

Suits you Sir!

As we saw last month, learning occurs in many ways, both formally and informally. The ways we choose to absorb and reflect on information come from an ever increasing web of sources and we need to rethink our approach to learning design to accommodate these changes

- The e-suite
- Keeping costs down
- An 'e-book approach'
- A portal approach
- Food for thought

The e-suite

As we saw last month, learning occurs in many ways, both formally and informally. The ways we choose to absorb and reflect on information come from an ever increasing web of sources and we need to rethink our approach to learning design to accommodate these changes.

One approach that works well is what we call an e-suite, or a suite of objects, that learners can use in a 'pick and mix' manner. It is an open design that is adult-orientated and contemporary. It allows learners to follow their own learning path through the content, to explore and reflect, and to study wherever they feel comfortable and have time, be it offline, at home, or in transit. It makes the learning accessible and open to the wide variety of ways that adults learn.

Keeping costs down

The e-suite complements and adds value to existing content making use of content that you know works well rather than converting it for the sake of creating something new.

It is cost effective because it plays to the strengths of available media such as the audio visual dimension, with **e-movies**, and the thought provoking interactivity of **e-quizzes** to highlight and bring to life the key issues, the talking points, the key messages of the content; content that can then be more fully

accessed as an **e-brief** to be read and absorbed - on or offline - **e-reference** with links and opportunities to explore - and maybe content available in an audio version - as a downloadable podcast or mp3.

And, where a more formal scored test is required to be tracked or recorded, a link to **e-assess** could be a link to an LMS (or some simpler form of 'launch and track'). And finally, there is **e-valuate** - an online questionnaire that can be used either for feedback on the learning experience and/or to conduct self analysis, attitudinal, audits etc.

Here's a more detailed description:

- **e-movie** - stimulates with an audio visual sequence and/or video clip to introduce key issues, raise awareness, provoke thought, discussion, reflection or perhaps demonstrate a correct/incorrect way of doing things.
- **e-brief** - informs with the knowledge, the facts, the background information, key messages.
- **e-quiz** - checks understanding and 'tests to teach' the key learning points by asking questions that promote thinking and/or check understanding by questioning and through the feedback provided.
- **e-reference** - explores the subject further by providing the user with further reading, relevant intranet/internet links to 'drill down'.
- **e-assess** - tests understanding with scored questions and feedback that identifies and recommends areas for improvement, further study etc.
- **e-valuate** - gathers feedback from learners which can be used to analyse the impact of the content and where it could be improved or refined.
- **downloads** - elements of the learning can be downloaded as audio 'podcasts'/mp3 files, as Word, PDF document etc.

This is a design approach that:

- treats learners as adults
- suits different learning styles

- taps into what already exists
- makes the most of the media
- gets the best return on the investment.

The e-suite approach enables the objects to be used in all sorts of different combinations.

Here are two examples.

An 'e-book approach'

With this approach we started with a series of booklets that we were asked to convert into e-learning. However, we noticed that these were "exceptionally well written, stylishly illustrated and constitute excellent introductions to their subjects."

So, instead of spending the budget on a series of linear e-learning modules, we suggested the investment go into creating e-briefs, e-movies and e-quizzes linked to each equivalent chapter in the booklet. This included the ability to jump straight to the relevant part of the booklet, which we repositioned as an e-book - a PDF file, also suitable for downloading, printing.

For each chapter, an e-movie stimulates interest, touches on the key issues, raises awareness, provokes thought, amuses, and enlightens!

And for each chapter, a short quiz focuses on key points with feedback to the questions providing links straight to the relevant part of the booklet.

Understanding and retention of the course as a whole is tested by e-assess - a scored assessment tracked by a Learning Management System.

A portal approach

The starting point in this example was a PowerPoint presentation of the core content. Instead of converting this material into a traditional linear e-learning course, we simply tidied up the text and introduced a more professional look to the slides.

These slides form the e-briefs; but before the users read the PowerPoints, they are presented with a short audio visual trailer designed to grab their attention and focus them on the need for this training, followed by two e-movies, which

show an incident from two perspectives - done well, and done badly. This contextualises the core content.

Using e-briefs and e-quizzes the users are guided through the training and their level of understanding checked, finishing up with an e-assess section where feedback is gathered.

Food for thought

Using objects that can be broken down into smaller entities presents users with a much more realistic learning situation, reflecting the way adults learn, both formally and informally. As well as being useable in any combination, each element can be treated differently depending on factors like IT constraints, budget etc.

If you are interested in finding out how this approach can benefit your learners or see some of the examples above in action please don't hesitate to email us.

Call us on 01273 827676 or email us at enquiries@brightwave.co.uk to find out more about our corporate learning solutions and how we can help your business.