

TANDBERG CUSTOMER PROFILE

Nanyang Technological
University



- **GOAL:** Deliver distance learning SMA programs across wide geographical boundaries and time zones; ensure stability, reliability and minimize connectivity issues, while providing a quality live user experience.
- **SOLUTION:** TANDBERG 6000 and TANDBERG 550 videoconferencing solutions to create a collaborative live classroom environment.
- **RESULTS:** Created one of the largest interactive distance education collaboration in the world; achieved robust and reliable visual communication, while delivering a high quality user experience.

“ The TANDBERG video system is robust and reliable, ensures high level of connection in live sessions while minimizing impediment in learning for the SMA program.”

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR DANIEL T.H. TAN
DIRECTOR, CENTRE OF EDUCATION
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QUALITY ENGINEERING EDUCATION THROUGH DISTANCE DELIVERY

Ranked 26th among technology Universities in the world, Nanyang Technological University (NTU) is one of the most progressive science and technology education institutions. Besides having one of the largest engineering colleges in the world, NTU has expanded its global network to accelerate collaborative research, teaching and entrepreneurship through joint University programs, including the Singapore - MIT Alliance.

Founded in 1998, the Singapore-MIT Alliance (SMA) is an innovative engineering and life science educational and research collaboration among three leading research Universities in the world: the Nanyang Technological University (NTU), the National University of Singapore (NUS), and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

Working towards its primary goal of educating leaders and advancing knowledge for Singapore and beyond, NTU turned to visual communication technology to break new ground in global education. In 2000, NTU along with the Universities of the SMA combined their expertise and superior resources to create a distance learning environment at the forefront of best practices using TANDBERG technology.

Following a thorough evaluation of equipment from several vendors, NTU chose the appliance-based TANDBERG 6000 for their education platform. The TANDBERG 6000 met the University's stringent requirements for stability and reliability. They were especially impressed with the systems' handling of ISDN network disturbances and IP congestion.

“The decision to replace our Vcon and PictureTel systems with TANDBERG was based on connectivity, stability and quality,” says Associate Professor Daniel T.H. Tan, Director of Education Development, NTU. “TANDBERG is able to deliver on all our requirements, ensuring constant connectivity by providing a stable and robust technology platform to enhance the learning experience in real-time.”

GLOBAL DISTANCE EDUCATION MODEL

Five different educational programs are currently run by the Singapore-MIT Alliance. NTU's videoconferencing system is used daily as an integral part of these programs, providing students with access to world-class teaching resources and the possibility to share knowledge with fellow students abroad.

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Considered one of the largest interactive distance education collaboration in the world, SMA takes advantage of NTU’s state-of-the-art synchronous and asynchronous facilities to achieve seamless instruction in 4 sites across 12 time zones. The interactive distance technology has enabled live beaming of seminars by Nobel Laureates and other distinguished faculty from MIT to audiences at NTU. And, the voice delay is less than a second between the Cambridge, Massachusetts classroom and the Singapore classroom.

TANDBERG’s visual communication technology is enabling a culture of collaboration at NTU. Students attend live course lectures between Universities, may interact with professors through videoconferencing, and review all lectures and materials electronically. The result? NTU students have access to a combination of international expertise and resources, which maximizes their learning experience.

THE NEED FOR A RELIABLE AND ROBUST SOLUTION

TANDBERG’s robust and reliable videoconferencing solution has ensured that NTU’s students and staff can operate the system with ease. With high-quality audio and TV-quality video transmission, the deployment provides a natural learning experience for geographically dispersed users and teachers, allowing them to focus on the lessons, rather than the technology.

“By deploying the TANDBERG solution, we also sought to minimize lesson interruption in the event of a drop in connectivity,” adds Mr. Tan. The TANDBERG system is very stable. It provides robust and reliable connection and enables almost instant recovery of calls in the event of a drop in connectivity.”

CHANGING THE FACE OF EDUCATION

Today, competition amongst education institutions is fierce. Universities compete for every resource of significance from quality students to superior faculty, from corporate support to private funds and endowments. As productivity and quality provide the twin engines of competition among Universities, NTU believes its distance education focus delivers a competitive advantage.

“Our distance learning program offers a quality alternative to traditional geographically static classroom courses,” says Mr. Tan. “But most importantly, it allows us to feature live lectures from some of the world’s best educated professionals. Overall, our technologically advanced distance learning facilities is the enabler for the ground-breaking collaboration between NTU, NUS and MIT.”

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

There is no doubt that face-to-face communication is an important part of the education process. In fact, a collaboration such as the SMA would not have been practical or even possible, were it not for the underlying framework that visual communication enables.

“Having face-to-face contact is important in ensuring a better learning experience,” says Mr. Tan. “With TANDBERG systems, NTU’s students and teaching staff are able to have live interaction with each other, without the traditional restrictions of time limitations or geographical barriers.”

ENRICHING THE EDUCATION EXPERIENCE

There is no doubt that interactive distance education at the SMA provides the key to using today’s advanced technology to bring students together with the world’s most influential teachers. TANDBERG is delivering visual communication solutions to help NTU foster a climate of hands-on learning and collaboration without geographical barriers through its SMA programs - that will inspire and motivate students for years to come.