


DMACC Trusts WizIQ to Bring its Extensive Distance Learning Program Online



Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) is one of the fastest growing community colleges in the nation. With more than 700 faculty members serving over 70,000 students in full degree programs and extensive continuing education courses, DMACC's commitment to education is unparalleled. Therefore, when the opportunity arose to reach a wider audience by leveraging technology and offering more meaningful online classes, the administration eagerly welcomed the idea.

UPPING THE ANTE

DMACC was not looking for just any technology solution for their online learning courses. Principles of educational effectiveness run deep in their ecosystem, so DMACC had very high expectations for their technology partner.

DMACC wanted a feature-rich educational platform that would enable interactive and engaging online learning. Additionally, because new e-courses would be introduced each year for its ever-increasing student base, the college wanted a solution that was scalable to meet their growth needs.

Choosing a robust e-learning solution was also a deciding factor. After all, the platform was to be the center for DMACC's important online and distance education programs.

One particularly big challenge for the evaluating team at DMACC was finding a solution that would engage both students and teachers, two key stakeholders with varied needs for education technology. The students were digital natives and expected the solution to be comprehensive, providing all the features they wanted and were accustomed to in one place. The instructors, on the other hand, sought teaching-friendly technology with tools that simplified online education and improved functionality, rather than making it complicated and thus diluting the impact of the courses.

The stakes were very high. DMACC management was making a decision that could either catapult the college to a place among the leaders in advanced education, or deeply tarnish its reputation.

Challenges

DMACC wanted to leverage technology in order to bring its distance learning programs online and make them more accessible and engaging. The college was looking for a platform that would:

- Enable synchronous online learning.
- Be scalable to allow for more users and courses over time.
- Offer robust features and ease of use.
- Facilitate seamless communication through various media.

Solution

WizIQ eLearning Platform

Outcomes & Benefits

DMACC saw incredible results with WizIQ, including:

- Quick adoption by students and teachers alike
- 35+ teachers use WizIQ daily
- 3000+ courses held to date
- Easy implementation and integration with existing IT infrastructure

“Our students like the WizIQ sessions because they allow them the opportunity to get questions answered and interact with other students in real time. The chat feature is interesting to watch, too, as students will post a question and other students will start answering them before the instructor has a chance to respond. It turns into a great collaboration session that they would not get in the traditional classroom.

— Joe Raineri, DMACC

Making the big decision

The decision was not simple. The administration worked hard to explore the available online education solutions and make the right choice. After an initial screening based on various factors including features, scalability, and cost, DMACC narrowed their options to three providers: Elluminate, Wimba, and WizIQ. After further analysis, Elluminate was unable to make the mark in the area of user friendliness or ease of integration, and Wimba failed to impress on multiple counts. Even more, these alternatives were considerably more expensive than WizIQ. In fact, WizIQ offered DMACC everything they wanted and needed in an online education solution, without any additional stress on their budget or IT department.

Enjoying WizIQ's cutting-edge education

Easy implementation

DMACC started using WizIQ with an initial deployment of 150 rooms. Implementation was easy, and the plan was to first meet the extensive needs of distance education students before moving on to include teachers who wanted to teach remotely. With synchronous learning capabilities, a browser-based intuitive interface, seamless real-time communication, WizIQ was able to provide everything that DMACC needed in their distance learning courses.

Visual impact

Nothing beats visual impact, and WizIQ showed DMACC's distance education students just that. Students were not only able to attend live online classes, but they could see and communicate with their teachers as well. Enabling synchronous online learning made a real difference in students' overall performance in class. Also, since WizIQ enables six live video feeds, including those of the teacher and a presenter if needed, students found each class to be just as good as its of online version.

Fluid communication

With WizIQ, DMACC distance education students were no longer studying in isolation. The chat feature –including both voice and text chat – allowed students and teachers to converse privately or in groups, and brought about increased openness and engagement in class. Students were even able to enjoy the interaction and camaraderie that had been typically only associated with brick-and-mortar courses.

Lesson captures

Not only could DMACC students attend live online WizIQ classes from home or work, but WizIQ also enables class recordings that can easily be shared with students. Students were able to view class recordings as much as they needed, and the feature was extremely useful for those who had missed class or wanted extra review.

Mobile access

With access to WizIQ mobile apps for iOS and Android, students could access their classes and submit coursework from literally anywhere, making it extremely convenient for the working professionals who comprise a significant portion of DMACC students. Even the instructors could teach and manage courseware on the go.

Seamless integration

A critical factor in the implementation and success of any new technology is the seamlessness of its integration with the existing IT infrastructure— and WizIQ makes it as simple as it gets. WizIQ's seamless integration with the existing IT department at DMACC made it easy to get the system up and running quickly, without causing unnecessary burden to financial or human resources.

Robust support

The WizIQ support team is available to students and teachers 24/7 – all day, every day – to help resolve any technical issues that may arise during implementation or operation. The DMACC IT team enjoyed this service, as it was no small feat to move the college's many distance learning courses online. The WizIQ team understood the significance and difficulty of DMACC's efforts, and provided extensive support that was essential in facilitating the process. The well preparedness and teamwork ensured that the implementation, and later the expansion, was smooth and hassle-free.

Creating impactful education

The rollout and expansion of DMACC's online course offerings were successful. Courses were received extremely well by both students and teachers, and everyone at DMACC took to WizIQ with ease. Though WizIQ's interface is easy and intuitive, teachers who needed any help had access to video trainings explaining how to launch and present classes and use the platform's many features to make their sessions richer and more effective.

With a well-planned strategy and step-by-step augmentation, DMACC was able to initiate and expand its online education services across a spectrum of courses, successfully adopting new trends in learning by leveraging technology to create impactful education.

WizIQ

education.online

Today, WizIQ is an integral part of the DMACC learning ecosystem. In addition to being pivotal for enabling quality online education, it also serves DMACC as a knowledge center and a reliable platform for information exchange, making communication between students, professors, and administrators reliable and easy. The intuitive, easy-to-use interface, plus its extended functionality, mobility, and scalability, have proven to make WizIQ the best choice for a school with learning needs as dispersed and intense as that of DMACC.

Key highlights

- From a modest initial rollout, DMACC has increased its license to 1000 users.
- Between 30-35 teachers access WizIQ daily to create and present online lectures, while even more teachers use it occasionally for various purposes.
- More than 3000 WizIQ courses have been given by DMACC to date.

Let WizIQ handle the technicalities

WizIQ's online education platform for teachers and learners creates intuitive, comfortable spaces where people can share ideas. With its seamless, browser-based technology, the WizIQ online platform is as impressive as it is simple. WizIQ is replete with features that enable true collaboration and interaction, such as:

- Real-time audio and video streaming
- User-friendly, intuitive interfaces for both teachers and learners
- Effective tools for seamless communication
- Online resource library
- Lecture recordings for review and better learning

The team of experts at WizIQ is ready to help the faculty and students of your institution implement a new, robust online learning system. Moreover, we provide services to expedite the integration of WizIQ into your organization, including:

Live online training

We'll help your teachers learn how to use your system with our live, online, and interactive tutorials and demonstrations.

24/7 support

Our expert team offers around-the-clock telephone and online chat support for teachers and learners.