LEARNING & CAREER SUCCESS, ONE DIGITAL BADGE AT A TIME

Learn how Los Angeles Trade-Technical College is arming 18,000 students with next-generation tools for capturing and demonstrating skills for transfer and job success.

*Portfolium sat down with Linda Delzeit-McIntyre, Professor, Faculty Trainer, and Academic Technology Coordinator at LA Trade-Technical College (LATTC). Linda is a true champion for the transitioning and working student, going above and beyond administration of **learning management** to drive **learning success** - learning with a direct impact on personal and professional advancement.*

What initiatives does Portfolium support?

Portfolium supports a myriad of LATTC initiatives, but at the top of the list are **Digital Badging**, **Digital Literacy**, **Transfer Success**, and the **Career Readiness** of LATTC students. The common denominator across all of the above is our students' need to capture evidence of learning and link it to opportunity. Portfolium's profiles and network do just that.

What problem were you trying to solve in selecting Portfolium?

As you can tell from the array of initiatives we're involved with, LATTC required a system that met a diverse variety of needs. Most vendors specialize in one or two of our requirements; Portfolium checked all boxes.

Describe the importance of badging for LATTC and some of the specifics on where and how Portfolium fits into your badging strategy

Digital badging - which Portfolium now supports at an advanced level with its Credly integration - is important on several fronts. For our students who are embarking on a second career later in life, digital badges prove that they have acquired new, modern skills to fill the gaps left by degree programs from decades ago which have lost relevance in the face of rapid technological change. Badges do this by capturing and certifying course and certificate-level learning and training. There is a particularly interesting use case for badges in the area of home healthcare. This field now requires that health care professionals be proficient with software and apps for diagnosis and treatment that didn't exist up until recently. It is critical that employers verify the competencies of all of their employees, and badging makes this much easier.

Badging is still considered to be a cutting-edge practice, but it is headed for the mainstream. Portfolium, the Lumina Foundation, and others are providing the future infrastructure to make digital badges portable and universal. I believe that the CCC and LATTC have been wise to steward leadership on this front, perhaps getting ahead of future mandates.

What specific advantages does Portfolium provide?

From a ***student*** perspective, our experience with the Mahara ePortfolio system missed the mark on several fronts. The same can be said for other vendors that we investigated. Legacy ePortfolio products weren't easy enough to use, weren't portable following graduation, and were often too costly. Cost alone is a huge non-starter for technical and community college students; Portfolium is both portable and free for life for students and alumni. Finally, Portfolium is a network that provides value by connecting students to other students, faculty, and employers. This is highly unique among "educational technology" software applications.

From a ***technical*** standpoint, Portfolium has key integrations with both Canvas and Credly, both of which were critical requirements.

From a ***strategic*** standpoint, Portfolium was already partnered with the UC and CSU systems, which are primary 4-year transfer destinations for our students. To give students a seamless transition where they can continue to build their portfolios on a single, free system made a lot of sense.

What aspect of Portfolium makes your job easier?

Portfolium is intuitive to anyone who has used Facebook or LinkedIn, so I don't have to hire additional staff to train our 18,000+ students on the system. This is a hidden element of affordability that Portfolium provides. In addition, Portfolium has its own online help files and videos.

How does Portfolium support learning success for students?

We believe successful learning should support successful outcomes for students. Portfolium helps LATTC help students demonstrate their skills to employers. Portfolium also helps students discover jobs that match their skills. Data from Portfolium's EDU Platform indicates that our most active Portfolium users are interested in Internet, Aerospace & Defense, Automotive, and Consumer Electronics careers. We can also see that top employers of LATTC Portfolium users include the US Army, Dameron Hospital, Kaiser Permanente, Toyota, and the Cal State University System.

What was the decision process for LATTC? How was it funded?

Portfolium was initially funded by the LA3HC, which is a multi-college project funded by the US Dept. of Labor, building on LATTC's Pathways to Academic, Career and Transfer Success (PACTS) framework. Portfolium later signed a system-wide deal with the California Community College System (CCC).

LATTC Top 5

See some of the strongest LATTC student profiles, based on Portfolium's profile ranking system, in these 5 skill areas:

1. Diesel Technology
2. Fashion Merchandising
3. Cosmetology
4. Computer Applications Office Technology
5. Health Care Industry