

A Case Study: eLearning and ROI in a Contact Centre Environment

In eLearning, one of the central questions asked by clients is 'what is the return on investment?' Is eLearning worth the effort and can we produce the figures to prove that?

Salmat eLearning, a part of the Salmat group, one of the biggest contact centre providers in Australasia, recently completed developing an eLearning project for a major budget airline. Because contact centres have extensive sets of data on conversion rates, Average Handling Times (AHTs) and sales, we have been able to calculate with some precision the returns on investment of this eLearning exercise.

Customised eLearning

Customising eLearning for a contact centre helps ensure the service is targeted and relevant. Using eLearning has proven to be particularly useful for training staff and improving their performance.

Salmat eLearning was commissioned to build a flexible solution, which would be accessible to both national and international staff. To overcome cultural barriers and increase staff engagement Salmat eLearning developed a solution that reinforced essential information with polished visuals and a user-friendly interface. The result exemplified the actual return on investment, or ROI, offered by eLearning.

After implementation there was an almost immediate change in the performance of agents: a 29.5% improvement in sales conversion rate, an 11% improvement (reduction) in the AHT and a 48% increase in sales per hour. When assessed, agents who had undertaken eLearning achieved a 91% competency rate, a stark contrast to the 71% achieved with facilitator-led training. With eLearning outperforming face-to-face training, the client was so pleased they adopted Salmat eLearning's Learning Management System (LMS) to administer these training resources.

This sophisticated and user-friendly LMS helped the client get the most out of their content by tracking agent performance, allocating relevant training and archiving material. Like many of our clients, this budget airline found the adoption of an LMS maximised their content, streamlined administration and reduced course development time.

While, in this case, an LMS was used to manage customised content, it is equally effective in managing off-the-shelf or internally developed content as well as all face-to-face training activity.

Off-the-Shelf Content

Customised content can deliver a significant ROI; however, an off-the-shelf product addressing broad industry-wide requirements can be just as effective. With this in mind, Salmat eLearning drew on Salmat's contact

centre expertise to develop a high-end training program for all agents called Quality Conversations.

Recently released, early pilot results indicate this program is going to have a major impact on contact centre productivity, performance, agent development and customer satisfaction.

Hosted by a virtual facilitator, Quality Conversations is a fully animated program combining the best of face-to-face training with eLearning. Like a real life facilitator, the program provides a context for content with anecdotes, examples and humour. This is interspersed with virtual customer interactions giving each learner the chance to try, fail or succeed at applying the material within a workplace environment.



Choosing the mental state of the staff member (thought bubble) prior to engaging with the customer. Gadgets such as the volcano and seismograph give the learner visual indicators as to the customers anger levels.



Having chosen the state of mind the staff member reacts physically and the verbal responses provided match the state of mind chosen – in this case negative. The customer is reacting even more angrily and this is shown in the seismograph.

All modules have full audio and transcripts for accessibility purposes.

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eLearning Victoria

The eLearning Industry Association of Victoria was started in October 2006 to give the industry an identity and a voice with government and educational bodies.

Our aim is to develop the profile and community of eLearning providers in Victoria.

Together, we can expand the vision of eLearning.

eLearning News

This newsletter is produced every three months to keep members informed of news and events in their industry, as well as providing food-for-thought articles.

Members are invited to submit news items, ideas and article topics. Comments on previous items are also welcome.

Simply email or phone us to discuss.

Contact us

If you have any questions about eLearning Victoria or would like to learn about becoming a member, please contact

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or

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President
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eLearning Industry Excellence Awards Timeline

20 May - Nominations Opened

12 Aug - Nominations Close

26 Aug - 1st Round Judging

2 Sept - Finalists Announced

25 Sept - 2nd Round Judging

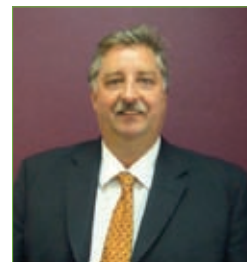
5 Nov - Awards Gala Dinner
and Presentation Night

eLearning Report

A Word from the President

Wow, time flies, July is here already!

From what I hear from members, colleagues, and customers this year has been very busy for eLearning. This is obviously great to hear, and we hope this continues, leaving the dark cloud of the Global Financial Crisis floating off in the US and UK distance.



We (the Association) have announced and released our Patron package offerings which provide a means for organisations to be directly involved in our plans to develop the eLearning Industry in the sectors of K-12, VET, University, Corporate, and Government. I would like to thank the Victorian Department of Education for its continued support and also for being the first organisation to sign on as a Patron.

