SUCCESS STORY

EDUCATION: STUDENTS CIRCLE NETWORK CONNECTS A GLOBAL GRAPH TO HIGHER EDUCATION

New Academic Social Network Brings Students And Educators Together From Around the World Opening New Doors to Critical Education and Skills

Founded in 2010 Students Circle Network is an educational social network designed to provide college and high school students without access, to an environment where they can engage, network and receive critical entrepreneurial business and technology skills. Taught by instructors across the globe, the service opens the doors to education for students that do not have the means. Leveraging InfiniteGraph as its core infrastructure, Student Circle is able to connect the dots and pave a path for the next generation of global entrepreneurs.

Key to the success of the Network was the ability to enable students to interact and communicate, making online education and e-learning more engaging through resources, study groups, social connections, scholarship offers, and university placements. As founder and CEO Gospel “Gossy” Ukanwoke investigated technologies on which to build his vision, he identified two primary needs. “Our first challenge was cost. We needed courses to be extremely inexpensive and whenever possible, free,” said Ukanwoke. “The second was scalability. We needed an infrastructure that could support our vision.”

“InfiniteGraph has enabled us to build a personal dream into a reality” Gospel “Gossy” Ukanwoke, Founder and CEO

Student Circle leverages the free community version of InfiniteGraph that enables it to deliver a robust social layer within the Network including connections to both Facebook and Twitter. InfiniteGraph also allows Student’s Circle to integrate with most virtualized cloud platforms, including GoGrid, RightScale, and Amazon’s EC2, to build “internet-scale” services with significant infrastructure and cost savings.

Innovation: Startup CEO Gospel “Gossy” Ukanwoke from Nigeria wanted to build a platform connecting students and teachers around the globe for entrepreneurship, and technology classes, critical conversations, and knowledge exchange in a single online service.

Challenge: Like any social network, Student Circle needed to connect the dots between educational need, instructor expertise, and students interests, in real-time.

Solution: InfiniteGraph allows Student Circle to be built on a framework that connects multiple types of content including conversations, coursework, instructors, students, study groups, and mentors to create a lively, well-rounded educational experience.
In a very short amount of time Student’s Circle has grown to be a significant educational network. The social network – which provides students with free course resources and materials, live faculty help, teaching and lecture materials to students, scholarship offers and study groups – supports studies in business, information technology, engineering and computing, architecture and design, science and humanities, and several other areas. Students Circle launched its initial service in December 2010 and already has more than 40,000 members from over 135 countries. Now Students Circle Network is a member of the OpenCourseware Consortium. OCW Consortium has member universities globally with the most contributing member being MIT; others include Open University, UK and University of California at Irvine and a list of some of the most reputable universities worldwide.

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“We are growing so quickly that we are receiving constant requests for more courses, services and ability to leverage the relationships in the Network, said Ukanwoke. “With InfiniteGraph we know that we have built our application on a database that will scale with this fast growth and enable us to take advantage of the data within the Network to better serve our members.”

InfiniteGraph enables organizations to utilize data and connections found in the large volumes of data collected from social networks, in real-time. For Students Circle Network, InfiniteGraph gives them the ability to connect any number of individuals and their interests, through deep queries of highly complex relationships. InfiniteGraph’s core technology was designed to traverse relationships faster than traditional relational technologies. Students Circle Network can then meet the needs of the students quickly and understand the diverse needs of providing education to multiple levels of educational access and acumen.

How successful has this been for Student’s Circle? “Soon we began to get requests for more than just classes and network but to become an accredited University and allow students to gain credits for their work in Students Circle. This summer we will launch the first online university for Sub-Saharan Africa. InfiniteGraph has enabled us to build a personal dream into a reality.”