



Idaho Saves Thousands of Dollars in Travel Time and Man Hours by Training Teachers via Wimba Classroom

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-Mike Caldwell, Director of Supervision and Development, Idaho Digital Learning Academy

Traditionally, K-12 teachers throughout Idaho had to drive up to 8 hours one-way to participate in professional development seminars. But with recent state budget shortfalls, travel time had to be reduced. Therefore, the state turned to Idaho Digital Learning Academy's (IDLA) Wimba Classroom license to help meet live online to allow teachers from throughout the state to meet live online. After a year of online meetings in 2008-2009, a survey of 300 teachers revealed tremendous data and savings:

- 100% of Idaho regions participated in online meetings
- \$81,500 saved in mileage reimbursement costs
*Additional cost savings include overnight accommodations, meals, etc. & is not included in the \$81,500
- Over 3,100 "out of office" hours eliminated
- 97,000+ travel miles saved
- 4,850+ gallons of gasoline saved
- Trained more than 1,000 teachers throughout Idaho and an additional 1,364 have viewed archives

And this doesn't even mention the 10,000+ students that took classes via Wimba at IDLA.

When most people think of the western United States, they typically recall images of the snowcapped Rocky Mountains, sunny California, or perhaps the misty Pacific Northwest. But few think of Idaho. At 479 miles long and 305 miles wide, Idaho is the 8th largest state in terms of geography and also one of the most rural, with less than 1.3 million residents living within its 82,747 square miles.

In fact, to serve all its K-12 students, the state only needs 120 school districts, 1/3 of which have fewer than 500 Students. Many Idaho schools are rural, remote, and isolated, and are therefore unable to offer a broad curriculum to its students. It's also difficult for teachers and administrators to receive professional development because they have to drive great distances to meeting sites.

Enter IDLA.



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idla.k12.id.us

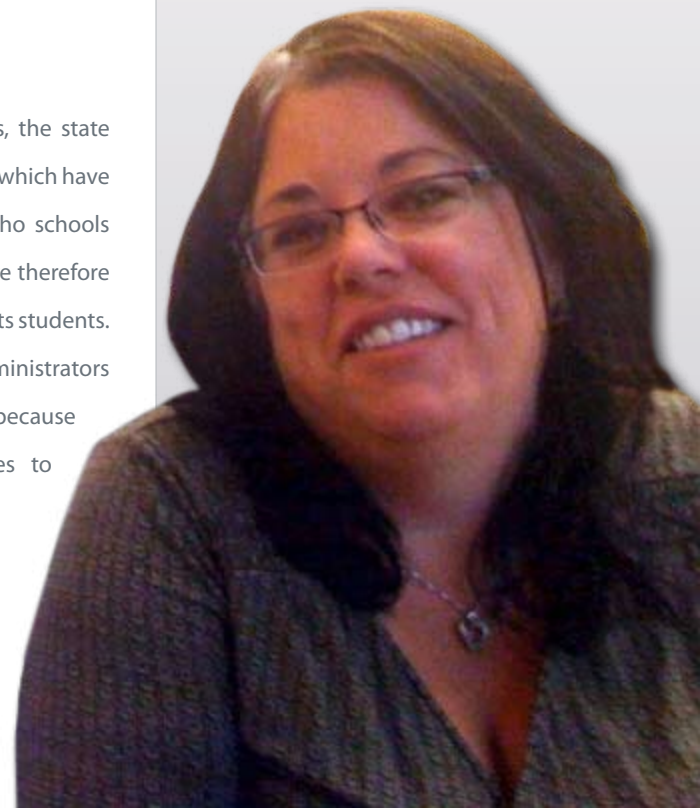
WIMBA PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

- Wimba Classroom
- Wimba Voice

KEY BENEFITS

- Trained teachers in 100% of districts
- \$81,500 saved in mileage reimbursement costs
- 3,100 "out of office" hours eliminated
- 97,000+ travel miles saved
- 4,850+ gallons of gasoline saved

Donna Hutchison
CEO, Idaho Digital Learning Academy





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WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

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-Donna Hutchison,

CEO, Idaho Digital Learning Academy

Established in 2002 by the Idaho Legislature, IDLA is the state's virtual school created to meet the education needs of all Idaho students by supplementing face-to-face classes.

