

Desire2Learn Client Success Story

MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES



Minnesota
STATE COLLEGES
& UNIVERSITIES

Minnesota State Colleges and Universities comprises 32 colleges and universities—25 two-year colleges and seven state universities (excluding the University of Minnesota). The system serves about 382,000 students each year with credit and noncredit instruction and offers customized training for employers. Minnesota Online, the eLearning branch, offers more than 180 programs and 6,400 course sections completely or predominantly online.

The Challenge

The challenge was to migrate a total of five Learning Management Systems (LMS) into a single, high volume, mission-critical, comprehensive solution that would increase efficiency, enable standardized online course delivery, and reduce costs statewide. Minnesota State Colleges and Universities required an extremely flexible, user-friendly LMS, coupled with a responsive organization that promptly responds to the user community.

Desire2Learn Impact

- Tremendous growth in both online course sections and the enrollment of students in online courses.
- 472% increase in the number of internet course sections between 2002 and 2007.
- 378% increase in the number of students enrolled in Internet courses between 2002 and 2007.
- A centralized community created for common training that can be shared throughout the system and a consistent student experience

In Search of Answers

The system employed five course management solutions (involving three approved vendors with group pricing) and each of the 32 institutions made its own decision. However, these systems were unable to meet everyone's needs. As the cost of maintaining three separate systems escalated, so did the desire to present the system as a cohesive unit, reinforced by one common LMS serving all member institutions.

"We had a state-wide task force for selecting a new learning management system. The goal was to bring 32 colleges and universities onto a single platform to make a better experience for students and also to provide common training that could be shared throughout the system."

Barry Dahl | Vice President of Technology,
Lake Superior College

The task force selected Desire2Learn to be implemented across the state. This decision was a remarkable accomplishment, given that 32 schools had to agree.

The Solution

The system sought a solution that would be highly flexible to adapt with growing institutions and a constantly changing technology landscape. Additionally it required the ability for each campus to have its own unique branding and configurations enabling each institution to express its unique brand while providing learners with consistency in how the technology operates and how they access their courses across different institutions. From the faculty standpoint, extensive functionality and ease-of-use was paramount; for the system

as a whole, the solution had to be scalable and cost effective. Desire2Learn not only met those requirements, but also had the capacity to provide quick and responsive implementation as well as hands-on customer service. Desire2Learn enabled the system to share the responsibility by running the installation centrally and managing it locally, thereby optimizing the efficiency while ensuring the unique requirements of each institution could be met.

To coincide with the implementation, the system also developed Minnesota Online, a single web site that presents a centralized view of the system to prospective students. Students from a home institution can take courses from any college or university in the system. They can mix and match and choose courses based on cost and convenience from any of the institutions.

Desire2Learn eLearning Suite is designed to support the mission-critical needs of large institutions and consortiums with the desire for more advanced management of their eLearning initiatives, courses, and diverse roles that interact within and across multiple campuses, departments, and programs. The unique architecture, found only in Desire2Learn Learning Environment, allows a single hosted environment to support the diverse needs of multiple campuses and institutions while providing the ability to share and collaborate as a group, and retaining autonomy as required.

The Results

Through collaborative efforts the system is providing students with options. Students are not limited to the confines of a traditional educational institution. Instead, they can supplement their learning experience by enrolling in classes offered online by other member institutions. With courses offered online, students who study abroad or live in remote locations can be confident that they will have consistent access to their courses. Additionally the system has provided a centralized community of users, training, and support services. Although each campus controls these elements, all the institutions can work together to share information, best practices, and successful initiatives across the entire system since they are using the same technology.

The system is continually adding to the extensive array of online course offerings. The ultimate goal is to create a learning environment that transcends traditional boundaries and can be accessed by remote users.

"Desire2Learn is a key unifying factor for us in representing the system view of 32 institutions across the state: that's really important for us. And we think that a single Learning Management System allows us to achieve our objectives."

Ken Niemi | Vice Chancellor/ Chief
Information Officer, Minnesota State
Colleges and Universities

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.

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