



Des Moines Area Community College, Thomson Learning and Microsoft Collaborate to Deliver More Integrated, Online Courses

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ORLANDO, Fla., Oct. 18 /PRNewswire/ -- Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC), Thomson Learning and Microsoft today announced they are collaborating in an extensive course redesign project to make learning available to DMACC students anytime, anywhere on any device. The first phase of this project began this fall with the launch of an online criminology course that combines course management via DMACC's Connected Learning Framework, a Web-based learning environment with integrated content from Siegel's Criminology, textbook, test bank, and web resources, published by Thomson Learning. All of the redesigned, interactive coursework is delivered through Microsoft's SharePoint portal server. The majority of DMACC students are commuters, so online courses offered through the Connected Learning Framework enable students to complete their coursework in a manner and schedule that fits their needs. A second online course will roll out for Law Enforcement in the spring of 2006.

The course redesign project was initiated by Ann Watts, Instructional Design Coordinator / Portal Project Manager and recent appointee to the Iowa Learning Technology Commission.

Watts commented, "I really believe that the pre-packaged course idea with textbook, lecture notes, enrichment materials, assessments and appropriate links to outside resources and media -- along with tools for instructors to customize their courses -- is the wave of the future in online learning."

DMACC's SharePoint portal deploys Microsoft WebParts for integrating and customizing content, and to enable instructors to facilitate interactive and technology-enhanced learning, such as RSS feeds or video streams, collaboration space for groups of students, and more. For the current redesign project Thomson Learning Labs developed specific WebParts for the display and navigation of Web-based digital texts. Previously, Thomson Learning Labs had developed Chapter Navigation, Resources, Content Viewer, and eCommerce WebParts, which are currently in use.

"Windows SharePoint Services is a platform for building highly collaborative applications, and the innovative use of the SharePoint portal as a course management system at DMACC -- and the integration of Thomson's digital text and supporting materials through WebParts to reach online learners -- is an excellent example of how these new productivity tools can help administrators, educators, and publishers improve online and classroom instruction" said Rob Curtin, industry solution manager, higher education, Microsoft.

Thomson Learning Labs partnership with DMACC and Microsoft enabled the development of online "textbooks" that incorporate three-dimensional learning: drawing on the power of the Web, on individual instructor customization, and on interactivity -- among students and with digital simulations.

"The online courses and supporting digital instructional material provide a model for developing interactive content to best meet the needs of both classroom and online learners," said Patricia Sabosik, Vice President & General Manager of Thomson Learning Labs. "WebParts are an effective way to integrate publisher material into online courses and to build integrated, electronic solutions that deliver learning materials in new and different ways."

About Des Moines Area Community College

Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) is Iowa's second largest two- year college program in the state with over 75 career programs designed to prepare students for high demand jobs. In the last year over 22,000 individuals took a college-credit class at DMACC, and nearly 50,000 enrolled in a continuing education offering.

DMACC anticipates student and community needs, providing quality, learner- centered higher education and workforce development at our six campuses throughout the state. Our programs and services encourage and develop career success, cultural understanding, social enrichment and life-long learning. For more information about DMACC, please visit <http://www.dmacc.edu/>.

About Microsoft

Founded in 1975, Microsoft (Nasdaq: MSFT) is the worldwide leader in software, services and solutions that help people and businesses realize their full potential.

About The Thomson Corporation

The Thomson Corporation (<http://www.thomson.com>), with 2004 revenues from continuing operations of \$8.10 billion, is a global leader in providing integrated information solutions to business and professional customers. With operational headquarters in Stamford, Conn., Thomson (NYSE: TOC; TSX: TOC) has approximately 40,000 employees and provides services in approximately 130 countries. Its learning businesses and brands serve the needs of individuals, learning institutions, corporations and government agencies with products and services for both traditional and distributed learning.

SOURCE The Thomson Corporation

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