

OUTSTART



ABA Brings Training to All

Founded in 1875, the Washington, D.C.-based American Bankers Association (ABA) is the largest association of its kind in the United States. The ABA represents banks of all sizes on issues of national importance for financial institutions and their customers.

THE CHALLENGE

Until recently, the ABA offered training to its members via instructor-led online courses and through locally based training providers. Now, the ABA employs a group of instructional designers and training experts who develop education for online delivery to member banks. The ABA's training team is spread across Arizona, California, Florida, Texas and Washington, D.C. This made it difficult for designers and training experts to collaborate on the development of training content.

The ABA sought a way for its far-flung training team to collectively work on projects and pass courses to one another just as if they were sitting around the same conference table. The training team also hoped to reuse training content wherever possible, so it could quickly produce courses to meet new developments in the banking industry.

"Our team is a relatively small one," said April Faulk, eLearning technology manager for the American Bankers Association. "So if we have to bring contractors in to help us create content for online training, we need to have a tool that they can quickly learn to use."

Along with the ABA's desire to collaborate easily, the association faced a challenge in disseminating its training. The ABA's member

banks range in size from large banks with tens of thousands of employees to small community banks with a handful of workers. Just as there is a great variance in size, there is also a wide disparity in what the ABA might consider the standard technology profile for an elearner.

For example, 30% of the ABA's members are small banks or thrifts. These members also service many home-based users. The Internet connection speeds for these members range from T1 lines to DSL and, in some cases, dial-up connections running at 56k. So the ABA had to find a way to develop and deliver great content with (or without) highly interactive simulations and animation without having to develop two completely separate libraries of content.

INDUSTRY

Banking

SOLUTION

OutStart TrainingEdge.com LCMS helped the ABA quickly expand the breadth and depth of its library of compliance training courses for thousands of member banks. TrainingEdge.com LCMS became the fulcrum for a program that ABA launched to deliver top-notch training to banks of all sizes, regardless of bandwidth or technology constraints.

RESULTS

- Increased by 100% the amount of compliance training offered to bankers.
- eLearning revenue has increased approximately 100%, in part, due to LCMS.
- eLearning content accessible to 100 percent of ABA members, regardless of bandwidth restrictions.

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April Faulk,
eLearning Technology Manager,
American Bankers Association

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Coupled with these challenges, the ABA saw a trend in which some of its member banks were turning to ABA competitors to put together strategies for tackling compliance training over the web. Offering compliance training had long been one of the ABA's best offerings. Some of these competitive packages included self-paced online training, which bankers could better squeeze into their busy days.

"Any time a bank regulation changes, banks have to go through training," said Faulk. "We saw a strong need among members for self-paced training delivered via the Internet."

THE SOLUTION

"We realized the answer to our challenges was twofold. First, we had to offer a flexible training option, one that banks of all sizes could tap into," added Faulk. "And second, we had to offer a compelling carrot that would draw people in large numbers to not only our compliance training but all of our member benefits."

To tackle the first challenge, the ABA turned to a learning content management system (LCMS) called OutStart TrainingEdge.com LCMS, made by OutStart. The LCMS was software for creating, managing, maintaining and delivering not only training courses, but also editing all the millions of bytes that made up a catalog of training classes.

OutStart TrainingEdge.com LCMS meets both the ABA's and member banks' hardware and software requirements. The product is flexible enough to allow instructional designers to create courses for banks with faster Internet connection speeds, while still maintaining delivery to those using low-speed connections. ABA instructional designers and experts are able to easily create, review and edit courses in a synchronous way.

With OutStart TrainingEdge.com LCMS, the ABA's eLearning design and review team builds content in a central repository. In other words, the team does not have to ship files back and forth between designers and content experts. Instead, they collaborate in a single location—executing new design, revision and reuse of courses from this single place. OutStart TrainingEdge.com LCMS makes it possible for the ABA's team of instructional designers and reviewers to design, develop, review and edit training courses as an online team, even though they are spread across the country.

Faulk states that OutStart TrainingEdge.com LCMS makes it simple to develop training that leans more toward text. This helps low bandwidth member banks. OutStart TrainingEdge.com LCMS can concurrently develop an optional, embedded version that utilizes rich media, which high bandwidth customers favor.

"With OutStart TrainingEdge.com LCMS, we have the ability to distribute courses as light-weight, HTML to the Internet," said Faulk. "We can quickly expand the availability of learning, making it possible for us to deliver self-paced online learning to banks of all sizes."

As for the second challenge, the team at the ABA put together a program called ABA Frontline Compliance. The program makes all the compliance training courses assembled with OutStart TrainingEdge.com LCMS available for free via the ABA's learning management system, a software system for storing and serving up training.

"We had assembled so much great training on compliance issues. We knew that if all banks had easy access to it they would see the value of not only the training but also ABA membership in general," said Faulk. "So we launched ABA Frontline Compliance in August 2007. Now, if a bank is a member of the ABA, or joins the ABA, then the bank's staff immediately receives our compliance training free of charge."

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CASE STUDY

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THE RESULTS

With a handful of instructional designers spread across the country, the ABA was able to produce more than 70 online compliance courses in OutStart TrainingEdge.com LCMS. Along with a boost in production of online compliance courses, the ABA has also seen a nearly 100% increase in elearning revenue from courses of all kinds since turning to OutStart TrainingEdge.com LCMS. The ABA notes that the up tick in revenue is not solely due to OutStart TrainingEdge.com LCMS.

When the ABA has to train new people to use OutStart TrainingEdge.com LCMS, users who possess some technical abilities are able to go in and create a course in as little as one or two hours. But whether someone is completely new to using content authoring software or an expert, the ABA says anyone can teach themselves enough to start editing courses in 50 minutes.

"We work with a number of training contractors and partners to help us with our content authoring," said Faulk. "OutStart TrainingEdge.com LCMS has made it easy for them to pick up and begin authoring courses for us. If we have editorial changes, using OutStart TrainingEdge.com LCMS is like editing a PowerPoint presentation – very quick, simple."

After the ABA launched the Frontline Compliance program to members, online course "enrollments" jumped nearly twentyfold.

"If it weren't for OutStart TrainingEdge.com LCMS, one of every three of our member banks wouldn't be able to access online learning; we simply couldn't author courses for low bandwidth situations," said Faulk. "The flexibility of being able to deliver online compliance courses in whatever format our members can accommodate has been a big part of the rapid rise in enrollments."

"We saved about \$11,000 by choosing ABA Frontline Compliance," said Thomas Boyle, president and CEO of Illinois-based State Bank of Countryside. "But it's not just about saving money – I need to know my staff is getting thorough training. I know that is happening with ABA's training."



ABOUT OUTSTART

At OutStart, we're out to solve a big problem.

Most organizations possess a wealth of underutilized collective intelligence around their products, services, and processes. This underutilization negatively impacts employees, customers, and partners, costing precious time and money while hindering performance. Said simply, "what your people don't know will hurt you."

OutStart's social business software and learning systems act like a lifeline: connecting people to the know-how, creativity, and learning they require to be efficient, effective, and agile.

Since its inception in 1999, and backed by leading venture capital firms, OutStart has matured into a profitable and rapidly growing company with an impressive range of customers, who are surpassing their expectations and delivering exceptional business results. The company is honored to have customers like Autodesk, BB&T, Boeing Company, BT, CVS Caremark, DIRECTV, EDS, Internal Revenue Service, Lufthansa, McDonald's, MetLife, Prudential, TiVo, Australian Defence Force, U.S. Navy, UK Ministry of Defence, Verizon Wireless, and Yum! Brands.

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