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### Tia Triumphs

November 15, 2007

*Training* magazine's first Technology in Action awards recognize innovation and vision

By Lorri Freifeld

The field was crowded, the projects innovative across the board, and the applications filled with visionary ideas and cutting-edge technologies. But while all the solutions submitted were successful, our judges (listed and pictured on the opposite page) had the tough job of selecting the best of the best for *Training's* first Technology in Action (TIA) Awards. Winners were chosen in eight categories on the basis of purpose, vision, technology choices, alignment with learning strategy, implementation excellence, innovation, efficiency and/or business improvements, and learning impact/results. Here, highlights from the winning projects, plus lessons learned from their creators.

#### The Judges:

- Judy Albers, senior learning strategy and technology consultant, Intrepid Learning Solutions
- Pat Alvarado, independent learning consultant, E-Learning Engineering
- Judy Brown, strategic analyst, ClickSolv
- Sonya Calooy, senior learning design professional, Shell Learning
- Bryan Chapman, chief learning strategist, Chapman Alliance LLC
- Andrew Chemney, developer/consultant
- Jay Cross, chief scientist, Internet Time Group
- Jennifer De Vries, president, BlueStreak Learning
- Gary Dickelman, president/CEO, EPSScentral LLC
- Dan Douglas, president, Douglas Consulting
- Paul Drexler, account manager, learning and development group, Bechtel
- Margaret Driscoll, learning and development consultant, IBM Business Consulting Services
- Andy Gibbons, author, "Computer-Based Instruction: Design and Development," chair, Department of Instructional Psychology and Technology, BYU
- Conrad Gottfredson, knowledge management consultant
- Charles Jennings, global head of learning, Reuters, UK
- Tom King, chief consultant, Mobilemind
- Michael McGinnis, training manager, Bose Corporation
- Angela van Barneveld, program manager, Cognos Inc.

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## Top Manage Smarter Stories

## 2007 Tia Award Winners

**Blended Learning Project of the Year (Tie): Ameriprise Financial and PricewaterhouseCoopers**

### Ameriprise Financial

**Project:**Pre-Appointment Training Certification

**Challenge:** Providing advisors across the U.S. with a consistent curriculum and level of instruction without bringing them all to a central location.

**Solution:** A transformational learning strategy that encompasses a blended approach including virtual live online synchronous classrooms, online (asynchronous) interactive self-study courses, and DVD job aids all administered through Ameriprise University, which is a learning management system (LMS). The Ameriprise University Career Framework is designed for advisors at all stages of their career, including:

- Pre-appointment training: A 10-week blended learning "boot camp" for advisors.
- New Advisor (Capstone #1 workshop): A three-day workshop at the national headquarters in Minneapolis to expand financial planning, referral marketing, and product skills.
- Advanced advisor training for top 10 percent: A three-day workshop to meet top executives, network with peers, and learn from experienced advisors.
- Business planning and career planning (Capstone #2 workshop): A three-day workshop focusing on advanced financial planning strategies and business planning.
- Franchise builder workshop (Capstone #3 workshop): An industry expert speaks on the small business owner industry and available Ameriprise Financial tools.
- Advanced Financial Planning (Capstone #4 workshop): Deepens financial planning skills.

### Results:

Pre-Appointment Program Trainer Cost Comparison:

- Reduced the number of training hours by local field leaders: 500-plus

## Playing Office Politics

January 02, 2008

## Powering Lifelong Learning: Detroit Diesel's Tech Training

January 02, 2008

## Future Trend Watch

January 02, 2008

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- Instead delivered virtual live online training through a consolidated team of centralized trainers: 13
- Achieved total saving: \$2,749,000

**Judges' comments:**

- Local, face-to-face "drill-for-skill sessions" and role play through virtual live online session (with instructor).
- Scalability of solution for various learning styles.
- Ongoing coaching and support network to cement and support learning opportunities.
- Well-documented presentation and well-defined vision/ purpose with measurable strategy for success.
- Aggressive scope for blended learning technologies; course blends across 10 weeks.

**PricewaterhouseCoopers**

**Project:**PwC Inside\*

**Challenge:** Improve the onboarding experience while increasing new employees' knowledge of the firm, including its culture, values, and business.

