

Vision, Protect-On Help Charter High School “Fast Forward” to Improved Student Performance

Fast Forward Charter High School is in Logan, Utah, a small city located near the Utah-Idaho border, 80 miles north of Salt Lake City. Opened in 2003, Fast Forward serves a student population of 200, primarily at-risk, students.

Schools that cater to an at-risk student population face a variety of challenges while trying to give their students the best possible education. Determined to keep their students engaged and in school, teachers and staff need tools that help them operate with maximum efficiency and minimal distraction. At Fast Forward Charter High School in Logan, Utah, technology director Shannon Thurston found his solution with Vision® classroom management software and Protect-On™ student computer security software.

Logan, a city of 45,000, is located in Utah's Cache Valley, about 80 miles north of Salt Lake City near the Idaho border. Known primarily for its agriculture and recreational offerings, Logan is home to three public high schools as well as two charter high schools. Fast Forward High School opened in 2003 and serves a student population of approximately 200, largely at-risk, students.

Trouble-Free Classroom Management Software

Fast Forward has more than 80 computers networked in two computer labs, a video lab and teacher/staff workstations. When looking for classroom management solutions, Thurston found Vision matched his needs. “I gave a lot of thought to the potential of hardware vs. software,” he recalled. “Another charter school here had spent \$20,000 for a hardware system that never worked. I didn't see anything comparable to Vision with Surf-Lock. It's been nearly trouble-free since the beginning.”

Vision is the easy-to-use classroom management software that empowers teachers and trainers to guide and supervise student computer activity from the instructor's computer screen. With the Surf-Lock2™ plug-in, teachers can turn browsing on or off from their computer with a single click, allow students access only to selected Web sites that support instruction, and stop or limit Web browsing instantly for a single student or the entire class.

“There's no need to perform daily maintenance on the computers anymore.”

Thurston says Vision has made it easier for Fast Forward teachers to incorporate technology into their lesson plans. Whether it's a how-to video in the computer technology class or a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation on the parts of speech in an English class, the material is conveyed efficiently with few distractions in the labs.

Keeping Students on Task, Improving Performance

English teacher Julianne Homer has found Vision key to keeping her students on task in the computer labs. “I can just be at my computer and easily see who's on task and off task,” she said. “There's only so much you can catch walking back and forth.” The ability to better monitor students has made it easier for Homer to integrate technology into instruction. “Vision has made me more at ease with going into the computer lab. Now that it's not a hassle for me, we do it more often.”

In addition to its monitoring capabilities, Vision helps Homer with respectful student communication. “It's a very quiet classroom management tool,” she says. “If

GenevaLogic Case Study: Vision, Protect-On, Surf-Lock



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someone is off task, I just send a message directly to his or her computer, without other students becoming involved. This gets the job done without disrupting the classroom.”

Since implementing Vision, Thurston has seen an improvement in student performance in the labs. “I taught classes before we had Vision, and I can definitely see the difference,” he said. “Usually the students closest to the wall, farthest from the teacher, never did anything. Now that we have Vision, they can’t get away with that.”

Benefits of Using Vision and Protect-On

- Eases classroom management in computer labs
- Allows discreet one-on-one communications with students
- Reduces time spent on computer and network maintenance
- Cost-effective solutions for computer and network management

Vision also helps Fast Forward teachers keep students on task when using the computers, resulting in some teacher-student amusement. “When students are in the labs to use Microsoft Word, I lock out the Internet on their computers, which upsets them,” laughs Homer. “Once they know how Vision works, the kids have fun with it. They’ll go into Word and write me messages in 45-point type, then watch me to see my reaction.”

Protecting Student Computers

A year after installing Vision, Thurston added Protect-On student computer security software to his suite of solutions. Using Protect-On, he can roll back virus damage and unwanted changes that students may have made to classroom computers. With a simple restart, computers are back to normal with no damage, downloads or games. Protect-On allows him to remotely reboot, change settings or wake the student computers and schedule unprotected time for system changes, such as virus protection updates.

Thurston said that with Protect-On, the challenge of keeping the network free of viruses and unwanted downloads has been almost completely eradicated. “There’s no need to perform daily maintenance on the computers anymore, really,” he said. “The kids can’t mess things up – they don’t install things anymore, because they know it’s all wiped out when the computer restarts. The same aspects that help the teachers manage a class help me manage the network.”

With Protect-On, students aren’t able to download from the Internet to the computer’s hard drive. Thurston has set up the network so there is space on the server for student downloads. “I police that, of course, but this way I only have to police one hard drive instead of 40.”

While Protect-On is available as a stand-alone product, it can also be easily integrated with Vision classroom management software. The Protect-On console can be opened from the Vision dashboard to change settings.

Using Vision6 with Surf-Lock and Protect-On, Fast Forward is in control of its network and its students’ interaction with computer technology and the Internet, which allows the staff to focus on the students. “This technology helps educators put their energies where they need to,” said Homer.

Thurston agreed. “With Vision and Protect-On, we spend our time teaching instead of babysitting.”



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SWITZERLAND

Chasseralstrasse 1-9
CH-4900 Langenthal

+41 (0)62 957 70 40 | Fax +41 (0)62 957 70 50

UNITED STATES

15725 SW Greystone Court, Suite 105
Beaverton, OR 97006
866.725.7833 | Fax 503.352.3413

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