



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

FAST FACTS

Name: Charles Miller, Ph.D.

Role: Executive Director, Institute for Design Innovation; Associate Professor, College of Education and Human Development

Institution: University of Minnesota

Challenge: Design and development of learning platforms scalable and useful to millions of world language students.

Solution: Partnership with EMC Publishing, a leading producer and marketer of textbooks and supporting multimedia.

Results: Superb student-centered tools with an expanded reach into a broader market.

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A Partnership that Works

A university design institute develops world-class language learning platforms scalable to millions with the help of a leading textbook and multimedia publisher.



Loving & living design. Charles Miller leads a team that transforms communication, education and collaboration through research-fueled design and innovative digital environments.

Charles Miller is the Executive

Director of the Institute for Design Innovation (IDI) at the University of Minnesota and an Associate Professor in the College of Education and Human Development there as well. As Executive Director, he oversees design and development of learning solutions that are geared toward world language classrooms of tomorrow.

To assist in these efforts, IDI entered into a partnership with EMC Publishing, one of the nation's leading learning solutions providers for schools throughout the country.

The partnership has proven to be extremely beneficial. The organizations have teamed up to provide the education community with sophisticated and highly effective tools for learning languages.

"We began working with EMC Publishing in early 2012," Miller says. "Our initial effort was to take a product we developed and expand it to reach a much broader market. EMC was a logical choice because of its more than 50 years of experience and excellent reputation as pioneers in language-learning."

The original collaboration of IDI and EMC was on a program called Avenue. The program allows teachers to use webcams or iPad apps to create assessments. "The product as developed at IDI was shown to be effective and well received by teachers," says Miller. "But we wanted to make it more widely available. So we partnered with EMC to help us reach a market they specialize in, and today Avenue

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—Charles Miller, Ph.D., Executive Director of the Institute for Design Innovation, University of Minnesota



Better for it. *With over 2 million videos shared in both K-12 and higher education environments, Flipgrid benefited tremendously from their partnership with EMC Publishing.*

has about 150,000 student users across K-12 and universities all around the world.”

More of a Good Thing

Shortly after that first venture, the IDI again

partnered with EMC to distribute Flipgrid. This product allows teachers to create grids of short questions (using text or video) that students respond to through recorded videos. Flipgrid boosts community and social presence in face-to-face, hybrid, and online classrooms, as well as enterprise organizations around the world.

Flipgrid now has well over 2 million videos shared in educational environments — K-12 and college — both inside and outside the classroom. “The product is used by approximately a million teachers, students and organizations every day. It’s grown exponentially over these last few years,” Miller comments. “EMC played a key role in building a more comprehensive environment that allowed Flipgrid to become a cohesive and unified experience for world language learners in a variety of environments.

“Our third and most recent collaboration is Passport,” Miller notes. “It is an innovative learning program that seamlessly delivers content and assets, enabling teachers to easily assign class work, track student progress, and report results to parents or

school districts – all within a single application.

“In the early months of conceptualizing Passport,” Miller observes, “was the core experience of a world language learner today. After much brainstorming and many design sessions, we came up with key

components of that experience: *discover, create, expand, share, and perform.*

“The design process was focused on the student experience from day one,” says Miller. “The key components above represent what the student must do to learn efficiently — then ensure that the teachers have easy access to everything needed to provide that kind of world-class learning environment.”

Beyond a Partnership

Miller is very happy with the relationship between EMC and his team. “They’ve become friends,” says Miller. “I think that really shows when we attend conferences, presentations, and similar events. People see for themselves that we really do have a strong connection — and that is evident in the products resulting from our partnership.” ■

A five-point approach:

Discover – Students connect to core curriculum via their eBooks and other supplemental materials

Create – Students practice their knowledge of language and culture through dynamic, engaging, project-based activities

Expand – Students explore language and culture through virtual tours, news articles, video documentaries, and music

Share – Students post for peers their opinions, ideas, stories, and more, using a video-based tool

Perform – Students demonstrate oral proficiency through video assessment tasks

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