HOW LAMBDA HELPED ISS*of*BC DEVELOP A LEARNER-CENTRIC eLEARNING ENVIRONMENT

AT-A-GLANCE

CUSTOMER'S BUSINESS:
Settlement language transition training for new adult immigrants

OPPORTUNITY:
Implementation of a learner focused eLearning model with a secure, hosted open-source LMS

SOLUTION:
Moodle provided ISS*of*BC pedagogical freedom, data security, and readily available support

RESULTS:
Time saved, user friendly, security assurance, and extended usability

ABOUT ISS*of*BC

Since 1972, ISS*of*BC has been providing a variety of support services for immigrants and refugees to help them get settled, find careers and learn all they need to know about starting their new lives in Canada. Through their dedicated staff, volunteers and community partners, ISS*of*BC provides settlement, education and employment services for over 25,000 clients every year.

ISS*of*BC is the largest agency of its kind in Western Canada, with targeted programs for refugees, women, children and youth, plus support services in over 45 languages. Their programs and services are available throughout Metro Vancouver, Squamish and the Okanagan.

25,000
CLIENTS
PER YEAR

OVER 45
LANGUAGES

THE CHALLENGE

ISS*of*BC uses Moodle Learning Management System to provide settlement language programs (in online, and blended classroom environments) to new adult-immigrants in B.C. Before partnering with Lambda Solutions, ISS*of*BC was using a self-hosted instance of Moodle, Without the assistance of a hosting vendor, they were not able to take advantage of the extended features of Moodle, such as plugins allowing greater communication functionalities.

Other struggles they faced came with being self-hosted. They had no external vendor to help secure their data - they had to rely on the safety of their own servers, managed entirely by their own people. "I don't have an IT background, so I was always worried that if anything came up, I wouldn't be able to do anything about it" recalls Janis Fair, Online and Technology Coordinator at ISS*of*BC. To improve their LMS experience, ISS*of*BC recognized that it was time to move to a hosted Moodle instance.

"The HelpDesk has improved my work conditions - I'm now free to help more students and staff, and to develop more learning resources as well."

THE SOLUTION

ISS*of*BC's priority was to find a Moodle hosting vendor that would provide them with more pedagogical freedom, LMS support, data security, and integration abilities. Ultimately, they were looking for a Moodle system they could have confidence in. So, they opted for Lambda Solutions.

ISS*of*BC found appeal in the overall pedagogy behind Moodle. They wanted to continue using teacher-centered learning and communicative methodology in their blended and online classes, and Moodle gave them the freedom and support to do that.

The communication functions and features in Moodle greatly assisted them in this process, because it promoted communication between students, not just from teachers to students. Students could use Moodle to collaborate on activities, ask and answer each other's questions, bounce ideas off of one another, and participate in discussions. Moodle also gave students more control over their learning, and encouraged a more independent learning method . Students have the ability to review the resources they need as they need them, and spend less time on material they are already familiar with.

With Moodle through Lambda, ISS*of*BC had newfound assurance on the security of their data. They could be sure that there was no data mining of their information, because the Moodle software is both private and secure. This is partly thanks to the open-source nature of Moodle, which was a welcome benefit. "I really like the open source software," says Janis. "I like that there are so many people working on it, including teachers who have invested time into it, and contributed their ideas."

Another attractive feature of Moodle with Lambda, was the extended support through the HelpDesk. Janis admits that she initially only used it for emergency situations, but has begun using it more because she finds it so efficient. "If something comes up, I still try to figure it out myself," remarks Janis, "but it's great to have the back-up of going to your HelpDesk."

ISS*of*BC also really liked the integration abilities that Moodle had, because it allowed them to create a seamless eLearning environment for their learners. ISS*of*BC used the Mahara platform alongside Moodle, and Lambda integrated the two platforms with single-sign-on access, so that users could easily move from one platform to another without re-authentication.

RESULTS

Time saved with the efficiency of Lambda's HelpDesk support. If ISS*of*BC couldn't figure something out quickly, they could rely on HelpDesk to resolve the issue with speed and efficiency. "The HelpDesk has improved my work conditions - I'm now free to help more students and staff, and to develop more learning resources as well." Janis also emphasized that she has more confidence in her system now that it is being taken care of by Lambda and Moodle.

User-friendly experience, thanks to Moodle's third-party integration abilities. ISS*of*BC was able to integrate Moodle with Mahara, with a single-sign-on, creating a seamless online learning environment for ISS*of*BC learners.

Extended usability, thanks to Moodle plugins, which ISS*of*BC wasn't using prior to Lambda. "We're able to get more out of the system now, because we are able to add Moodle plugins." For every activity that Janis wants to include in learning programs, there is an activity, resource module, or plugin that makes it possible.

Enhanced Security and safety of data. ISS*of*BC benefited greatly from the reassurance of having a hosting provider take care of their data. "It's the reassurance of knowing the system is there and it is secure" explains Janis. "Secure in that it is safe, and also secure in that it's not going to crash." Hosting with Lambda and Moodle has given ISS*of*BC peace of mind, and allowed them to concentrate their efforts elsewhere.

Learner-Centric Learning

TIPS FOR NEW MOODLE USERS

There's a lot you can do with Moodle, so Janis recommends digging into what your options are. "Do your research, and figure out how you're going to use it," she suggests. Explore the plugin options, and take advantage of all the different modules and activities available through Moodle.

Research the pedagogy behind Moodle, so that you understand it fully. "Don't just use it for a top-down teacher centric tool" Janis suggests. "Make sure you're using it in a way where students are getting the 21st century skills that you can get out of a rich system like Moodle." This includes digital skills, team building skills, and collaborative skills.

Use the multiple resources available online. Moodle.org has documents and forums where you can ask questions and find out more on how to take advantage of all the different Moodle features. Janis also appreciated the resources available on Lambda's website, particularly the monthly webinars.

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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Book a Demo

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