Cloudalize™

Figure: Clouldalize's DaaS solution running on a MacBook of an architectural student, UCLouvain

UCLouvain

Location
Tournai, Belgium

Industry
Education & Training

Solution
Desktop-as-a-Service (DaaS)

Application
Remote Learning CAD, CAE and BIM

When courses were suspended during March 2020 because of the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic, a number of architectural and urban planning students of UCLouvain found that they had no method of continuing with their course work.

However, implementing Cloudalize's GPU-powered DaaS solution in a matter of hours helped them to have the high-speed and graphical-performance needed to continue their course work remotely and prepare for the end-of-year exams.

About UCLouvain

The Faculty of Architecture, Architectural Engineering and Urban Planning is one of the 14 faculties of Belgium's largest French-speaking university, UCLouvain.

The faculty is spread across three campuses - Louvain-la-Neuve, Brussels and Tournai - and offers undergraduate and postgraduate courses in architecture, civil engineering and urban planning. Students learn how to use a variety of modern and digital design and planning tools such as computer-aided design (CAD) and engineering (CAE), and Building Information Modelling (BIM).

UCLouvain is the current name of world-renowned Université catholique de Louvain (UCL) after merging with Brussels-based Université Saint-Louis in 2018.

The Challenge

UCLouvain, like many other educational institutions around the world, was presented with a sudden and unprecedented situation during March 2020. The university recorded its first case of COVID-19 on 9 March. UCLouvain took the decision to close the faculty to reduce the risk of infection to students on 11 March. This necessary step resulted in students being locked out from the computer labs and offices from which they had accessed course software and did project work. This was done as a temporary measure but the spread of COVID-19 escalated in Belgium and regional educational authorities suspended all educational classes from 13 March indefinitely.

The search was on now for a more permanent solution to run demanding BIM and graphical software used by the students to continue their course work and eventually to prepare for the end-of-year exams in June.

The Solution

Given the constraints, there was no time to wait for UCLouvain's IT team to return with a high-speed solution with the necessary graphical performance along with full costings and an implementation plan.

That's when the faculty approached Cloudalize. The Cloudalize team worked over the weekend to facilitate UCLouvain with its technical questions and Cloudalize's service details.

The GPU-powered virtual machines are accessible from anywhere on any device through a stable internet connection. The desktops are deployed easily to each individual student with a specialised blueprint which is specially adapted to their specific course needs.

The Future

"The students are very happy that we found a solution to their immediate problem very quickly" confirmed Professor Jean-Pierre Couwenbergh. "Cloudalize helped to standardise the setup for the different operating systems (OS) used by students."

COVID-19 caused a monumental shift in education and deploying Cloudalize's GPU-powered DaaS solution has enabled the faculty to plan for a post-COVID-19 future where learning is flexible and remote. By using Cloudalize's solution, UCLouvain has already a robust, secure and powerful solution available now to handle the needs of its current students as well as its incoming students for the next academic year.

"Cloudalize is an efficient solution which is simple to use and has a transparent cost structure."

Professor Jean-Pierre Couwenbergh
Faculty of Architecture,
Architectural Engineering and Urban Planning,
UCLouvain