

# Ohio Supercomputer Center Virtual Tour

Chase Eyster ([ceyster@osc.edu](mailto:ceyster@osc.edu)), Alan Chalker, PhD ([alanc@osc.edu](mailto:alanc@osc.edu))  
The Ohio Supercomputer Center

## Purpose

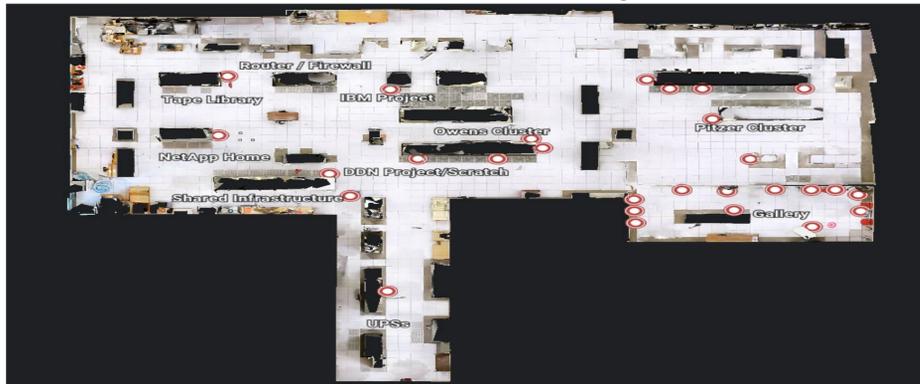
The Ohio Supercomputer Center (OSC) offers tours of its data center as a way to engage with the community, while sharing information on our computer clusters and demonstrating what makes a computer “super.” Tour sessions feature a history of OSC hardware from 1987 to the present; an inside look at computer nodes and storage systems; information on the types of research that leverage HPC for their work; and a special OSC keepsake to remember the experience. Starting in March 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic made these public tours impossible and eliminated the opportunity for interested parties to see a working supercomputer facility — virtual tours were the logical solution.

## Development Process

- In early 2021 OSC noticed peer orgs switching from in person to virtual tours
- OSC consulted with peers on virtual tour options and equipment needs
- After evaluating, OSC purchased a Matterport.com 3D virtual tour subscription
- OSC obtained a Matterport suggested Insta360 One 360 degree camera
- Using the Matterport app, collected >100 images within the OSC data center
- Matterport processed the recorded images into a single virtual tour
- OSC added information tags to images to complete the virtual tour experience
- OSC publicly announced the virtual tour as part of the SC'21 conference
- Currently engaging a third-party vendor to make the tour ADA accessible

## Screen Shots: OSC Virtual Tour

### OSC Data Center – Floor Plan View with Mattertags



### Pitzer Cluster with Mattertags



### Owens Cluster with Mattertags



## Benefits of a Virtual vs In-Person Tour

- No inconvenience due to restricted physical access to the data center
- Able to accommodate evening and weekend hours scheduling
- No limitation on the minimum or maximum size of groups
- Able to be asynchronous or live narrated via video conference
- Doesn't interfere with operations staff
- Self-pacing allows for variable duration tours
- Accessible to visitors with health or mobility concerns
- Requires less overall time from OSC staff
- Available on short notice

## Project Features

**Web Accessible** – Visitors can utilize any web browser

**Interactive Experience** – Participants can move through the environment

**Self-Guided** – Can be completed at any pace, sequence, and frequency

**Tour Options** – Selectable via icons:

- Pre-planned sequence: Starts in the lobby and views points of interest in the same order as in-person events
- Bird's eye: A floor plan view allows people to go directly to any particular destination within the facility

**“Mattertags”** – Clickable bullseyes:

- Contain descriptive text, images and hyperlinks to external websites
- Communicate important details on features such as HPC clusters, storage systems, and cooling and power infrastructure
- Provides some of the background and context that is offered on in-person tours

## Interested in Creating a Virtual Tour?

OSC recommends asking these initial questions:

- Is there an interest from your clients to learn more about your facility?
- What info should be shared about your resources and services?
- Who will pay for hosting services, camera equipment, and staff time?

The authors are happy to answer questions or provide advice via email

## QR Code for the OSC Virtual Tour



[osc.edu/virtualtour](https://osc.edu/virtualtour)



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