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Thanks to WebEx, we generated much more revenue than our set goals.*

—Jeff Olsen, Manager of Education Services

## SirsiDynix generates multi-million dollar training revenue with WebEx.



- **INDUSTRY**  
Technology

- **WEBEX APPLICATIONS**  
WebEx Meeting Center, WebEx Sales Center, Support Center, Event Center, Training Center, Consulting Services

- **SUMMARY**

To increase staff productivity and training efficacy, the Education Services Division of SirsiDynix sought an online training solution that customers would embrace. Using WebEx Training Center, SirsiDynix transitioned its in-person training courses to an online format, boosting both customer satisfaction and knowledge retention rates. WebEx helped SirsiDynix increase training staff productivity, improve the quality of education, and convert its Education Services Division from a cost center to a revenue generating e-learning environment.

- **ABOUT SIRSIDYNIX**

- **Line of Business**

- Technology solutions for libraries

- **Headquarters**

- Huntsville, AL

- **Number of employees**

- 630

- **Target market**

- Public, academic, corporate, K-12, and government libraries and consortia

- **WebEx Customer Since 2000**

SirsiDynix is the global leader in strategic technology solutions for public, academic, corporate, K-12, and government libraries and consortia. In concert with key industry partners, SirsiDynix offers a comprehensive integrated suite of technology solutions for improving the internal productivity of libraries and enhancing their capabilities for serving people and communities. SirsiDynix has approximately 4,000 library and consortia clients, serving 300 million people through more than 20,000 library outlets worldwide.

### The Challenge

In 2000, the Education Services Division of SirsiDynix sought a more efficient way to provide training to its large number of library customers. "Our division provided in-person training at customer sites and each time we sent out a trainer, we wasted an entire day on a four-to-six hour flight," says Jeff Olsen, Manager of Education Services at SirsiDynix. In addition to in-person training, SirsiDynix also provided libraries with consulting services to help them optimize their library solutions. Libraries that signed consulting contracts would often fly their staff to SirsiDynix for two days. "Consulting sessions, designed to familiarize customers with the system so they could decide how they wanted their databases profiled, often turned into data entry sessions," explains Olsen.

Olsen knew online learning could increase productivity and improve the quality of training, but he recognized that librarians would be reluctant to embrace this new training model. He faced the same concerns from within his organization. With his training staff traveling 30-40 weeks a

year, low knowledge retention rates, and high customer frustration, Olsen felt he had little to lose.

### The Solution

After evaluating NetMeeting and PlaceWare (now Microsoft LiveMeeting), a colleague showed Olsen WebEx. "As soon as I saw the WebEx demo I knew it provided the exact functionality and support my division needed," says Olsen. He purchased WebEx Meeting Center and began exposing customers through selected mandatory classes. Initial trainings were successful, and Olsen was ready to begin using WebEx Training Center for all Education Services Division projects.

The tragedy of 9/11 eliminated any remaining resistance to online training. Customers didn't want to travel, and many installation and upgrade projects were stalled. Olsen offered WebEx Training Center as the solution. "Using WebEx Training Center, we completed all training projects on time and met our revenue targets," explains Olsen. "This was the clear turning point."

With WebEx Training Center now a viable alternative to in-person training, Olsen turned his attention to revenue generation. The Education Services Division was fulfilling contractual obligations, but training was still a cost center. Olsen used WebEx to develop a series of add-on trainings for existing customers. "WebEx made it possible for us to reach out to our existing customer base for the first time. Within the first year of introducing these new offerings we generated a new stream of revenue from this previously untapped source," he notes.

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—Jeff Olsen, Manager of Education Services



When Olsen became the product marketing manager for the Education Services Division, he used WebEx to develop a new set of training offerings that would generate even more revenue for the organization. Today, the division's training program includes group lectures for 30-35 people, private lectures for 12-15 people, and private and group hands-on sessions. "With WebEx, we now offer private online sessions, incrementally charging the customer for the value-add of one-on-one trainings," says Olsen. Using the WebEx Training Center Hands-on Lab feature, Olsen dedicated two training rooms with 24 computers to provide training workshops to 12 students at a time. Remote students connect to Hands-on Lab computers, accessing SirsiDynix library applications from their locations. "Hands-on Lab enables students to work through practice exercises, while trainers assess individual student progress in real-time," he says.

After creating the training programs, Olsen's next goal was to make it easier for customers to purchase the new offerings. To realize his vision, Olsen engaged WebEx Consulting Services to develop a sophisticated e-commerce and registration system that supports 30 different coupon types. Customers take advantage of a master coupon to enroll in as many classes as they want during a given period. "WebEx Consulting Services custom-designed our e-commerce and registration system to

provide reports, metrics, and statistics on training purchases and coupon usage," says Olsen.

#### **The Benefits**

WebEx helped SirsiDynix create new product offerings and e-learning packages that converted the Education Services Division into an important revenue generating component of the business. While the division still offers in-person programs that cost \$14,400 on average, a \$10,000 master coupon providing unlimited online training has now become the alternative of choice for customers. With the coupon, customers can start taking live training sessions upon signing the contract, and the new packages encourage repeat business. When customers finish one master coupon, they can buy another and repeat the classes until they feel comfortable with the SirsiDynix solutions. "In 2006, we exceeded our target revenue by more than 60%. Thanks to WebEx, we generated much more revenue than our set goals," reports Olsen.

WebEx enabled SirsiDynix to improve quality of training, knowledge retention, and customer satisfaction. Consulting projects that previously required two full days of in-person training are now conducted online in 1½ hour sessions over a two-week period. Breaking the information down has made it more palatable for customers, resulting in increased knowledge retention.

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The transition to WebEx Training Center dramatically increased business efficiency by impacting both productivity and spending. "The money saved on travel is equal to adding two people to our team. Using WebEx, SirsiDynix accomplishes more with 14 trainers than with its previous training staff of 25 to 30," says Olsen. In the past, the division had to cancel classes if a minimum of 10 people didn't register. "We don't have the same restrictions with the online courses because WebEx has helped us to be more efficient," says Olsen.

#### **The Future**

The SirsiDynix Education Services Division is now planning to create SirsiDynix U., a certification program built around WebEx Training Center. Students will be able to declare majors and graduate from different programs. Olsen recognizes that without WebEx, the division's transformation would not have been possible. "With WebEx, we successfully transitioned from a cost center to an e-learning environment that generates significant revenue for our organization. We give WebEx an idea and they make it into a reality," concludes Olsen.

## **HIGHLIGHTS**

- WebEx helped convert the SirsiDynix Education Services Division from a cost center into an important revenue generating component of the business.
- With WebEx Training Center, SirsiDynix dramatically improved the quality of training, knowledge retention, and customer satisfaction.
- WebEx Consulting Services transformed the way customers access training with a registration and e-commerce system that encourages repeat business.