Transforming Learning Space Management at University of Guelph

$25,000

First-year savings from eliminating wasted spend

500+

FTE hours saved during year 1 of LSM Subscription

100%

Accurate and reliable asset data and reporting

> **"Our previous systems slowed us down, created duplication, and made planning harder than it needed to be."**

Chris Hewitt, Manager of Classroom Technology at University of Guelph

Industry:

Higher Education

Location:

Ontario, Canada

Size:

30,040 students

3,925 academic staff

Products:

- Learning Space Manager
- Learning Space Profiles+
- Loans Module

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At the University of Guelph, classroom technology management once relied on spreadsheets and a custom-built legacy application. While this approach technically worked, it came with real operational friction. Multiple spreadsheets often disagreed with one another, duplication caused constant rework, and staff hours were routinely spent reconciling data instead of supporting classrooms. The legacy system required ongoing maintenance, manual version control, and regular intervention just to keep it functional. As classroom technology evolved more rapidly, these tools increasingly struggled to keep up, leaving the team one missed update away from inaccurate records or security concerns.

The University of Guelph is widely recognized for its leadership in innovation and excellence in teaching and learning. To strengthen how classroom technology was managed day to day, the university partnered with Talem3 to implement Learning Space Manager (LSM). By moving beyond spreadsheets and aging legacy systems, Guelph adopted a modern, cloud-based platform that provides real-time visibility, reduces operational friction, and supports more strategic planning across its learning spaces

The Challenge

Prior to implementing LSM, the Classroom Technology Services (CTS) team relied heavily on spreadsheets and on-premises systems to track assets, manage maintenance activities, and plan lifecycle renewals. Asset information was duplicated across files, frequently out of sync, and difficult to trust. Updating one record often meant updating several others, with no guarantee they would remain aligned.

Tracking and reporting were time-consuming and manual. Routine room checks required staff to document findings, reconcile discrepancies later, and hope nothing was missed in the process. Without dependable lifecycle data, replacement planning became reactive. Budgets were often built on incomplete information, and valuable staff hours were consumed by reconciliation work rather than classroom improvements or faculty support.

As Chris Hewitt, Manager of Classroom Technical Support, explains:

“Our previous systems slowed us down, created duplication, and made planning harder than it needed to be.”

The Solution: Learning Space Manager

In late 2018, the University of Guelph began working with Talem3 to implement Learning Space Manager, with a full rollout completed in 2019. The platform was designed specifically for higher education and aligned closely with the operational realities of CTS. LSM replaced manual tracking with a centralized, real-time asset management system, improving the speed and accuracy of asset updates. Staff could update equipment records directly in the room, knowing the data was immediately accurate and centrally governed. Automated maintenance schedules replaced ad hoc tracking, while dynamic reporting introduced reliable lifecycle visibility for the first time.

Just as importantly, the implementation eliminated duplicate records and established consistent data governance across critical asset fields. Instead of maintaining multiple versions of the truth, CTS now worked from a single, trusted source of data.

Onboarding was straightforward, and the team transitioned from spreadsheets to a live system within days. Data migration focused on cleaning and normalizing existing records rather than simply importing historical inconsistencies. The platform's flexibility allowed the team to adapt workflows over time without requiring infrastructure maintenance or server oversight.

As Hewitt notes:

"We needed a tool that didn't require server babysitting, manual version control, or guesswork."

Results and Impact

The impact of Learning Space Manager was immediate and felt most clearly in the day-to-day work of the Classroom Technology Services team. By eliminating duplicate updates, manual reconciliation, and repeated site visits, CTS estimates that LSM saved several hundred staff hours in the first year alone. Those hours were not absorbed elsewhere; they were deliberately reinvested into room upgrades, lifecycle renewals, technology migrations, and more proactive faculty support.

Before LSM, routine room checks and inventory updates often meant updating multiple spreadsheets and later reconciling discrepancies. Equipment moves or replacements could trigger a chain of manual updates across disconnected systems, with no guarantee that records remained aligned. With Learning Space Manager, technicians now update assets directly in the room by scanning a barcode or making a mobile update, knowing the record is immediately accurate and centrally governed.

"Instead of updating four different spreadsheets and hoping they matched, my team can now scan a barcode, update the equipment in real time, and know the entire record is clean," said Chris Hewitt, Manager of Classroom Technical Support.

These workflow improvements translated into measurable financial impact. Annual operational savings are estimated at up to $25,000, driven primarily by efficiencies in room checks, lifecycle renewal planning, and technology migrations. Inventory updates are faster and more reliable, reducing surprises and improving service turnaround for faculty and students.

Perhaps most importantly, Learning Space Manager delivered something CTS had long been missing: data they could trust. Accurate, governed asset records now support long-term forecasting, with visibility extending up to thirty years for certain technology categories. This shift allowed budgeting to move from reactive to strategic and enabled more informed conversations with financial stakeholders.

"We weren't short on data before," Hewitt noted. "We were short on data we could actually trust."

That confidence also enabled more strategic purchasing decisions. In one scenario, CTS used lifecycle and end-of-life data to predict upcoming equipment needs and negotiate a bulk purchase, saving

approximately $300 per unit on a 30-unit order. These savings were not accidental; they were the result of having reliable data that aligned operational reality with financial planning.

“Our goal in CTS is simple,” said Hewitt. “Reliable spaces, fewer surprises, and data we can trust. Learning Space Manager finally gives us that foundation.”

Looking Ahead

Building on its success with Learning Space Manager, the University of Guelph plans to further integrate the platform into its broader planning ecosystem. Upcoming initiatives include connecting LSM with scheduling and budgeting systems, exploring integrations with monitoring and command-and-control tools, and evaluating AI-driven support options for faculty.

Conclusion

Partnering with Talem3 and implementing Learning Space Manager was a game-changer. The University of Guelph significantly improved how classroom technology was managed, replacing fragmented tools with LSM, providing a reliable, real-time system that reflects the realities of day-to-day operations. The result is not just cost savings, but a stronger foundation for planning, support, and continuous improvement across learning spaces. This updated toolset enabled the University of Guelph to identify, fund, and replace its aging audiovisual inventory through a long-term plan. The learning environment has been dramatically improved with predictable and repeatable results for years to come.