

EMERGING AS A RECESSION PROOF BUSINESS WITH RELIABLE ONLINE LEARNING

AUGUST 2014

AT-A-GLANCE

CUSTOMER'S BUSINESS:
Chocolate Arts & Professional
Chocolate Making School

OPPORTUNITY: To service all areas
of the market by offering online
chocolatier programs

SOLUTION: Moodle hosting and
expert support from Lambda
Solutions

RESULTS: Ecole Chocolat has
become a recession proof business
that grows year after year



ORGANIZATION

Founded in 2003, Ecole Chocolat Professional School of Chocolate Arts offers a portfolio of programs for chocolate making—mastering techniques while gaining the expertise and business knowledge to become a professional chocolatier or chocolate maker. Their programs are offered primarily online so unlike print textbooks, the program curricula are constantly updated to reflect the latest news, techniques and advances in the industry.

With over **4,000 past and present students**, Ecole Chocolat has been **able to increase student enrollment year after year** due to the flexible nature of their online course offerings of renowned teachings.

THE CHALLENGE

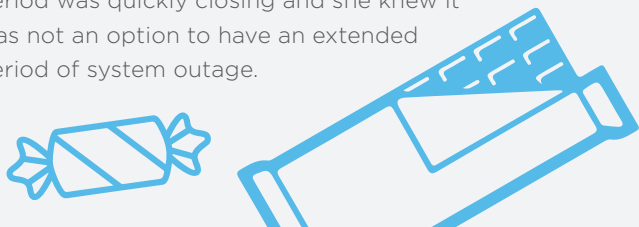
A core challenge for **Ecole Chocolat** is that unlike traditional learning institutions—such as K-12, post-secondary, and vocational schools—their students are from all over the world learning at their leisure. This means that it is difficult to predict when students will be coming online to complete coursework.

Ecole Chocolat founder, Pam Williams adds, “My students are completely funding their own chocolatier education to often start their own businesses or pursue it as a hobby. This means **[students] expect to have access to the online courses 24/7/365.**”

Ecole Chocolat has a long history of experience with Learning Management Systems (LMS) and in 2003 they licensed a proprietary LMS through University of British Columbia (UBC). The proprietary system was rigid and costly and in 2006 access to the proprietary software was discontinued which left Williams in a bind.

Williams explains that, “UBC had a huge IT team to manage proprietary software which I greatly benefited from. With such a large expert team who managed my former LMS, **I was worried that I would not be able to find a cost effective and reliable alternative.**”

Williams needed to make a decision fast as her grace period was quickly closing and she knew it was not an option to have an extended period of system outage.



“ We haven’t been affected by the economy—we are amazed that we have become a recession proof business by providing reliable 24/7/365 online learning. Lambda makes this possible. ”

PAM WILLIAMS
Founder of Ecole Chocolate



THE SOLUTION

UBC decided to switch over to **Moodle**, the most popular LMS in the world, they also signed up for managed hosting with expert support from Lambda Solutions. Williams knew it would be a strategic choice to follow in their lead. UBC is one of the leading universities in Canada, so Williams knew that they had done their research into a firm that is reputable, reliable and cost effective. She was overjoyed to discover that **Moodle was free and only required managed hosting and expert support** to meet her unique needs. Better yet, Moodle had a more sophisticated look and feel than the old LMS so specific configuration was minimal.

Williams explains further, “When I started with Lambda, I went on the recommendations that Lambda could provide superior hosting and that Moodle was the way to go. At that time, Lambda was one of the main shops that specialized in Moodle. It was Lambda’s business to make Moodle work flawlessly and we knew **Lambda would be a reliable firm who could provide us with 99.99% uptime.**”

Williams says, “Lambda has surely kept to their policy of 99.99% uptime which was a significant improvement from our old LMS”. When Williams reflects further on the past 8 years with Lambda she adds that “Lambda cares about me as a client which is so important to me. We are a small company but we are successful at doing what we do because we do it really well. **Our students come to us because we can provide reliable education which Lambda helps us achieve**”.

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RESULTS

✔ Increased Enrollment Year After Year

During the 2008 recession Ecole Chocolat continued to remain profitable and even experienced an increase in enrollment from the previous year. Williams remarked, “We haven’t been affected by the economy—we are amazed that we have become a recession proof business from providing reliable 24/7/365 online learning. Lambda makes this possible.”

✔ Continuity of Service

In the 8 years that Ecole Chocolat has been with Lambda, they have only worked with a few support technicians providing them with unprecedented stability. “We know the faces of people who help us on a daily bases. We have dealt with 2 or 3 support staff. This gives us the power of historical knowledge—they know us and know what we need. Lambda’s expert support team knows the tweaks and functionalities we like and are able to do it without us asking,” says Williams. She added further that, “I have been amazed with Lambda’s honesty and ethics—they have gone as far as talking me out of upgrades to wait for a later release which put money back in my pocket.”



ABOUT LAMBDA SOLUTIONS

Exceptional Support has made Lambda Solutions a leader in Moodle Managed Hosting and Professional Services. We believe that support is a critical component to any successful implementation and use of any technology. Since 2002, we have helped many organizations deliver great eLearning experiences. We combine offerings in managed hosting, application support services, development and integration expertise, as well as training to customers in Education, Corporate Training, Healthcare and Government. Lambda Solutions is an official partner of Moodle, the world’s leading Open Source Learning Management System.



Contact our team

We want to talk to you if you’re looking for reliable Moodle or Totara hosting and support, or if you need customization and consulting for your existing system. Our solutions combine a choice of robust hosting platforms, seamless integration with your enterprise applications and friendly, easy to access support.

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