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Case study:
Trinity College's Engineering and Robotics Team

Engineering and innovation with the ActivPanel

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Sion Harman
Senior School Robotics Coordinator
at Trinity College

A bit of background

Located in Adelaide, Australia, Trinity College is committed to developing positivity and confidence in students from pre-school through to age 18. Made up of five schools, Trinity College prides itself on its Christian values and Anglican tradition which encourages the personal and spiritual development of those in the Adelaide community.

Over the last decade, the college has built upon its passion for engineering and robotics to help nurture students' talents. This extensive co-curricular programme allows students from each school to come together as a part of a dynamic team which designs, builds and programs robots.

At Trinity College, the spirit of 'doing your best' is an ethos which permeates both the students and staff, and one that is at the core of the robotics programme. This enthusiasm has led to the College entering the First Tech Challenge regularly during the past eight years, and becoming multi-award winners at the Australian and International championships. With Promethean's support, the College has been able to enter competitions further afield including the World Robotics Championships in China, where the team won the Design Award.

Why the ActivPanel?

The teaching team at Trinity College believe that Promethean's ActivPanel has been invaluable in supporting growth and individuality in students.

The ActivPanel has greatly benefitted the Robotics and Engineering Programme, as it enables flexible working and seamless collaboration. The student-centric ethos at Trinity College has enabled students to take a sense of ownership over their work through the ActivPanel, and they have been making the most of a range of tools encouraging innovative engineering. Sion Harman, Trinity College's Senior School Robotics Coordinator, has seen first-hand what technology can do.

"Awards are one thing, but student development is at the heart of Trinity College," Sion Harman comments. "We've been taking full advantage of the instant whiteboard to create to-do lists and enhance productivity throughout the robotics process."

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Combining Robotics and the ActivPanel

Sion highlights how crucial the ActivPanel has been in motivating senior pupils at Trinity College, saying: "With the ActivPanel at the heart of planning and development, our robotics and engineering programme is helping older students look beyond what they do in the classroom and consider their future after education."

"We are very keen to help students explore their futures and understand their potential. It's important that, as teachers, we give students hands-on experience in areas which could lead them into impassioned careers."

Such is the case with Trinity College's robotics and engineering scheme. Set up to inspire innovation and develop valuable, subject-specific skills, the programme is encouraging students to flourish.

Sion recalled one particularly heart-warming story, which showcases the successes of the programme remarkably. The anecdote focuses on a 17-year-old student who was not confident in his writing abilities, and often isolated himself during mainstream education.

"We saw this student come out of his shell in the robotics and engineering scheme," Sion explained. "He took responsibility of the ActivPanel as an organisational tool, creating and updating to-do lists as part of each session. As his confidence grew,

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he began creating photo-based instructions, taking photos of the components the team were using and annotating them directly on the ActivPanel."

The ActivPanel has also helped the team keep in touch through video sharing. Collaboration has never been easier, with the students using Skype on the ActivPanel – and even keeping in touch with a French exchange pupil who still wanted to contribute even after returning to France. Not only is the robotics and engineering scheme more active than ever, the students are learning remote-working skills that will benefit them in the future.

Sion concludes, "Promethean's ActivPanel has done more than just enhance our robotics and engineering programme. It has helped a number of students gain an idea of the sorts of careers they would like to pursue, and given them a sense of focus. More than one of the students is now looking at a career in engineering, and with the tech-based skills they've picked up along the way, they'll be well placed to do so."

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