



# San José State University

## Leading state university enhances teaching and learning by integrating the Adobe® Creative Suite into its Wireless Laptop Project

### Overview

San José State University (SJSU) offers rigorous coursework and research opportunities to approximately 30,000 undergraduate and graduate students in eight colleges. Given the university's premier location in Silicon Valley, SJSU is establishing itself as a leader in integrating technology into education. To support this effort, SJSU instituted its Wireless Laptop Project to create a more dynamic and collaborative environment that enhances teaching and learning.

"Professors have more freedom to incorporate interactive lessons into curricula, and students have vital learning tools right at their fingertips," says Mary Jo Gorney-Moreno, associate vice president of academic technology at SJSU. Currently, more than 1,000 students participate in the project in the School of Art & Design, the School of Journalism & Mass Communications, and three departments within the College of Education. Central to the success of the project is SJSU's decision to standardize on the Adobe Creative Suite, a complete design environment that includes Adobe's award-winning software tools.

### Challenges

It is one thing to require students to use laptop computers as part of their coursework and quite another to successfully integrate laptops into everyday learning. "We wanted to avoid the pitfalls that universities can experience with wireless laptop projects," says Gorney-Moreno. "Simply mandating that students purchase and use laptop computers is not enough."

One obstacle to implementing successful laptop programs is not giving faculty the time and resources needed to create curricula suited to more mobile, well-equipped students. For example, in contrast to having students watch and learn in traditional design classes, professors can now have students use their laptop computers during lectures for interactive, hands-on learning. "It's challenging to provide faculty with professional development opportunities and with the right software tools," explains Gorney-Moreno.

For the university, it was also important to identify industry-standard applications that students could afford. "With the Adobe Creative Suite, students have access to professional, industry-standard tools they can purchase easily," says Mary Fran Breiling, director of the Wireless Laptop Project. To complete assignments, students have traditionally worked in campus computer labs. The Wireless Laptop Project eliminated the need for students to reserve computers and travel to labs. With laptop programs, students have the freedom to work at any time and from any place.

### Solution

Faculty from SJSU schools and departments participating in the Wireless Laptop Project selected the Adobe Creative Suite, including Adobe InDesign® CS, Photoshop® CS, Illustrator® CS, and Acrobat® software, as the standard tools for their curricula. "Adobe design and production software is used daily by professionals," says Dennis Wilcox, director of the School of Journalism & Mass Communication. "With the Adobe Creative Suite, we can help our students develop the skills they need for success in the classroom and in the business world."

#### SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY

[www.sjsu.edu](http://www.sjsu.edu)



San José State  
UNIVERSITY

#### INDUSTRY

Higher Education

#### CHALLENGES

- Effectively integrate laptop computing into curricula
- Enhance student learning with best-in-class tools
- Provide students with affordable, intuitive software applications

#### SOLUTION

- Laptop Computing
- Design and Production

SJSU's Wireless Laptop Project leverages the Adobe Creative Suite to create a more dynamic and collaborative environment that enhances teaching and learning.

#### RESULTS

- Accelerated student participation in the university's Wireless Laptop Project by providing affordable, powerful software tools
- Improved quality of work produced by students with integrated suite of industry-standard software
- Enabled students to gain valuable, real-world design and production skills
- Strengthened SJSU's reputation as a leader in incorporating technology into education

SJSU design students participating in the university's Wireless Laptop Project use Adobe Illustrator CS and Photoshop CS to develop graphically rich images that are incorporated into page designs created with InDesign CS. The image shown on the left was created by student Lior Taylor. The image on the right was created by student Christopher Ocampo.



## "Incorporating Adobe Creative Suite software into our Wireless Laptop Project provides students the chance to develop vital skills."

Mary Jo Gorney-Moreno,  
Associate Vice President, Academic Technology,  
San José State University

One year before students began using laptops with Adobe Creative Suite software, faculty in the SJSU schools started working with the applications to determine how best to incorporate the software into coursework. "The powerful features in the Adobe applications provide flexibility in developing lessons and help us encourage our students to produce higher quality work," says Wilcox. For example, journalism students used InDesign CS software to completely redesign the campus newspaper with new fonts, a new layout, and new images, making it more attractive and easier to read.

Students purchase the Adobe software for use on laptop computers running the Microsoft® Windows® operating system or Apple PowerBook laptop computers. Assignments created in any of the Adobe Creative Suite software applications can easily be converted to platform- and application-independent Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) files, eliminating problems that could arise from students and professors working in different computing environments.

## Results

The decision by SJSU faculty to standardize on Adobe Creative Suite software eliminated one of the biggest obstacles that universities face when requiring students to adopt new technologies: lack of affordability. "Adobe is a true partner in education," says Breiling. "The Adobe Creative Suite software sets the standard for quality in professional environments, and the tools are affordable for students. It's a winning combination."

Adds Robert Milnes, director of SJSU's School of Art & Design, "The integrated Adobe software suite enables students to create visually compelling projects that include a variety of elements." For example, design students can use Illustrator CS and Photoshop CS to develop graphically rich images that are incorporated into page designs created with InDesign CS.

Using the software on their laptop computers, students can work at their convenience and easily redo images on assignments without wasting time maneuvering through unrelated programs. Completed assignments with all details—text, images, fonts, and other elements—can in a single step be output to Adobe PDF files to submit to professors.

Because the Adobe tools share a similar interface and design palette, skills learned on one program transfer easily to the other applications, enabling students to quickly gain design expertise that is useful in and out of school. "We're committed to giving our students a 21st century education," says Gorney-Moreno. "Incorporating Adobe Creative Suite software into our Wireless Laptop Project provides students the chance to develop vital skills."

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