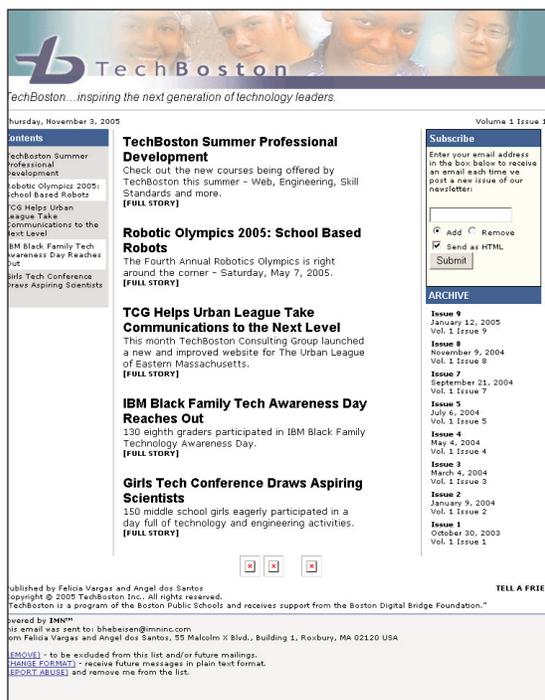


IN A CLASS BY ITSELF: TECHBOSTON USES IMN TO BUILD AWARENESS, GROW SUPPORT

Providing advanced technology education for Boston Public School students is TechBoston's core mission. However, TechBoston administrators realized the program's existence hinged on getting the word out about what they do to multiple constituents.

A young, innovative department within the Boston Public School system, TechBoston is focused on giving students the technology skills to succeed in the 21st Century. To date, over 7,000 students from Boston's K - 12 public schools have enrolled in TechBoston's courses including Cisco networking & IT Essentials, Web development, Microsoft Office, Java, GIS and Robotics.

The results speak for themselves. TechBoston students are going on to college at a higher rate than the rest of the district and over 500 TechBoston students have been placed in IT-related internships at top-notch companies including Fidelity and JP Morgan.



Five Marketing-Savvy Staffers

Despite TechBoston's success, the department is under constant pressure to demonstrate its value and to increase its awareness within the Boston School Department and externally among the private sector. Visibility equals funding. Funding equals growth. And growth is critical if TechBoston is to achieve its goal of becoming recognized as Massachusetts' leader in technology education. Moreover, TechBoston is one very small organization within a large public school system. According to Felicia Vargas, Co-Director of TechBoston, "If you're not visible, you're forgotten."

Vargas talks candidly about the challenges of marketing TechBoston's accomplishments to its various constituencies. "You'll never find a more dedicated group of people.

But there are only five of us running the daily operations so we're stretched very thin. Yes, it's difficult but we also see it as an opportunity to practice what we tell our students: 'Be resourceful and leverage the power of technology.'"

Building Visibility, Demonstrating Value

That's exactly what Vargas and her team are doing with the help of IMN's e-publishing services. They created TechBoston's bi-monthly Electronic Newsletter as an efficient yet powerful way to share news and student success stories and to demonstrate its vital role in improving technology education opportunities for the City of Boston's youth.

Each issue features articles about important initiatives undertaken by the TechBoston staff such as the annual Robotics Olympics. TechBoston also highlights student success stories including those about the TechBoston Consulting Group: a division of TechBoston that employs students to handle real world technology projects so they can earn real world money! The e-newsletter also includes "hard news" articles dealing with pressing topics such as pending legislation that could affect funding and strategies for encouraging more girls to get on the IT bandwagon. TechBoston uses the e-newsletter to promote professional development for Boston teachers and every issue includes a message informing private sector recipients about opportunities to hire TechBoston students.

TechBoston staff members expressed delight about how surprisingly fast and easy it is to create and publish the TechBoston Electronic Newsletter. Vargas and her team branded the IMN template with their logo and appropriate graphics. The content in each issue is laid out in a clean, 3-column format with photographs that bring life and energy to the stories that are quickly imported. The e-newsletter is sent directly to more than 700 recipients within the Boston Public Schools, Massachusetts Department of Education, area universities and colleges, private companies and other supporting organizations. Teachers are also on the list as are alumni and students. Click-through tracking shows each issue boasts an average open rate of about 35%.

Positive Feedback

TechBoston's e-newsletter also contains embedded content behavior analytics that tell Vargas and her team who is reading the e-newsletter and which articles are most popular. This feedback is helping the staff to develop editorial calendars for future issues that focus on the topics of highest interest to recipients. Equally important, every issue offers opt-in functionality. Not only has the e-newsletter successfully maintained awareness among its existing supporters, it continues to spread the word and build up the subscriber base. Although the e-newsletter has already achieved TechBoston's original goal of building awareness and visibility, Vargas intends to leverage IMN's unique capabilities even more. Plans for creating segmented versions for individual communities (teachers, private companies) and by business goal (developing the internship program and TechBoston Consulting Group) are on TechBoston's horizon.