

Blackboard Supports Rapid Transition to Remote Learning in the Middle East

Blackboard leveraged AWS to support massive increase in number of users on its virtual classroom solution during the COVID-19 pandemic

DUBAI, 12 August 2020 — [Blackboard](#) today announced that it successfully supported hundreds of institutions in the Middle East with their rapid transition to fully remote learning leveraging its Blackboard Collaborate Ultra virtual classroom solution as the Covid-19 global pandemic unfolded. Collaborate Ultra saw an increase of nearly 3 million active users who clocked 2.3 billion virtual classroom minutes across the region during the period from March to May 2020. Collaborate Ultra was vital during this period as academic institutions had to shift to wholly remote learning environments within a matter of days.

Blackboard's Collaborate Ultra solution relies on the leading cloud infrastructure from Amazon Web Services (AWS). Blackboard worked closely with AWS to increase computing capacity for its platform to manage the unprecedented surge in users in the Middle East during this time, scaling the platform 50x to support the increased demand from hundreds of institutions.

“We are proud that our hundreds of clients in the Middle East entrusted Blackboard Collaborate to support their rapid transition to fully distance learning during the pandemic,” said Robert Speed, Vice President of Middle East and Africa at Blackboard. “We worked hand-in-hand with our strategic partner AWS to scale the platform to meet the unprecedented demand and to ensure users have uninterrupted, anywhere-anytime access to our virtual classroom solution.”

Blackboard's virtual classroom solution is specifically designed for educators and learners and can ease the transition to a fully digital education environment by offering both synchronous and asynchronous course capabilities. The virtual classroom solution connects students and instructors via both desktop and mobile devices. Designed to simulate a physical classroom, the tool includes features that connect students and promote collaboration, engagement, and accessible learning through features such as hand raising, whiteboard, chat, breakout groups, and polls. The solution integrates seamlessly with all leading learning management systems (LMS).

“Over the last months, the world of education has had to adapt fast, with technology becoming critical in helping educators innovate and embrace virtual classrooms at a rate that we have not seen before,” said Paul Grist, International Head of Education at AWS. “Blackboard has leveraged its wealth of experience in the

region during this period and we were happy to support them to meet the increased demand for their solutions. We look forward to continuing to work with Blackboard to provide an agile, secure and reliable environment to support the region's learners however they learn be it in-class, remote, or a hybrid of both.”

About Blackboard

Blackboard is a leading EdTech company, serving higher education, K-12, business and government clients around the world. We connect a deep understanding of education with the power of technology to continuously push the boundaries of learning. Our mission is to advance learning together with the world's education community, so that all learners, educators and institutions can realize their goals today and prepare for tomorrow.

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