

BLUESCAPE<sup>®</sup>

 CASE STUDY

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## Digital Savvy Students Embrace New Ways to Learn and Collaborate Together



## Collaborate Together

In the movie “Dead Poets Society,” the John Keating character tells his students to rip out the preface of their poetry books — all the pages that were meant to instruct them on how to understand and rate poetry. The reason? He wants them to think outside the box, to think for themselves.

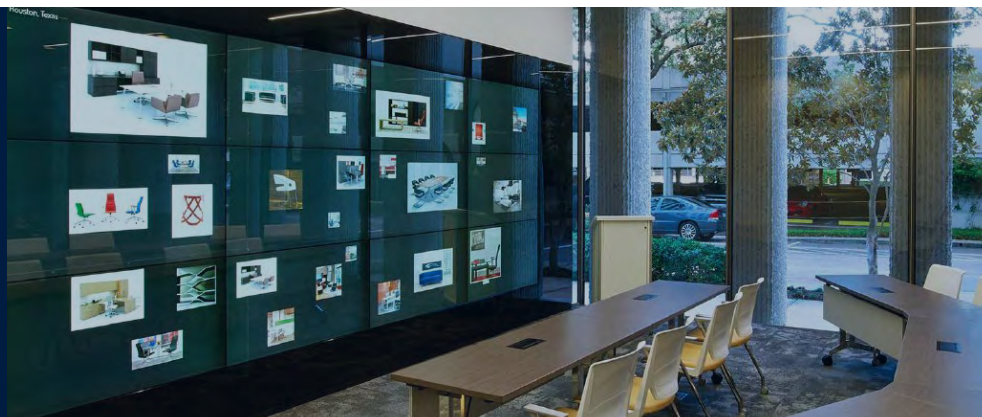
And that’s exactly what Grand Valley State University (GVSU) near Grand Rapids, Michigan wants for its students, and why it implemented Bluescape, a digital workspace that promotes creative thinking and team collaboration. The university has been using Bluescape across its graduate and undergraduate schools for the past four years to teach faculty and students new ways to learn, present and collaborate.

“Bluescape helps us embrace the messiness that creativity requires,” said Rachel Travis, a GVSU student who first used the tool to collaborate with classmates on a case study of Grand Rapids’ craft brewing industry. “It offers a visual, three-dimensional experience where you can throw out any and every idea, click down for deeper dives as necessary, and see what sticks or stands out. I don’t think we would have been as creative, collaborative or learned as much without Bluescape.”

“We could see across the industry’s entire supply chain — from farm to disposal — to find where and how we could improve the product’s time to market,” said Eric Anderson, a fellow GVSU supply chain management student. “Also, because we could see all the work that other students had already done, we didn’t waste time researching the same thing and were able to explore other topics, which helped us develop a more comprehensive study.”

“Bluescape helps us embrace the messiness that creativity requires.”

RACHEL TRAVIS, GVSU STUDENT IN SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT





## Teaching With Impact and Relevance

Perhaps more than anyone, Star Swift, associate professor of law at GVSU, had a vision to use Bluescape to highlight and involve her students in the dynamic nature of law.

“Laws are changing day to day. I can’t assume the curriculum I create one semester will maintain its relevance and value into the next,” said Swift. “Bluescape gives me the flexibility to update lesson plans in real time and integrate a current news story into an historical perspective on a case. It helps bring a sense of both timeliness and timelessness to the content.”

“Bluescape was an instant hit with students. Our students are incredibly tech savvy. They don’t want static, one-way lectures from us; they want a dialogue, they want to be hands-on. So, I use Bluescape as a collaborative, living textbook,” said Star Swift, associate professor of law at GVSU.

What’s more, Bluescape has given Swift’s students a whole new way to organize cases. They can use it to store all relevant materials, with everything — from opening and closing statements, witness lists, questions, talking points — at their fingertips to be reworked or reordered, however they wanted, and whenever they needed.

## Present and Articulate With Confidence

In Swift’s litigation class, students present their legal cases in Bluescape. The mock trials give students a realistic courtroom experience in presenting evidence and articulating their points of view. Previous technologies did not provide the real-life stage whereas now, students can better hone their arguments and give more dynamic presentations.

Across the hallway, another group of Swift’s GVSU students are using Bluescape for their team project. Many of these students are first generation, where English is a second language.

“Our job is to get our first generation students comfortable with technology and with their studies,” says Swift. “Bluescape gives them a voice, a means to collaborate with their classmates and present with confidence. Any leg up we can give them is very important to us.”





## Fostering Autonomy and Accountability

As a central document repository, Bluescape also helps students optimize their time and work whenever and wherever is best for them. There's no need to dig through emails to find a document. No more confusion about who received materials or didn't. And no room for "my dog ate my homework" or "it got lost in my spam folder" excuses. Everything's right there in Bluescape for all to see — and that's a positive.

"Bluescape brings visibility. Visibility brings accountability. Accountability brings success," said Anderson, the craft brewing project student. "When you're juggling a number of classes and other activities, it can be tough to coordinate schedules with project partners. But with Bluescape, it wasn't an issue. If I had time to work when they didn't, it was okay. I did my part and when their schedules freed up, they did theirs. I was able to keep my own pace and be a good teammate. It's a lesson — and hopefully a tool — I'll take with me when I join the workforce."

GVSU is making great strides in preparing their students, this new breed of millennial workers, for successful careers. It involves a new way of teaching and learning - focused on how students can work more creatively and collaboratively in ways best suited for them.

### Bluescape Benefits

- Creative thinking and visual approach to learning.
- Enhanced classroom interaction and collaboration.
- Real-time updates to lesson plans and coursework.
- Meetings and projects are more productive and move faster.
- Everyone contributes, presents and is integral to overall team success.

## About Grand Valley

Established in 1960, Grand Valley State University is a public liberal arts university in Allendale, Michigan. With a mission to educate students to shape their lives, their professions, and their societies, GVSU contributes to the enrichment of society through excellent teaching, active scholarship, and public service.

## About Bluescape

Bluescape creates collaboration solutions that help distributed teams perform their best—at work, on the go, and at home. Its virtual work platform empowers colleagues to see the big picture, make better decisions, and drive positive results. Customers include Fortune 100 companies, government agencies, higher education, and leaders in media and entertainment. A Silicon Valley-based company, Bluescape has offices throughout the US and Canada. Bluescape is headquartered in San Carlos, CA. The company was founded in 2012 and is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Haworth. Visit [bluescape.com](https://bluescape.com) and follow us on Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook.

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