



## USC Provides Students an Opportunity to Unleash their Creative Energies

### USC's Digital Creative Lab Sets a New Standard for Varsity Esports and Creative Expression

Playing video games in college is no longer relegated to dark corners of the dorm rooms. Today, college esports, which is competitive video game play, sits front and center for new recruitment programs, coupled with lucrative funding opportunities for student-athletes. With the global esports market expected to top \$5 billion\* by the end of this decade, it's no wonder academic institutions of higher education around the U.S. are enthusiastically backing fully-fledged varsity esports programs.

The University of Southern California had a vision to not only throw its weight behind esports, but to also create an entirely new space that is engineered to harness the creative potential of any student on campus. It was out of the desire to tap into the technology and opportunities of the future that the Digital Creative Lab was born.

### Creating A Signature Space

The USC Digital Creative Lab covers a portion of one of the University's libraries. This technology hub was initially conceived as an esports arena where the esports teams could not only practice, but also host tournaments, but it soon became the signature space for all things digital. At its heart is a 165-inch diagonal direct-view LED video wall from Sharp positioned at the front of the main room to serve as a focal point for the entire space. During tournaments, vivid, crystal-clear game play

#### The Challenge:

The University of Southern California (USC) in Los Angeles wanted to create a space to provide students and staff with commercial-grade, interactive multi-media technology that would unleash creative energy and enable students to evolve artistically, create professional quality videos and absolutely intimidate the competition, so they dominate in esports events.

#### Solution:

- A 165-inch diagonal direct-view LED video wall using the LED-FA019i2-165, which was installed as the centerpiece of the USC Digital Creative Lab.
- 11 large format displays including four C750Q 75" Ultra High Definition Commercial Displays and seven M651 65" Ultra High Definition Professional Displays installed in the NFT Lounge, which is the first permanently installed NFT art gallery on any college campus.
- 28 additional large format displays, including one M551-PT 55" Ultra High Definition Professional Display with PCAP touch, 10 M551 Ultra High Definition Professional Displays, five 49" Ultra High Definition Professional Displays and 12 M431 43" Ultra High Definition Professional Displays used in the Digital Creative Lab's state-of-the-art video production room and in other areas of the lab.

#### Result:

The USC Digital Creative Lab is a magnificent hybrid space unlike anything seen at any other university. It serves as a classroom, an art studio, a professional video production house and an arena worthy of the fiercest esports competitions on earth.





and highlights are displayed larger-than-life on the video wall so no one misses a second of the action. During school hours, the hybrid space is used as a classroom. It has 26 stations for students and professors to have the luxury of using the video wall with their lectures.

Hunter Stacey, the AV/IT Projects Facilitator at USC ITS Learning Environments, and his team plan and support the technology needs for most of the learning spaces on campus and set the standards for technology and functionality in those spaces. "The Digital Creative Lab is a unique asset unlike anything seen on any campus in the world. It is available for all students, staff and faculty to express themselves creatively. Here they can create and display NFTs, host podcasts to share their passions, create YouTube or

TikTok videos with incredible production value, play games on high-level machines they may not have access to otherwise and dominate the competition in a first-rate esports facility. At USC, we encourage students to go after their dreams, and the world-class technology we have implemented allows them to make that a reality like nothing else."







## World-Class Learning with Top-Tier Technology

Ancillary to the main space are several additional rooms including a state-of-the-art video production room populated with technology that would be at home in any of the nearby Hollywood studios including green screens, camera and sound equipment and several 49" and 55" Ultra High Definition Professional NEC displays. The lab also includes a hologram machine, two podcast studios, large-format 3D printers and the first-of-its-kind NFT Lounge.

The special NFT Lounge is the first permanently installed NFT art gallery on a college campus. It features 11 displays from NEC including four 75" and seven 65" Ultra High Definition Professional Displays. These displays are used to present the digital art, NFTs in perfect clarity.



\* Fortune Business Insights, <https://www.fortunebusinessinsights.com/esports-market-106820>

## Educating Innovators

Joe Way, Ph.D. and Director, Learning Environments, Information Technology Services at USC said, "Having the right technology in a learning environment means everything. Not only do we have the number one game development program in the entire country with many students going on to work for the top-tier game developers in the world, but we also have many graduates sign on with Disney, NBC, Netflix and other production companies. As such, it was critically important that we provide professional level tools and technology, such as the video wall and displays from NEC that will deliver the highest quality imagery for many years to come to future-proof the space. We recognize that the Digital Creative Lab sets the standard for all similar spaces that will follow."



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