

Cisco Sees Two Major Trends That Are Empowering K-12 Education

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ATLANTA, GA--(Marketwire - June 25, 2007) - Cisco (NASDAQ:CSCO), the worldwide leader in networking that transforms how people connect, communicate and collaborate, is seeing significant trends in the world of K-12 education. More and more schools are viewing technology as a strategic part of education. Technology is enabling educators, students and parents to have more interactive, individualized experiences through better communication and engagement, increased efficiency and heightened learning -- all in more safe and secure schools and communities.

The first trend has evolved from increasingly tragic attacks on schools, students and staff. Administrators across the country are reevaluating their safety procedures and looking to better prepare for emergencies of all types. Educators have been aware that technology can improve school safety and security, but Cisco has seen a rise in those who see the benefits of using technology beyond one-off solutions.

"Before partnering with Cisco, teachers would have to locate the nearest phone in the event of an emergency," said Lance McCutchen, Director Network Services, Arlington ISD. "We had a phone system in place, but some teachers still relied on their own cell phones in case of emergency. Some locations have spotty cell coverage and phones would not work. Now that we've deployed Cisco Unified Communications, our teachers have instant access to help when they need it. Key personnel are notified immediately when a 911 call is placed anywhere in the district -- and the location of the emergency can be pinpointed immediately."

The recently released GAO report to Congress, 'Emergency Management: Status of School Districts' Planning and Preparedness' echoed this trend. The report highlighted some key issues with school emergency preparedness. It estimated that 62 percent of all school districts identified challenges stemming from lack of equipment, training for staff, and personnel with expertise in the area of emergency planning.

The GAO report highlighted challenges around communication. The study stated that school districts experience difficulties communicating emergency procedures to parents prior to, during and after an incident. Communicating with parents who do not speak English as a first language is even more challenging. Another communication challenge is interoperability. Many schools use radios on campus, as do their local responders. Unfortunately, many of these radios operate on different frequencies, hindering effective communication in the event of an emergency. However, intelligently applied technology can solve communication and interoperability challenges without requiring schools or first responders to replace existing equipment.

"Prior to working with Cisco and SchoolMessenger, our administrative staff would have to make calls to parents in the event of an emergency or for absentee notifications," stated Geromy Schrick, Technology Director for Mustang School District. "Now, with SchoolMessenger, we have automated our daily calls and use only seven dedicated phone lines with additional offsite capacity for emergency situations. During our last lock down we were able to reach more than 5600 homes in less than 20 minutes. That's something we never would have been able to do manually. Plus, since everything is integrated with our student information system, we are constantly ensuring our contact information database for both students and parents is up to date."

Cisco encourages all schools to review their safety and security capabilities. Schools should focus on partnering with their public safety officials, local higher education institutions, and local government to create a holistic approach to respond to school and community violence, natural and biological disasters, as well as cyber-safety incidents.

"Schools are recognizing the need to work with first responders and their community to develop a comprehensive plan that addresses all types of emergencies," said Phylis Miquel, Education Solutions Manager for Cisco. "By involv-

ing technology, operations and governance in their planning, schools ensure a swift and seamless response in the event of an emergency.”

The second trend stems from sweeping changes in digital delivery of video. Video as a medium in education has been used for decades to help bring history to life and global events closer. Educators know the power of this medium in the education environment as a tool to help increase understanding and retention.

But over the last few years, video distribution has been shifting from traditional physical mediums such as tapes and DVDs to digital distribution. Consumers are familiar with this through movies on-demand, YouTube, and the up-to-the-second “citizen news.” Schools, too, see the benefits to expanding their video resources, but challenges do exist. The foundation of an IP network and Internet access are starting points, but educators might also need training on how to create and distribute their video -- and teach their students how to do the same.

Cisco is seeing a growing trend in schools using video in new ways -- not only in the classroom for educational opportunities, but for administrative use and professional development as well. The 2006 Annual Teacher Media Use survey for PBS conducted by Grunwald Associates revealed that 93% of teachers use video or television programming in their classrooms.

“IP video distribution is changing the way we provide information to our students and staff,” said Randy Bassett, Director of Technology for Fontana Unified School District. “We moved to IP when we realized the cost of hardwiring one school for traditional video distribution was just as much as it would be to move the entire 45 site district to IP distribution. And, with curriculum use of video evolving to more clip-based usage, IP just made sense. It provides more flexibility, makes it easier to store, organize and access than traditional tapes and DVDs. In addition, it enables us to distribute our own teacher training materials right to everyone’s desktop.”

Cisco has created an online course for video over IP. This course enables teachers, administrators, students -- all consumers, at all technology levels -- to learn about video production and distribution. The course is free of charge, has no prerequisite and is not monitored. The Cisco Video IP course is available at: https://tools.cisco.com/gdrp/coiga/showsurvey.do?surveyCode=1499&keyCode=143720_3

Educators can learn how to produce and use video in the following ways:

- Record and store video, as well as provide video-on-demand playback
- Effectively manage video bandwidth to reduce impact on the network
- Manage and protect video assets in a systematic manner
- Efficiently distribute video to geographically dispersed audiences
- Provide supporting applications such as distance learning and training, conferencing, and remote office communications
- Deliver video to desktops
- Deliver webcasts
- Facilitate corporate communications and rich media collaboration

“Our customers are always using video, but struggle with creating and distributing their own video for use in the classroom or for professional development,” stated Charles Fadel, Global Lead for Education at Cisco. “Media literacy is a key 21st century skill and Cisco understands the power that video can have in the classroom and beyond. We created this course to help our education customers learn how to simply and easily create and distribute digital on-demand video. Our goal is to empower educators and students with the tools to help create the most engaging learning and sharing environments -- the Human Network in its true form.”

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