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Montverde Standardizes Educational Experience with Schoology

Large private school chooses Schoology over Blackbaud and Moodle as their LMS and collaboration hub

The Challenge

Montverde Academy was founded in 1912 as one of the premier boarding schools. By 2002, they had converted to a full college-preparatory school serving K3-12, adding over 400 students with rapidly growing technology needs. To help handle that technology commitment, Dennis Woodward, Director of Technology, was tasked with managing all the systems, technologies, and hardware including an iPad 1-to-1 program. His first priority was to get the rapidly growing mix of technology under control.

Several years earlier, he started by implementing a Moodle site so that he could control every aspect from hosting to versions and permissioning. Montverde faculty enjoyed Moodle's ability to let them reuse materials from year to year but never fully used the rest of the features. After a few years, they realized they needed to upgrade to a hosted system where they weren't responsible for the management and hosting of their LMS.

Montverde Academy

Private College-Preparatory School
Located in Montverde, Florida
400 Students

"Having Schoology as our educational hub allows Montverde to offer the most engaging experience to our students by making the technology easy. We get to focus on the education instead of the system and that is the best feature we could ask for."

Mr. Dennis Woodward
*Montverde Academy
Director of Technology*

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The Decision

In the spring of 2010, Dennis went to FETC (Future of Education Technology Conference) and stopped by the Schoology booth. He knew it had all the capabilities and experience needed at Montverde Academy. When he got back from the conference, he began reaching out to the most active Moodle users to try Schoology's free edition. After a few months, most upper and middle school teachers at Montverde were using Schoology's free edition with no training or support. Now that they had everyone using an LMS and really enjoying it, they began to look for something that could integrate with their SIS.

The first thing they did was reach out to their SIS—Blackbaud. Since Blackbaud had its own LMS (OnCampus), they went with that thinking it would have the best integration since it's the same company. After four months using Blackbaud's OnCampus, they had realized they needed something easier to use. Teachers were constantly complaining of lost information or being unable to upload materials. The students complained of the mobile app crashing during assignments, forcing them to have manual backups in case they had to resubmit. Worst of all, teachers still had to spend a majority of their time grading assignments and assessments since Blackbaud's OnCampus app didn't have auto-grading and the teacher grading process necessitated many extra steps in comparison to the ease of keeping the workflow within the Schoology app.

They knew they needed a solution that was easy for everyone—teachers, parents, and students. Even though it was the middle of the school year, they decided to switch back to Schoology but this time using Schoology's Enterprise edition.

The Result

Montverde was nervous about switching to a new LMS in the middle of the school year, especially because their data was housed in 2 systems (Blackbaud and OnCampus), but Schoology's award-winning implementation team had everything running in 2 weeks. Due to the ease of the implementation and the comfort of the teachers with Schoology, Montverde only had to be trained on the new enterprise features they were getting compared with what they've used in the past.

Switching to Schoology Enterprise made teachers much more confident in their technology. Both Moodle and Blackbaud OnCampus had their usability issues but every teacher remembered Schoology. Teachers were used to the easy workflow of Schoology, and once switching to another system caused them to spend more time doing work outside the system such as grading and planning, Schoology Enterprise became their central hub for all communication, including teacher-to-parent. Every parent was able to login to see what their child was working on, any notes from the teacher, and assignment grades.

Since they are an iPad 1-to-1 school, Schoology's native iOS app allowed their students to fully utilize the LMS without the unease of using a browser on an iPad. Schoology was able to integrate with their favorite note taking app—Notability—allowing for a seamless educational experience. Now every grade uses Schoology for their assignments, grading, courseware, and assessments—all on one intuitive platform.