



Arthur R. Marshall Foundation acts locally, thinks globally.

Environmental organization uses Adobe Connect to create series promoting its message among students, educators, and others.



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Tara Bardi, director of education and senior scientist, Arthur R. Marshall Foundation



SOLUTION

Adobe Connect

RESULTS



BUILD COMMUNITY

Helped connect scientists, educators, and learners across geographies with conservation issues



ENGAGEMENT

Built emotional connections within the community and with content to reinforce learning



BOOST PARTICIPATION

Achieved previously unattainable levels of attendance for learning programs, including 7,000 students attending a four-day session



INSPIRE ACTION

Expanded reach and awareness for key ecological concepts, supporting key organizational objectives, including initiating change

Arthur R. Marshall Foundation

Established in 1998

Lake Worth, Florida

www.artmarshall.org

The School District of Palm Beach County

www.palmbeachschools.org

CHALLENGES

- Engaging with scientists, stakeholders, educators, and students and communicating complex ideas
- Expanding the reach of field programs to raise awareness for important conservation issues
- Delivering rich experiences to audiences with varying technical capabilities and resources

Foundation for the environment

Arthur R. Marshall Jr. was a soldier, scientist, and conservationist who dedicated his life to preserving one of Florida's most beautiful and biologically diverse ecosystems—the Everglades. Since his death in 1985, his legacy has included the conservatorship of the Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge and establishing the Arthur R. Marshall Foundation, an organization dedicated to raising awareness of the importance of the ecosystem and its stewardship.

To build community awareness, the foundation has brought members of the public—including scientists, like-minded individuals with interests in conservation, educators, and students of all ages—to the Everglades to see firsthand the value of preserving its resources. In an effort to better scale resources to engage with larger, more distributed audiences and serve local public schools with limited funding for field trips, the organization wanted to leverage eLearning and webinar technologies to launch a virtual learning platform to take students into the field.

“There are thousands of people who wanted to participate in our Everglades trips. However, resources are limited—either the number of people we have to lead tours or finances available for the students to attend,” says Tara Bardi, director of education and senior scientist at the Arthur R. Marshall Foundation. “By making these travel opportunities available virtually, we could accommodate a much larger live audience, as well as record sessions for additional uses.”

The organization also wanted to implement a learning and communication platform that could be easily installed and adopted by schools of all sizes. Additionally, Arthur R. Marshall foundation needed a solution that would be easy to use, enabling users with varying degrees of technical expertise to engage with high-quality materials.

Learning and passion

After evaluating solutions from several companies, the Arthur R. Marshall Foundation partnered with the School District of Palm Beach County and implemented Adobe Connect to launch its virtual field trip program. Using the solution's flexible video capabilities and its rich learning environment, the organization can integrate pre-built learning materials into live sessions to maximize the value of each learning opportunity originally co-organized by Gisa Wagner, the foundation's former board member, and Chris Carl, organizer and amateur naturalist. At the same time, participants and program leaders in the field can also create emotionally driven experiences that impart the significance of Everglades conservation and the importance of the organization's efforts.

“Because we can take audiences directly to the front lines of our efforts and deliver realistic experiences with Adobe Connect, our virtual program goes beyond just learning and connects the hearts and minds of all involved,” says Bardi. “This translates directly to the foundation's core values by instilling learning and passion within all audiences we engage.”



SOLUTION AT A GLANCE

• Adobe Connect

For more information
www.adobeconnect.com



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Reliable video within Adobe Connect enables remote parties, deep within the Everglades, to broadcast using mobile hotspots and cellular towers with the highest quality possible. Because the Adobe solution can optimize video based upon bandwidth, as well as enable presenters to limit video use by presenters or audiences if bandwidth doesn't allow, experiences can be modified for the greatest possible impact, regardless of location. Additionally, offering face-to-face interactions and chat between presenters and audiences helps to build emotional connections.

For presenters and their audiences, persistent meeting rooms offer fast, easy access to learning materials and experiences. The ease of using Adobe Connect also supports rapid adoption of the platform and removes barriers between learners and content. "By supporting flexible communications and addressing bandwidth limitations and other challenges, Adobe Connect eliminates barriers between presenters and learners," says Bardi.

Attaining higher value

The flexibility of the Adobe solution enables the Arthur R. Marshall Foundation to expand the variety of student learning opportunities. The organization is using Adobe Connect to deliver short kickoff activities for young students, introducing scientific concepts to support broader classroom learning. For example, the team is introducing the water cycle to young students through the lens of the Everglades ecosystem.

The foundation has also expanded its program and reach beyond the 200,000 students of Palm Beach County and neighboring counties—as well as beyond the state of Florida—using Adobe Connect. Because of the effectiveness of the presentation materials, the organization has garnered interest from learners of all types from Georgia to California, and learners from around the globe. By recording sessions, the Arthur R. Marshall Foundation can continue to engage an even broader audience in the future.

"It used to be a big challenge to get several hundred students at a time to participate in the field," says Bardi. "With Adobe Connect, we're still having students attend in person, but have surpassed those benchmarks and have had up to 7,000 students participate online in a four-day session. In the future, we look forward to continuing to exceed that level of participation with high-quality experiences."

Equally as important, delivering rich experiences to broader audiences has increased the foundation's profile and attracted more attention to the organization's message. In turn, the virtual program has continued to drive participation for its in-person field trips to the Everglades.

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