We certainly expect to see more organisations sign on as Patrons, and if you have any suggestions for potential patrons, please contact us.

Looking forward, it is not long until the Excellence Awards for this year come into focus and gain its usual momentum. There is still quite some time to register (12th August) but don't leave it too late.

The events sub-committee are planning that the September showcase be the forum to allow finalists for the Awards to show the eLearning they have submitted. I expect that this will be our largest showcase to date given we should have many and varied exhibitors.

These activities lead to the eLearning Excellence Awards gala dinner which will be on 5th November. We expect this to be even bigger and better than last year.

Lastly I would like to thank those members who have volunteered for both this sub-committee and the 'Marketing' sub-committee. Your involvement is really appreciated and importantly is adding noticeable improvement to what we are doing.

I hope the second half of this year brings continued success.

Regards

Graham Whelan

Letter to Kevin Rudd

In June, the eLearning Industry Association of Victoria sent a letter to the Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, in support of the building of a National Broadband Network (NBN) across Australia.

The following is from the letter:

"Given the importance and expense of the NBN, it is critical that this project succeeds. One of the factors critical to that success will be the location of the headquarters of the new NBN entity.

It is our belief that the new entity should be based in Melbourne, leveraging off Victoria's existing strengths and capabilities in telecommunications, IT and digital education."

For a copy of the full letter, please contact the eLearning Office by phone on 03 9535 7017 or email admin@elearning.org.au.

Newsletter Content

If you have a case study you would like to share with the eLearning community through eLearn please contact us.

Member Profile

In each edition of eLearn we will publish a profile of one of our members, demonstrating the breadth of the industry.

Introducing Money 101

Money 101 is an award winning service provider of financial education and communications strategies for employees. The program enables staff to gain vital skills and knowledge in financial planning, wealth management, budgeting, transition to retirement and superannuation.

Financial education is not new to the workplace. HR managers dread staff issues that snowball into financial stress. Divorce and family break ups, redundancy and unemployment and even sickness and injury mostly lead to financial disaster if they are not armed with the right knowledge.

Our approach

Money 101 quickly discovered that what people need is not what they purchase. The integration of consumer and financial literacy into the workplace through vocational education programs and employer training programs was not a simple strategy. The only method to reinforce the need would be for the team to utilise integrated marketing activities to sell the Money 101 suite of products. For financial education to be successful, Money 101 need to use strategic digital distribution channels to reach consumers in a timely, relevant, personal and cost-effective manner. The skills based training needed to affect and influence or change the learners' behaviour and decision making. Intrinsic behaviour and emotions - along with people being generally loss averse - creates issues, and unconscious and ingrained habits create further problems when it comes to sound choices about money.

The result of four years of dedicated resource building is a consumer financial education program with a

difference. Money 101 staff develop multimedia resources for a variety of corporate, member and consumer groups and with a comprehensive suite of 35 modules and multimedia tools staff integrate quality resources with a broader strategy of timely digital marketing.

The value add is that resources link to non-product and independent support resources and the content is updated weekly. With a sound LMS and authoring tool our product undergoes continuous improvement meeting rigorous accessibility, legal and compliance standards. Each time we deploy our content we gain valuable feedback that enables continuous improvement to our content and with new partnerships in the multimedia industry we are rapidly moving into Web 2.0 territory.

The success can be attributed to content that is wide and varied. eLearning works because finance is a very personal issue and online the consumer need not disclose financial problems or lack of knowledge.

What's exciting is that we have mapped our first modules to National Competency Standards and shortly the entire program will link to formal qualifications for learners interested in a qualification. This not only provides a new vocational opportunity in the financial services industry but a skill that helps them reach a safe and secure financial future. A win win on both sides of the ledger.

Money 101 - Money for Life

*Contact Catherine Birchall on 1300 789 765 or email
admin@money101.com.au or visit their website at
www.money101.com.au*

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Many of these interactions are game based and include multi-pathway or branching logic where the learner has to decide on variables such as their state of mind and the verbal or physical reactions to the customer they are dealing with. This approach means that these interactions are rarely the same for learners; however, the instructional design means the learner is always kept on an overall learning pathway. Dynamic and individual learner specific feedback is provided and can be recorded.

This complex but highly interactive and personalised approach to content development really does result in truly next generation eLearning content.

After piloting Quality Conversations in several of Salmat's contact centres we've seen an improvement in every measurable area with a 9% improvement (reduction) in AHT, a 14.8% improvement in the sales conversion rate and a 19.9% increase in sales per hour.

