

Desire2Learn Client Success Story

INFINITY – MINNESOTA'S DIGITAL ACADEMY

In 2007, INFINITY: Minnesota's Digital Academy was launched by Minnesota school districts to deliver fully-online classes across the state. The INFINITY program consists of more than 47 high school courses using Desire2Learn Learning Environment. INFINITY partners with districts and other collaborations from all over the state to expand educational options for students looking for credit recovery, additional coursework, flexible course scheduling, advanced placement options, or a different learning environment.

INFINITY, a state of Minnesota certified online K-12 provider, is a joint effort of approximately 35 school districts and growing to meet student needs.

The Challenge

In 2007, a collection of superintendents came together to collaborate on an online solution to provide greater access to alternative course offerings as a means of extending learning opportunities for their students while also maintaining local control over funding. Many districts are rural with small populations and want to offer a more extensive course catalogue to their students. The incubator programs that now make up INFINITY aspire to be the quality program of choice, based on district to district collaboration.



Desire2Learn Impact

- Growth in enrollment:
 - Year 1 to Year 2 = 374%
 - Year 2 to Year 3 = 141%
- 47 online courses offered
- 94.7% of all parents would recommend INFINITY courses

In Search of Answers

Various K–12 school districts organized or aligned themselves into separate online programs with a duplication of services. The two largest providers, Minnesota Collaborative Online Learning Academy (MNCOLA) and Virtual Itasca Area Academy of Learning (VITAL), acted independently of each other. MNCOLA serviced the smaller number of students through a purchased seat model. VITAL comprised eight school districts who reviewed four vendors for their specific needs and Desire2Learn provided the flexibility, ease of use, and reliability they required. Most importantly, VITAL sought a strong partnership with Desire2Learn and the districts they represented to craft their unique learning environment.

“Desire2Learn Learning Environment has met and exceeded the expectations of our staff and students as our selected online software. The functionality of this program has given us the opportunity to provide quality programs with ease in the online environment.”

Jim Smokrovich | Principal,
Grand Rapids High School

The Solution

Although each district provided quality services on their own, there was an obvious duplication of services and as of July 1, 2008 the district programs combined to form the new, larger INFINITY organization. Once combined, the decision makers of this newly-minted program agreed that Desire2Learn Learning Environment best met their goal to develop courses locally with the necessary functionality and cost savings. The use of Learning Environment at the K–12 district level will prepare students for online learning environments used in higher education. In particular, the students who move from INFINITY courses to the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) will be very familiar with the online learning program used by MnSCU, which is also run on Desire2Learn Technology.

The Results

Learning Environment enables these two programs to transition to one efficient organization offering more course options on a varied schedule. Most of the students who enroll in INFINITY courses do so to solve a scheduling conflict, take a class that is not available at their local high school, recover credits, or take classes on an alternative calendar that provides the flexibility they need.

Learning Environment features are quoted by INFINITY teachers as “user centric” providing an ideal place to build community, offering potential for users to individualize their learning. The flexibility of the platform supplies instructors ease of use in developing courses, adaptation to rapid change, use and creation of new tools, and quick response to requirements modification. Desire2Learn’s wide range of training, consultation, and support services ensures that all

inquires and concerns are dealt with in a timely manner. Through an exemplary partnership among the districts, the INFINITY program demonstrates the significance of collaboration to further teaching and learning for students across all of the districts involved. Additionally, INFINITY’s strong partnership with Desire2Learn contributes to an increased number of enrollments.

“With the challenges of declining enrollments and strained budgets, coupled with high poverty areas as well as the decreasing capacity to offer recovery, remedial, or elective classes to students, online learning has become a critical educational option in our region. Working with Desire2Learn, we are able to provide quality, rigorous online learning opportunities to meet the educational needs of our students.”

Rochelle Van Den Heuvel | Superintendent,
Greenway School District and former program
administrator for VITAL

To learn more about our clients visit us at: www.Desire2Learn.com

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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.

Desire2Learn Incorporated

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