



Presidential Precinct Connects Community Leaders and Experts Across the World Using Socialcast by VMware

Based in Virginia, United States, the Presidential Precinct is a non-profit consortium of six institutions – two premier public universities and three historic Presidential sites. The organization’s mission is to empower the next generation of influential leaders through education, collaboration and digital networking.

The organization supports its mission through a wide range of development programs, including the Global Empowerment Through Rule of Law Forum, Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders, and International Visitor Leadership Program. These programs have an impressive alumni roster of more than 350 current and former heads of state worldwide. These programs have brought together renowned speakers for participants, including His Royal Highness Prince of Wales and President Barack Obama.

Business Issue

The Presidential Precinct brings together young leaders from around the world to meet and collaborate with scholars, diplomats and private sector experts. Whether it is through a one-day program or a six-week program, Precinct participants make connections that drive change in their communities around the world. However, at the conclusion of these programs, participants lacked a reliable way to keep in touch with experts who could help shape ongoing projects and offer encouragement along the way. The Precinct wanted to establish a digital platform for young leaders to stay connected with influencers to continue valuable discussions and planning beyond Precinct programs.

The organization began exploring how social networking could bring intellectual resources to its young leaders. The solution needed to have three key components: strong security to protect users and the information they discussed; a familiar interface on mobile and desktop with support for user group creation; and rich search functionality to find specific topics, groups and users. “We wanted to create a virtual platform that was secure, accessible and useful for our international visitors,” said Neal Piper, managing director, Presidential Precinct. “Our programs are just the beginning for these future leaders, so we wanted them to have the resources they need to make change in their communities.”

Socialcast Solution

Piper and his team explored four major enterprise social collaboration platforms before selecting Socialcast by VMware as the foundation for its Presidential Precinct Network (PPN). Within its first year, the PPN brought on more than 1,000 users to connect and share ideas about community development projects.

INDUSTRY

Non-profit

LOCATION

North America

KEY CHALLENGES

- Lack of reliable network to connect young leaders with government, business and academic experts
- Need for secure, stable community over the Internet to protect young leaders

SOLUTION

- Socialcast establishes a vibrant, secure online community for collaboration, professional development and access to dignitaries and policy experts from more than 100 nations around the world.

BUSINESS BENEFITS

- More than 5,000 professional connections made through the Socialcast-powered Presidential Precinct Network
- Young leaders build knowledge and grow relationships from anywhere

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- Neal Piper,
Managing Director,
Presidential Precinct

Today, Socialcast enables Precinct participants and experts to securely share ideas, experiences and challenges on both desktop and mobile devices. “Without Socialcast, we wouldn’t have a secure and private resource to have these important conversations,” said Piper. “Socialcast helps connect the next generation of leaders who are working together to overcome some of the most pressing civic challenges of today.” Conversations that traditionally took place in-person are now available to the larger community of current and former participants for deeper discussions and feedback. Many young leaders can find dedicated user groups for their particular interests, including human rights, education and others.

Socialcast also enables live, interactive discussions during Precinct events. The recent Magna Carta 2015 forum, which Prince Charles attended, was broadcast live on the Socialcast-powered PPN. As program participants and experts watched the event, they could comment, discuss and ask questions about the topics with the entire PPN community in real-time. This brought a larger exchange of ideas and in-depth conversations among Precinct members around the world. “Our broadcast reached more than 1,500 people from 34 different countries who otherwise wouldn’t see it,” said Piper. “Members could have live dialog and share resources in real-time, feats that would not have been possible without Socialcast and the PPN.”

Business Impact

Socialcast helps Presidential Precinct connect with more young leaders, experts and partner organizations than ever before. In fact, over 5,000 connections from over 100 countries have been established between leaders and mentors on the PPN within its first year. “Socialcast has helped us connect with thousands more leaders than we could before,” exclaimed Piper. “We are better positioned for attracting international support and are seen as a premier destination for emerging leader programs.”

Young leaders have greatly benefited from the work they are able to do through Socialcast. One alumnus from the Precinct, who connects with public policy scholars on the PPN, is working with the Central African Republic government to revise the state’s constitution to increase human rights protections. Another Precinct scholar who formed the U.S. State Department’s African Women’s Entrepreneurship Program has started the Africa’s Women, Africa’s Leaders initiative within PPN. The group uses the PPN to host daily discussions of women’s empowerment with more than 350 women across Sub-Saharan Africa.

“I’m now part of a network of leaders who are partners in the quest to make Africa a better continent,” exclaimed Oluwatoyosi Ogunseye, Mandela Washington Fellow from Nigeria. Another Fellow, Emmanuel Ndlovu, remarked that the Presidential Precinct “helped me build a powerful network of connections and realize the critical role I play in the advancement of democracy in my home country.” Students maintain successful connections with colleagues they meet at the Precinct, providing support for their nation-building projects back home.

By 2020, the Presidential Precinct plans to establish hundreds of thousands of connections with emerging leaders from government, business, academia and civil society, all through a powerful global network of young leaders who are capable of becoming heads of state, ministry officials, corporate executives and leaders of civil society organizations. In 2015, the Presidential Precinct will use PPN to support over 1,000 young African leaders through the Mandela Washington Fellowship program and the newly created YALI Regional Leadership Centers across Africa. The non-profit also plans to expand the Socialcast-powered PPN to support Latin American and Asian based programs in the future.

