

# A View from Within

Tablet PCs On Campus

## “I Honestly Think We’ve Arrived at 1:1 Computing”

Bishop Hartley High School puts its seniors on a mobile track

“Every desk is a front-row seat,” says Ken Collura, Director of Technology for the Diocese of Columbus (OH), referring to this year’s graduating class at Bishop Hartley High School ([www.cdeducation.org/schools/bh/index.htm](http://www.cdeducation.org/schools/bh/index.htm)). “These tablet PCs bring all the seniors to the front of the class.”

The advent of tablet PCs — thin, lightweight units that resemble, in a fashion, a book but combine the power of a full-function PC with the convenience of a notepad and the simplicity of a natural, pen-based interface — represent the next stage in education technology. Supported by a wireless network, the tablets become highly mobile — and powerful — computers for entering and accessing information.

Collura’s enthusiasm for the Compaq Tablet PC TC1000 pilot program at the co-ed, “melting-pot” parochial high school is unmistakable: “I love these machines,” he says. “These units are reshaping what we teach and the way we deliver the curriculum.”

Last semester, 142 seniors at Bishop Hartley were given the units for 24/7 use (the tablets are covered by homeowners or renters insurance). “This [program] represents an evolution from computer labs to desktops in classrooms to mobile carts to laptops to, finally, tablets,” he describes.

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Quite possibly. The tablets give students the ability to have text loaded on their respective tablets to allow highlighting, annotation and snipping. The units have all the power of a full-function Windows-based PC to create, store, and access information with additional on-screen writing capability. This allows users to take handwritten notes, create drawings, or annotate documents, then wirelessly share this information. Teachers use the document-sharing program to post assignments

in any desired form — written, verbal [e.g., foreign language], worksheets, and so on — and the students access, complete and submit work in the same way. Teachers grade by annotating documents and using audio comments they send back to students as email attachments.

The use of the units on campus is non-stop, which raised concerns about battery life and whether the students would remember to keep the tablets fully charged. “I asked the kids how many had cell phones and nearly every hand went up. When I asked how many forgot to keep the batteries charged, all the hands went

down. I told them I expected the same diligence with the tablets. It hasn’t been a problem.”

In fact, very few problems have arisen; if anything, the biggest challenge on the horizon is that the hardware technology is outpacing software development. “Getting all publishers to work at getting digital textbooks is a must,” he urges. “This unit is going to revitalize [educational] publishing.”

In the meantime, Bishop Hartley High School will extend the program next fall so the seniors will have the tablets for the entire year. In 2004-2005 it will expand to include the junior class. The other 46 elementary and 11 high schools in the diocese will be brought on after the pilot evaluations are in, but don’t be surprised if Collura votes for diocese-wide implementation. “The tablet isn’t just designed for A students, it’s for all students and faculty and it does everything anyone needs.

“This is the first time in 20 years that I’ve only needed one computer,” he claims. **1:1**



**SENIOR CITIZENS:** Members of the graduating class at Columbus' Bishop Hartley High School show off their tablets.



### 1:1 Links

▶ If you want to hear more about the **Bishop Hartley High School** project or discuss other educational topics, visit the forum at:

[www.tabletpctalk.com/](http://www.tabletpctalk.com/) discussion

▶ For more information about **HP products**,

visit **HP's K-12**

Education online store:

[www.hp.com/go/](http://www.hp.com/go/k12education)

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