



# Tapping into the Potential of Distance Learning at California State University, Chico

With Wacom interactive pen displays in the classroom, students in the Distance Learning program at the California State University at Chico can do more than just follow along at home; they can interact and absorb the material.

Since 1975, CSU Chico's Distributed Learning programs have been meeting the needs of students in northern California. Over the years, the programs have evolved from microwave and satellite broadcast systems to today's Internet classroom solutions. And most recently, CSU has adopted a new "best practice"—using Wacom displays in the classroom. "I like to show and tell—not just tell," says CSU Chico Professor, Dr. Cris Guenter.

Bill Evans, Operations Manager for CSU Chico Distributed Learning Technologies, said he wanted to recreate a live, lecture-capable environment because most faculty members prefer to lecture as well as write and draw diagrams. Traditional distance learning environments can make this difficult, so Bill found a solution with Wacom's line of interactive pen displays and HorizonLive software. With a networked computer and the pen display linked to an LCD projector, the in-class students are able to see exactly what the online students are viewing on their remote computer screens.

The instructor can view the slide materials and the chat room while creating new material on the electronic whiteboard area. The instructor may also make notes on the screen—right over diagrams and existing text. According to Bill, The updated solution "Provides faculty the ability to use an electronic whiteboard in a natural way without fumbling around with a lot of technology."

What's more, he says that "the technology does not get in the way of their teaching but rather enhances it." He recommends it to anyone considering a distance education system.

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"Everyone is on the same page—literally. The instructor can jump in and interact with the content on the screen."

– Bill Evans  
Operations Manager  
for CSU Chico  
Distributed Learning  
Technologies

