

## Desire2Learn Client Success Story

# COLUMBIA COLLEGE

The Online Campus at Columbia College offers more than 400 classes each session and 16 online degree programs. More than 12,000 students each year take at least one online class at the college. Columbia College, with their home campus located in Columbia, Missouri and 31 extended campuses throughout the United States plus one in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, has been helping students advance their lives through higher education for more than 150 years.

### **The Challenge**

To provide a learning environment that is easy to access for people with diverse backgrounds and with varying degrees of computer literacy. As well, with a limited internal administration infrastructure and expertise to host and support the online system, Columbia College had high expectations for an always available system which included business continuity.



### **Desire2Learn Impact**

- 12,000 active learners
- Online Campus offers over 400 classes
- Columbia College is extremely pleased with the level of services and support
- Tremendous growth projected

## In Search of Answers

Prior to 2003, Columbia College was using a Desire2Learn competitor product. According to Mike Randerson, Vice President of Adult Higher Education, a selection committee was formed in the spring of 2003. Desire2Learn and competitors presented their products, and the vote was overwhelming for Desire2Learn. A well designed intuitive user interface for the faculty and the students and a hosted reliable infrastructure were chief reasons in the Columbia College decision process. Additionally, Desire2Learn met the need of providing a learning framework that will easily scale as the online program matures.

## The Solution — Desire2Learn Business Continuity

Another key requirement for Columbia College was the ability to deliver their courses through a highly reliable environment with the assurance that in the case of a power outage or system failure their mission-critical system would be recovered with minimal end-user impact. After determining that business continuity was an important strategy, the next consideration was whether to manage this project internally or seek an external provider who could manage it on their behalf.

After considerable deliberation on the overall costs associated with hosting a heavily-trafficked and critical system (IT staff, hardware, software and overall infrastructure), Columbia College decided to focus on their core competencies and outsource noncore activities. Desire2Learn understood the business needs of the college and had the expertise to host clients and provide business recovery services. Through a hosted solution, Desire2Learn provided a comprehensive, tailored, and cost effective service that eliminated unacceptable downtime and ensured reliable recovery and data protection.

The college was taking a proactive stance by providing an “always available” system to students, faculty, and administrators. By relying on Desire2Learn to offer proactive risk management service, Columbia College was assured their mission critical application would experience minimal downtime if their systems and infrastructure suffered a catastrophic failure.

*“Defining a strategic partnership between a higher education institution and a distance learning application provider can sometimes be difficult: however, the Desire2Learn team truly understands our business and how to provide outstanding service to their clients.”*

Kevin Palmer | Columbia College CIO

Desire2Learn Business Continuity Services provides advance levels of system availability through file server and database clusters, redundant Storage Area Network (SAN) arrays, and tape backups. This highly available infrastructure minimizes the possibility of single points of failure. Furthermore, to safeguard against any data loss, Desire2Learn offers a convenient solution by providing the processes, e.g., outlining an exhaustive list of potential system failure scenarios and proper response activities, documenting detailed steps for system recovery for every failure scenario, and rehearsing recovery processes for all possible failure scenarios. Technical expertise is also provided to help the organization get back on track rapidly. With Desire2Learn, organizations have a tested, dependable solution tailored specifically to their critical data needs keeping the entire institution functional in a crisis and viable in the long run.

## Results

Columbia College’s first session with Desire2Learn was in August of 2003. Currently 12,000 active learners are using the system. The College reports it has been extremely pleased with the level of services and support offered by Desire2Learn. The Online Campus continues to experience tremendous growth, attributed partly to the partnership with Desire2Learn. As Columbia College moves forward with expanding its Online Campus, the Desire2Learn system and services are assisting with providing educational opportunities that seemed impossible only a few years ago.

To learn more about our clients visit us at: [www.Desire2Learn.com](http://www.Desire2Learn.com)

# CONTACT US

## About Us

Desire2Learn includes Desire2Learn Incorporated and its subsidiaries.

Desire2Learn is a global provider of enterprise eLearning solutions enabling leading institutions and organizations to create teaching and learning environments that support them in realizing their vision.

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