



Reducing costs while deploying state-of-the-art graphics software throughout a North American school system

Name:

Larry Blackmer

Occupation/Profession

Associate Director of Education and National Technology Committee chair

Company:

North American Division Adventist Education

Industry:

Education

Product:

Corel K-12 Site License, Education versions of CorelDRAW X3, Painter IX, Paint Shop Pro X, Photo Album 6 and WordPerfect X3

One of the biggest challenges in deploying a standard graphics software package for 1100 K-12 schools throughout North America is cost. The Adventist Education system, headquartered just outside Washington, D.C., wanted to ensure all 50,000 students and 6,000 staff had access to the same versions of a graphics program and wanted to launch the product simultaneously. Larry Blackmer, Associate Director of Education and National Technology Committee Chair, found a solution: an organization-wide license for Corel products. "An unlimited license for Corel products provides Adventist Education unlimited access to CorelDraw Graphics Suite, Painter, PaintShop Pro, Photo Album and WordPerfect Office for a very reasonable price," Blackmer explains. "We certainly wouldn't have been able to achieve a uniform deployment with another software package."

To ensure the launch went smoothly, Blackmer posted the software to a centralized server, allowing teachers to download a copy for each computer in the schools. However, geography posed a challenge. Some schools relied on slow dial-up Internet access, making software download a tedious and expensive task. To ensure each school had equal access, the license granted Blackmer the ability to make unlimited hard copies of the Corel software. "Within a month of launching the software, 400 copies were downloaded," Blackmer says. "And several hundred more have been mailed out. We're very pleased with how well the students and staff are responding."

The license issued to Adventist Education also acknowledges the need for educators and students to access the software at home. Teachers can download the software to their laptops and home computers for lesson planning, while students can



use the software at home to complete assignments, or simply for fun. "The students really learn about using the graphics products through creative experimentation," Blackmer explains. "Home access is key to every student having an equal chance to try out all the options."

As changes are made to the software, Adventist Education won't be left with an outdated version. The license also permits updates at no cost for two years. "One of the major reasons Adventist Education chose Corel software is the service level. We won't have to worry about buying more seats, or buying upgrades as they are released. This makes budgeting and curriculum planning a lot easier."

To get the ball rolling

Blackmer and the educators at Adventist Education knew that student use of the newly launched software might lag without a little prompting. So, the school launched a graphic design contest for students of all ages and their teachers. While the winners are awarded a cash prize, the contest also provides an opportunity to showcase unique concepts and the tools with which the art was developed. Blackmer explains that the Corel graphics products are perfect for school aged children. "This is such a great way to launch the products with the kids. The software is very intuitive, so kids can feel their way through the program without needing guidance from a teacher or adult. They can express themselves through trial and error, so they won't get frustrated and give up."

While the contest helps students in elementary school learn about graphic design and the potential of working with a computer, it allows for enhanced creativity and artistic technique in high school art classes. The Corel suite also provides a new teaching tool for high school computer classes, where specific tools are the focus.

Looking Forward to a Curriculum

Adventist Education partnered with Corel to beta test the new school curriculum for the Corel graphics products. The courseware, by teachers for teachers, provides a set of lessons, ideas for class projects, and term projects at no cost to the school or educators. "We haven't been using Corel products for long, but we've had great feedback from all the staff who've started working with the product. I've also had good feedback about the development of the curriculum—it's great to have a hand in something like this," Blackmer says of the beta test experience.

"Ultimately," Blackmer says, "We know we've made the right move choosing Corel products for Adventist Education. They provide us with so much flexibility, and massive cost savings. Most importantly, the products help kids learn quickly. It's great to know they can take away something from the experience."



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