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Savvy
SOFTWARE, INC.

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Windham School District Case Study

A school system revamps its web site over the summer. And the community responds.

Like many school districts across the country, Windham School District in Maine had a web site that was hard to maintain and constantly out of date. Instead of serving as a link to the community and students, it was a source of complaints from parents, faculty and administrators.

The problem was not due to lack of effort. According to the district's technology director, Bob Asselin,

the web software they were using was simply too difficult to maintain: "Our web software was code-based, and each of our four schools had their own web sites. We just didn't have the time or resources to keep everything updated and consistent."

That was the situation at the end of the 2003-04 school year. Yet, by the time the district opened its doors the following September, a totally new and dynamic web site was up and running across the school system. More than a hundred staff members were easily creating their own web pages. And teachers were using their pages to communicate with students and parents on a daily basis.

How did such a huge change come about so quickly? How could so many people suddenly start using the site productively? The answer was Savvy Software's content management application.

"Savvy Software makes it easy for everyone to maintain their own web pages," says Bob Asselin. "If you can use a word processor, you can use the Savvy solution. The templates that are built into the software make it easy to maintain consistency across all our facilities."

Today the Windham School District's web site is at the center of the community, in more ways than one.

About 125 teachers are using Savvy Software to post daily assignments and supplemental course material on their web pages. "The ability for teachers to have their own pages is totally new." says Mr. Asselin. "We never could have done that before. It improves education and helps the parents know what is happening in their children's classes."

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Administrators and teachers also use Savvy to update the school calendars on a weekly, even daily, basis. Explains Mr. Asselin, "In the past, students and parents had nowhere to go to find when and where events were being held. Now they can see up-to-the-minute schedules at any time. What is the bus schedule? What is the lunch menu this week? When is my child's game? The answers are right there on the site. Of course, now that parents are relying on us, we have to deliver! But that's easy to do with Savvy."

> **"When it comes budget time, the community understands how much we offer."**
>
> -Technology Director Bob Asselin

Even community groups, including the local PTA, are interested in joining the web site. "They can see how successful and involved our site is now, and everyone wants to be a part of it," says Mr. Asselin. "We've created links to police and other organizations, and they've linked to us."

Most satisfying of all, says Mr. Asselin, is that the complaints about the web site have been replaced by praise from parents, teachers, students and administrators. "We've received many notes and comments from the community, thanking us for the web site. Our superintendent is thrilled."

The bottom line, says Mr. Asselin, is that Savvy Software has helped bring the schools and the community closer together. "We use the site to showcase our excellent facilities, such as our new auditorium and gymnasium, and school groups can even schedule events at the facilities right on the web. So when it comes budget time, the community understands how much we offer."

Mr. Asselin believes that education will become increasingly internet- and computer-focused in the years ahead: "That's why this was so important to us. We wanted to use our web site to reach out to parents and the community. With Savvy Software, we've been able to do that within our limited budget. It's been an unqualified success."

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