



Case Study - Education

Pacific Education Institute



Box helps the Pacific Education Institute take collaboration out of email and makes it easier to manage its mentor program and student projects.

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Erica Baker

Educational Consultant
Pacific Education Institute

The Pacific Education Institute was founded in 2003 with the belief that students learn better through real-world, outdoor experiences. PEI’s Senior Culminating Projects program works with high school students as they complete their senior projects, connecting them with mentors who help the students get outside and conduct environmental work.

Challenge

With dozens of students and mentors spread out across Washington State, the Pacific Education Institute was having difficulty managing its concurrent projects. Students were constantly emailing ecosystem descriptions and final presentations, while mentors were sending in updates. With no unified format for handling these submissions, the onslaught of content proved to be hectic and time-consuming. “We needed a way to manage all these projects as they were happening,” explained Erica Baker, Educational Consultant for the Pacific Education Institute. As a grant-funded organization, the Pacific Education Institute also needed an accurate way to report on its activities for its donors. “I thought, ‘How do we get all this information in an effective, organized way?’” Erica recalled.

Solution

In her search for a solution, Erica came across Box.net. “I found Box and really liked it,” she explained. Founded in 2005, Box.net now serves more than 50,000 companies from small businesses to Fortune 1000 that look to Box to simplify online content management, accelerate team productivity and connect employees with a familiar interface that anyone can use.

Erica invited her team of mentors and students to Box, and today, students easily upload files which the Institute can then manage and organize in various shared folders. Erica is also able to share information easily with the students. For example, when Erica had a form that she needed students to sign and bring to the next meeting, she simply uploaded the form to Box and sent the students a link. “It’s nice having a URL where kids can access files without having to remember a password,” Erica explained. Box allows users to send anyone a link to a file or folder for easy downloading. This unique link can also be password-protected.

At the end of each year, Erica puts together a publication of the students’ senior projects. In years past, she would spend 30 to 40 hours transferring the files to a digital format and organizing them. “Box will probably save me 60 hours this year,” Erica assessed. This equates to thousands of dollars in savings for the Pacific Education Institute.

Time and cost savings, however, cannot fully quantify the Pacific Education Institutes gains from Box. “The biggest benefit has been having a way to manage projects in a more organized manner,” Erica explained. “I love being able to be on top of not only our projects, but also what’s happening in other areas of the program and get information from the mentors we’ve trained.”

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