

eXia, a Division of Group CESI

Nationally recognized school adopts Macromedia® Breeze® from Adobe to deliver interactive, engaging distant learning courses to students across several campuses

eXia

www.cesi.fr

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Industry

Education

Challenges

- Support distance learning with an intuitive solution that requires little or no user training
- Minimize technology requirements for participants in distance learning courses

Solution

- Distance learning
eXia is using Macromedia Breeze from Adobe to bring together students and lecturers across dispersed locations.

Results

- Enhanced student learning environment
- Minimized student and staff training with easy-to-use web conferencing solution
- Seamlessly connected multiple campus locations
- Achieved low cost to deploy and maintain web conferencing solution

Systems At A Glance

- Macromedia Breeze from Adobe

Bridging the learning gap

The School of Applied Information Technology (eXia)—the latest addition to Groupe CESI—offers nationally recognized two-, four-, and five-year degrees and has locations in thirteen French cities. eXia currently serves 450 students and expects to double that number in the coming years. Developed in partnership with the University of Quebec in Montreal, eXia teaches students in small groups and uses a problem-based learning (PBL) method that encourages students to think. There are no full lecture courses. Training is centered on workshops, situational problem solving (SPS), and three-hour conferences presented by guest teachers.

A basic approach to learning at eXia is that all students studying the same curriculum take courses at the same time. “That was not an issue for the workshops and the SPS approach taught by tutors at each center,” says eXia director Jean-Louis Allard. “The challenge was finding a system that would allow our instructors—many of whom are business managers, not technology experts—to simultaneously present conferences to all our students.” To accomplish this, eXia adopted Macromedia Breeze software from Adobe.

Distance learning

A prerequisite for implementing a system to support SPS learning was that the solution had to allow students to see and hear lecturers and enable them to ask direct questions. The lecturer also had to be able to present class content in documents and other media visible to students. “In addition, we wanted an easy-to-use tool that was not expensive to purchase and deploy,” says Allard.

After three months of research and testing, eXia chose Macromedia Breeze from Adobe. “It’s the solution that best fits our needs,” explains Allard. “The way it works is simple. The conference times are sent by email to the centers, which connect to the Breeze server using an ID and password. At the specified time, the conference leader begins the session from his or her PC equipped with a webcam. In each location, students see a screen that is divided into three parts: live video of the speaker, the presentation, and a chat box where students can ask questions.”

In addition to eXia, Group CESI has two other primary operations:

- ei.CESI, an engineering school with several locations throughout the area. The school has more than 11,000 engineering graduates.
- A professional training department that accounts for half of CESI activities.

“Using Macromedia Breeze from Adobe is simple for lecturers and for students. Plus, deploying and maintaining the solution is cost-effective.”

Jean-Louis Allard,
Director,
eXia

For More Information

www.adobe.com/products/breeze/

An easy-to-deploy solution

In addition to being intuitive and requiring little or no training, Breeze was both cost-effective and easy to deploy for eXia. The application, based on Macromedia Flash® from Adobe, makes it easy for students and lecturers to participate in presentations using the free, ubiquitous Adobe Flash Player. “It was cost-effective to deploy,” says Allard. “The expenditure is very reasonable for the server license, hosting, and 2 MB/2MB line. It is an inexpensive solution.”

Breeze has been up and running for over a year at eXia and has been embraced by students, who appreciate being able to rewatch a conference simply by clicking on the conference option at the school’s website. Guest teachers also like the system that gives them an enriching experience and provides greater exposure for their companies’ names. It is a proven solution that is already being applied elsewhere.

Allard is satisfied with the results and now wants to capitalize on the success of the experience by expanding how Breeze is used throughout the organization. Already, the school is using Breeze to bring together administrators in 25 towns.

“The next phase is the rapid deployment of Breeze at ei.CESI, the group’s engineering school. Using Macromedia Breeze from Adobe is simple for lecturers and for students. Plus, deploying and maintaining the solution is cost-effective,” says Allard.



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Adobe Systems Incorporated
345 Park Avenue
San Jose, CA 95110-2704
USA
www.adobe.com

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