During the 2008-2009 school year, IDLA served nearly 10,000 students from 98% of all Idaho school districts, most often to accommodate scheduling conflicts, to offer courses not offered in a particular district, and for credit recovery. Interestingly, the smaller districts saw a higher percentage of students taking online courses via IDLA, usually because those schools lack the resources required to offer as robust a curriculum as their larger counterparts.

Since IDLA's mission is to serve students, school districts, and the state of Idaho by providing a high quality public school education, aligned with state achievement standards by utilizing innovative e-learning methods of delivery, the virtual school uses the Wimba Collaboration Suite to make its online classes and professional development trainings as collaborative as possible.

After using Wimba Voice many years for asynchronous vocal discussions, in 2008 IDLA created Idaho Live, a self-branded version of Wimba Classroom. Via Idaho Live, IDLA offers live virtual:

- Office Hours
- Math Tutoring
- Guest Speakers
- Collaborative Projects
- Archived Records

By offering highly engaging online collaborations, students and teachers can communicate via audio, video, application sharing, and chat in order to bring key concepts to life. For example, when the economy was a hot topic in late 2008,

IDLA held a weekly guest lecture led by a stock market expert who remotely taught Idaho students about finance and stocks. These guest lectures were unique additions to the usual Idaho Live collaborative sessions such as math and science tutorials given by teachers to students throughout the state.

"I've been involved in numerous ed-tech projects since the 1990's and I've never seen a tool adopted so quickly," said Donna Hutchison, CEO of Idaho Digital Learning Academy, recalling the immediate interest in Wimba Classroom.

With instructional uses of Wimba Classroom proving so successful so quickly, IDLA realized that Idaho Live should be used to support professional development as well. Upon this realization, teachers and administrators from throughout the state began meeting live online via Idaho Live for:

- Principal and Teacher Interviews
- Principal and Regional Coordinator Meetings
- IDLA Board Meetings
- Student Success Series
- Parent Focus, District IT focus, District Admin Focus
- Internal Professional Development
- Software Training

Now, by merely using its existing Wimba license, faculty and administrators were suddenly saving thousands of dollars in gas and travel time lost. By leveraging economies of scale, IDLA significantly reduced the cost of statewide professional development.

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WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

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*Director of Supervision and Development,
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Now, IDLA allows hundreds of faculty and administrators from each of Idaho's 120 school districts to take professional development webinars in topics such as Educational Technology, School Improvement, Curriculum Instruction, and Software Implementation. Idaho Live has already shown a significant statewide impact on:

- Reducing Travel Costs
- Increasing Opportunity and Access to information
- Increasing Professional Development opportunities statewide
- Reducing lost instructional and administrative time
- Enriching teaching and learning

About Wimba

Wimba develops web-based collaboration software designed for online education, language learning and live interactive communications. Our collaborative applications enable learning professionals to fully embrace the new wave of teaching and learning opportunities afforded by the Internet; regardless of geographic location, bandwidth or operating system. Our classroom collaboration solutions enable educators to conduct live, online classes, meetings, office hours and other collaborations, and our language learning tools add oral interaction directly into course content, webpages, study groups and assessments. With simplicity and power, Wimba adds new dimensions to online, accessible education, enhancing the learning experience for both students and instructors.

And after saving \$81,500 in mileage reimbursement costs, eliminating 3,100 "out of office" hours, and saving more than 4,850 gallons of gas, the savings don't stop there.

Hutchison emphasizes the notion that these savings are relative to the population of each state. For example, for states with 6.5 million residents such as Arizona and Massachusetts, these savings figures could be multiplied 5-fold because those states have 5X the population of Idaho. Further, these specific Idaho results could be doubled just because only half of Idaho Live attendees responded to IDLA's survey.

"[Wimba Classroom] is definitely saving the state a significant amount of money," says Hutchison, with a big smile.

