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Training Conference & Expo, March 6-8, Orlando, Fla.

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The [E-Learning Strategy Blueprint](#) from GeoLearning is a comprehensive resource package designed specifically for e-learning managers. It includes all the templates, tools and methodologies you need to identify the strategies, resources, functionality and technical aspects of your e-learning initiative. The cornerstone of the Blueprint is "The E-Learning Workbook" with 25 planning questions that will make your e-learning implementation run smoothly. Request it today at www.geolearning.com/BP.

business intelligence

Creating Culturally Relevant Training

Culture matters when it comes to learning content, says Massood Zarrabian, the CEO of

Boston-based OutStart, a company that provides formal, on-demand learning, knowledge sharing and community/expert collaboration solutions. It's with that belief in mind that the vendor announced a partnership last week with Italy-based Allos, an integrated e-learning solutions provider and consultancy, to offer content specific to regional needs.

OutStart's technology has been integrated into that of Allos to power the creation of tailored learning content. The contract between the two companies allows for OutStart's solution to be resold by Allos as a part of Allos' total solution, Zarrabian says. The partnership will begin with the development of specialized content for Italian and South African companies, but Zarrabian says the offering will likely be expanded eventually to other regions as well.

Developing learning content particular to each region's needs is key, says Zarrabian, who points out, for instance, that compliance-training requirements differ by country, as does software usage for tasks such as conferencing. "There are market preferences when you go outside the United States and become global," he notes, "where the preferences of customers in, say, Italy or South Africa, are different than preferences [in the U.S.] where a lot of people use WebEx, for example. So, when you look at the world, it is really too big, and there are too many products for a single vendor to do everything." It was for that reason, Zarrabian says, that OutStart and Allos decided to work together.

Regionally tailored learning content goes beyond simply translating the material into the users' language, he says. "Traditionally, when Americans think about localization of a technology, they think about it behaving in a local language, but a bunch of things are way beyond the local language." Zarrabian notes that a software that only provides content to aid American compliance laws won't be much use abroad, where there may be no required sexual harassment training, for example, or where the financial regulations are much more stringent, and so necessitate a more rigorous training than that used in the U.S. to comply with the Sarbanes-Oxley Act. "You all of a sudden are faced with the issue of having features in a product that are features you would not do for a product in the U.S., and if you did would make your product not look normal or standard for U.S. companies," he says. "But, those features still need to be developed."

Beyond differences in laws, learning content needs to take variances in cultural perspective into consideration as well. "Somebody told me in Italy, people are much more visual in terms of how they get training. If that's true, then the development of training is very different than what we do here." That would translate into a need for content featuring a greater number of simulations than would usually be included in software designed strictly for use within the U.S., he says. The simulations allow for a palpable representation of the principles being taught that would appeal to visually oriented learners.

"It's not about translation; it's about creation," Zarrabian says of the cultural differences that sometimes require extensive changes or additions to content. "As somebody told me, it has to be developed with the goals that Italians have, by Italians, for Italians."



best practices

Orkin Uses Physical Simulations to Enhance Training

Atlanta-based extermination services provider Orkin relies on more than classroom training to ensure its workers know how to properly service an infested home. In addition to conventional classroom learning, the company's training center contains realistic mock-up settings including a fully functional home designed with all the conditions in place that are conducive to pest problems. Its Termite Pavilion simulates more than 50 construction methods and the possible ways termites can invade a home.

Orkin ranked #57 in the 2005 Training Top 100, Training magazine's annual ranking of organizations that excel at training and development. The Training Top 100 is determined by

assessing a range of qualitative and quantitative data, including financial investment in employee development and how closely training efforts are linked to business goals. More information on the Top 100 is available at www.trainingmag.com/training/reports_analysis/top100/index.jsp.

news digest

U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency Selects Plateau

Arlington, Va.-based e-learning provider Plateau Systems has been selected by the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency's (DIA) Joint Intelligence Virtual University. The vendor will supply a learning management system in which DIA employees and civilian contractors can choose from a mixture of more than 300 courses, including distance learning modules.

Personnel Decisions International Acquires Astaire People Development

Astaire People Development, a human resources services provider in Milan, Italy, announced this week that it has agreed to be acquired by Minneapolis-based international human resources consultancy Personnel Decisions International (PDI). The deal will include the establishment of a PDI office in Milan.

new products

EduNeering Offers New Performance and Risk Optimization Tool

Princeton, N.J.-based knowledge solutions provider EduNeering has introduced its proprietary Performance and Risk Optimization for Value Enhancement (PROVE) solution. Applications for the technology include analyzing job tasks, assigning risk values and rationalizing job performance within a manufacturing environment as well as reducing the likelihood of failed clinical trials and/or litigation resulting from ill-informed patient participants. For more information, visit www.eduneering.com.

events

2006 Annual Quality Management Conference

March 2-3

Hyatt Regency, Irvine, Calif.

www.asq.org/qm/conferences/

Training Conference & Expo

March 6-8

Disney's Coronado Springs Resort & Convention Center in Orlando, Fla.

www.trainingconference.com

OVERCOMING LEARNER RETICENCE

After delivering some—or all—of your training, you open up the floor for discussion—only to be met with silence.

Ever had this happen? If so, how did you overcome student reticence and get learners actively engaged in fruitful discussion regarding your content—discussion that not only reinforced what you taught, but actually furthered the learning experience for everyone in the room?

[Training magazine's sister publication, Creative Training Techniques \(CTT\)](#), is calling all

trainers to submit their best tips, exercises and techniques (and war stories!) regarding how to engage learners in fruitful discussions.

If you have input to share with your peers, SEND IT OUR WAY in an e-mail to [Sarah Boehle](mailto:sarah.boehle@vnu.com) with the subject line "CTT: LEARNER RETICENCE." If we publish your input, you'll receive a complimentary copy of the CTT issue in which it appears.

To learn more about CTT, a monthly newsletter of tips, tactics and how to's for delivering effective training, visit www.trainingmag.com/training/business_resources/tcc/index.jsp.

For more conferences and events, visit Trainingmag.com and look for "[events calendar](#)."



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