These are all impressive figures, but perhaps the most dramatic results surround the customer response to the trained agents. Before the pilot, participants had an average of four customer complaints per week. After the pilot, this dropped to zero. Conversely, the

agent's average weekly customer compliments before the pilot was three; after the pilot this rose to eighteen per week.

As these results show, a high-end off-the-shelf product like Quality Conversations provides all the benefits of a comprehensive eLearning program without the significant investment demanded by customised content.

While an eLearning program is not always a guarantee of a return on investment, its flexibility, consistency and convenience make it an attractive alternative to facilitator-led training in any environment, particularly an environment with the time and resource pressures of a contact centre or any other sales and customer service function where customers are demanding ever more personal services whilst reducing the time they have to engage in these interactions.

Salmat eLearning (previously Aframe) is a multi-award winning eLearning content, consultancy and platform (LMS) development and provider. Winning the eLearning Industry Association Corporate eLearning award in 2008, Salmat eLearning is part of the \$900m Salmat Group and currently works on various eLearning projects ranging in size from the very small through to very large multi-lingual/full video/full animation million dollar projects for government and corporate customers alike. Contact Jamie Merriman on 03 8662 6895 or jamie.merriman@salmat.com.au

Calendar, News & Notes

Upcoming Association Events

Thursday 16 July 2009

eLearning Breakfast

8:00am – 9:30am

Venue: Innovation @257
257 Collins St, Melbourne

Speaker: Marc Niemes

Thursday 17 September 2009

Cluster Event / Showcase

Corporate Case Studies: Who's doing what in eLearning

3.00pm – 6.00pm

Venue: Innovation @257
257 Collins St, Melbourne

Thursday 5 November 2009

eLearning Industry Awards Gala Dinner and Presentation

Venue: Hilton on the Park Melbourne

eLearning Association Patronage Packages:

In previous years, we have had sponsors for our events along with government funding. We have determined that the most appropriate value proposition for members is to have active involvement from a number of 'patron organisations'.

We are looking for patron organisations in the following areas: Broad research, planning, and implementation; K-12; VET; Corporate; University; and Government.

We see this as a worthwhile commitment for organisations that are passionate about developing eLearning in their area of interest and reaping the rewards of this contribution.

There are three levels of patron packages available. A brochure is available upon request.

Industry Events

2 - 3 September 2009

Strategic eLearning Masterclass

Holiday Inn, Perth

Masterclass Leader: Dion Groeneweg, CEO, The Cape Group

This two-day masterclass will provide you with an opportunity to interact with a renowned expert in eLearning to really gain a better understanding of how to strategically approach eLearning within your organisation. You'll leave this masterclass enthused and full of ideas to integrate into your learning and management strategy and you will identify the first steps to take when you get back to your workplace.

www.arkgroupaustralia.com.au/Events-c085eLearning.htm

eLearning members register by 7 August to receive a discount



2 - 4 September 2009

eLearning Expo Korea

eLearning Expo Korea 2009 (eLEK2009), held in Seoul, Korea, is the world's leading eLearning event, attracting over 200 eLearning suppliers and over 25,000 visitors, and bringing together and global teaching and learning community for three days of innovations and inspirations. Apply to exhibit by 18 August 2009.

www.elek.or.kr



3 - 4 September 2009

eLearning Asia Conference

The eLearning Asia Conference will be held from 3-4 September in Seoul, Korea (during eLEK2009). It is hosted by the Ministry of Education Science and Technology, the Ministry of Knowledge Economy, and the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism of the Republic of Korea.

Under the theme of Transform Learning with Technology, the conference will provide a forum for networking and discussing the direction of educational reform using technology through diverse and high quality programs such as invited speeches, paper presentations, panel discussions, and more. It will be attended by domestic and international eLearning professionals, businessmen, policy-makers, and others within the field.

www.elearningasia.net

Register by 8 August to receive an early bird discount



29 - 30 September 2009

Collective Intelligence

Nurturing and capitalising on your information ecosystem

Rydges World Square, Sydney

One-day connected forum and post-forum workshops. Collective intelligence practices in Australia are quickly on the rise. Collective intelligence is already established as a highly applied method in Europe and the United States. This connected forum is leading the way in the Asia Pacific region as the first to explore the benefits of harnessing collective intelligence.

www.arkgroupaustralia.com.au/Events-c089CollectiveIntel.htm

eLearning members register by 28 August to receive a discount

