



Customer Spotlight



How York University Reduced Its Lab Footprint and IT Costs with AppsAnywhere and LabStats

York University has spent several years reducing the cost and complexity of its student computing environment while expanding flexible software access across a large, federated institution. Central to this transformation were two complementary platforms: AppsAnywhere and LabStats.

AppsAnywhere provided a centralized way to deliver and access applications beyond individual computer labs, while LabStats gave IT teams and Faculties the usage data required to understand where physical seats, rooms and software licenses could be reduced or consolidated. Together, the platforms supported a shift toward an IT model that replaced assumptions with evidence on student demand.



Snapshot

Institution: York University

Location: Toronto, Canada

Students: 53,000+

Staff: 3,000+

AppsAnywhere Customer Since: 2017

The results were soon visible and accounted for not only in reduced operational cost, but also in positive feedback from students, who gained uninterrupted access to their course software and a seamless digital experience. Here are a few highlights, as showcased by Oliver Chan Kong, Manager, Workgroup Technology Services, at the 2026 CANHEIT Annual Conference.

Key outcomes

- 70% reduction in total UIT-managed student lab seats, from 824 in 2018 to 245 in 2026
- 94% reduction in central UIT physical seats, from 450 to 28
- 250–275 seat computer lab closed and converted into hybrid teaching and learning space
- Approximately \$1.74 million in estimated cumulative savings associated with seat reductions between 2018 and 2026
- 24/7 software access aligned with BYOD and remote study
- \$40,000 annual saving on SAS and SPSS within the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies
- \$13,000+ annual saving after central IT reduced Maple and Minitab licensing to around 20 licenses



Physical lab footprint reduced by 70%

York's physical lab estate had become increasingly expensive to maintain and visibly underused, as student behavior shifted toward remote study and BYOD.

LabStats gave Faculties and central IT visibility into how physical labs were being used, allowing them to assess occupancy over time and use that evidence in discussions with deans about whether specific rooms and seats continued to justify their cost.

Between 2018 and 2026, UIT-managed student lab seats fell from 824 to 245, a reduction of approximately 70%. Within the central UIT environment, the change was larger still, with physical seats falling from 450 to 28, a 94% reduction. The 28 workstations were places in hallways in high traffic areas as kiosks, to offer students easy access to devices when and where they most needed them.

One large 250–275 seat computer lab was also closed and converted into hybrid teaching and learning space, allowing York to release both the hardware cost and the floor space associated with that environment.

AppsAnywhere made these reductions operationally viable by separating software access from fixed rooms and machines, so students could access applications from personal devices and other locations, while York retained a much smaller physical estate for students who still required university-managed hardware.





Software licensing consolidated across Faculties

York's federated structure had historically enabled Faculties to manage their own software contracts and environments, which created opportunities for duplicate purchasing, packaging and patching efforts, and multiple versions of the same applications across the university.

AppsAnywhere gave central IT a common way to package, deliver and manage applications. The usage data through Analytics helped teams assess how many licenses were actually required and where pooled or centrally managed agreements could replace separate Faculty arrangements.

Within the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies, York reported \$40,000 in annual savings on SAS and SPSS licenses by hosting them through AppsAnywhere.

Central IT also reduced Maple and Minitab licensing from several hundred licenses to around 20, producing more than \$13,000 in annual savings, while usage data also reduced the university's reliance on Adobe software.

Software access available 24/7 through AppsAnywhere

York adopted AppsAnywhere in 2017 as part of a move toward centralized software delivery and away from its previous Citrix model.

By the time COVID forced teaching and learning off campus, the platform was already established, allowing York to move application access remotely and support students working away from physical labs. In the years that followed, the university saw continued demand for this model as students increasingly expected to access technology from their own devices, at any time and from any location.

This approach offers students uninterrupted, 24/7 access to the resources they need to succeed, while the hallway kiosks preserve on-site access for students whose personal devices are unsuitable for specific workloads.

York generated estimated savings of \$1.74 million from seat reductions by reducing the number of fixed machines that UIT needed to purchase, image, patch, support and replace.

York also reported that savings generated through lab consolidation helped cover the cost of AppsAnywhere within its existing contract envelope, allowing the new access model to be sustained from efficiencies created elsewhere in the estate.



VDI limited to targeted use cases

AppsAnywhere enabled York University central IT to replace its reliance on VDI when its contract was due for renewal in 2017. While the university uses AppsAnywhere to deliver its applications, it has retained VDI where a specific teaching requirement supports it. This was the case for School of Business, that funded a specific a virtual desktop environment.

This gives York a more selective infrastructure model, with centralized application delivery handling broad access requirements and VDI reserved for workloads that require a full virtual desktop.

A leaner, demand-led computing model

York's results come from its holistic approach of linking visibility and delivery and working across Faculties to reduce waste, duplication and inefficiencies.

LabStats showed where physical capacity and software provision exceeded actual demand. AppsAnywhere allowed York to reduce that capacity while maintaining broad access to applications across personal and managed devices.

The outcome is a significantly smaller physical estate, lower recurring software costs, a more centralized delivery and uninterrupted 24/7 access for students.

With 70% fewer UIT-managed lab seats, an estimated \$1.74 million in cumulative seat-related savings, and recurring software savings of more than \$53,000 a year across the examples reported, York's operating model aligns IT provision more closely with how students now work.

Want to see how AppsAnywhere and LabStats could help your institution simplify software delivery, improve student access, and make better use of labs and licenses? Get in touch to explore what a joined-up approach could look like in your environment.

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