet, and really the only device capable of actually replacing the laptop. This enabled us to go with a one-device strategy,” said Landry. “It all came together this year with the Series 7 Slate.”

The program saw the successful deployment of hundreds of Series 7 Slate tablets to undergraduates in one day during orientation. The massive deployment was a logistically challenging operation and involved several processes for every student, including attaching the computer to the network, entering their credentials and setting up their e-mail accounts.

“I’ve long admired Samsung’s consumer electronics,” said Landry. “But as a CIO I need to buy thousands of devices and support them in our teaching and learning environment. I’ve been really amazed at Samsung’s responsiveness. Samsung has been able to deliver and to provide the services and support that any CEO will need for a large-scale deployment.”

Student and faculty feedback on the Series 7 Slate has been extremely positive. A survey to gauge student satisfaction indicated the mobile computing program had responded well to student needs, with all the listed features – battery life, weight, storage space, form factor and screen size – receiving high marks.

“The Samsung Series 7 Slate with the Windows 8 operating system really gives me the best of both worlds,” said Kevin Barden, a Freshman at Seton Hall majoring in Economics. “The portability and ease of use of a tablet with the power of a real computer that can run all of the applications I need for school.”

“I am delighted with the capability, form factor and performance of the Samsung Series 7 Slate,” said Professor John H. Shannon, J.D. Associate Professor, Legal Studies at Seton Hall’s Stillman School of Business. “It is a remarkably light, fast and capable platform that integrates all of the Windows 8 applications that I need to facilitate the creation of more sophisticated learning environments. As a result, I am able to engage my students in ever more active learning spaces.”