**Solution:** All joiners have a solution that incorporates: an employee who reaches out to the joiner prior to his or her start date, access to the new joiner portal, assignment of a peer host, assignment of a coach, and encouragement to build relationships by participating in new hire circles. Organized support is provided to the new joiner through the issuance of two eCards: overall and line of service based.

- Articulate eLearning: Encourages joiners to view content outside the PwC platform to gather data on a topic prior to employment (if the joiner chooses to do so) in an engaging and insightful fashion, with search capabilities.
- New-Joiner Portal: A Web-based interface that provides support to new joiners before their first day with the firm. It includes videos showcasing PwC people and experiences, culture, and values.
- RoboHelp: Used to provide technology instruction that allows all joiners to choose the depth of their technology instruction based on their existing knowledge. It remains resident on their hard drive, so joiners can continually return and improve their skills. Updates are pushed out automatically.
- eCards: Organize the new joiner administrative and instructional requirements into two just-in-time key messages to help new joiners in the onboarding process and firm acclimation.
- Instructor-Led and Team-Based Learning: Provides a vehicle for clarity on cultural and values-based matters and further develops employees' understanding of the firm; encourages new joiners to develop relationships with existing employees.

**Results:**

Experienced New Joiner Satisfaction—Questions asked at the end of Month 3 (Jan. - June '07); 1=Extremely Satisfied and 5=Extremely Unsatisfied

- PwC Inside\* Culture and Values was effective in preparing me for my role and responsibilities at PwC 1.68

- I feel connected to a team of people 1.90
- I understand the PwC Culture and Values 1.54
- Overall, I was well prepared to perform my client responsibilities at the highest level 1.89
- Overall, I am satisfied with my onboarding experience 1.82

**Judges' comments:**

- Excellent use of self-assessment.
- Full array of delivery formats for new hires.
- Division of objectives related to delivery format; effectively provided solutions for various learning styles.
- Aggressive scope for blended learning technologies; span of onboarding blend is 6 months with interaction a couple of times a month.
- Well-documented presentation.

**Informational Learning Project of the Year (TIE): Peace Corps and Sun Microsystems**

**Peace Corps**

**Project: Peace Corps Guru**

**Challenge:** Difficulty sharing and retaining institutional knowledge and delivering high-quality support to 7,000 volunteers worldwide due to IT infrastructure limitations and high staff turnover (employees must leave the Peace Corps after 5 years of service).

**Solution:** Peace Corps Guru provides an environment for knowledge sharing by offering its participants community forums, expert events, an expertise exchange, FAQs, and a file library. The community forums are facilitated by subject matter specialists located in headquarters who work to provide timely responses to questions and drive participation to Guru. The community forums also benefit from the use of subscription services, which allow staff to keep up to date with the receipt of personalized e-mail digests. With expertise exchange, staff members post questions within Guru or send an e-mail request to Guru. Questions are automatically routed to a Guru Peer Resource via e-mail and all they need to do is reply. There's no need to break out of their daily process and sign into a special system to answer. All responses are organically stored in a knowledge bank (rather than shared once and lost) for ongoing access. In the FAQ and file library section, subject matter experts upload documents that have been developed by the agency, as well as channel many of the questions that have been received via e-mail prior to the system coming online.

**Results:** During the course of the beta test, 326 of 552 possible staff logged onto Guru once or more. On average, the system had 100 unique staff members logging into the system each month. During the first three months, staff contributed content 821 times to the community forums. They read more than 4,064 pieces of content. On average, each piece of content was read five times. Prior to the implementation of Guru, 75 percent of the respondents reported that collaborating with colleagues at other posts was difficult to impossible, while only 25 percent stated it was easy to somewhat easy. Conversely, in the post-beta test survey, 92 percent of respondents stated collaboration with colleagues was easy to somewhat easy after the implementation of Guru.

#### **Judges' comments:**

- Good use of Internet technology (including Web conferencing) to collaborate among a diverse, geographically dispersed group of users.
- Innovative linking of discussion threads to FAQs.
- Good use of templates for new forums with adaptability for specific needs.
- Innovative use of e-mail to facilitate use and capture content.
- Access to subject matter experts aligned to specific expertise.

#### **Sun Microsystems**

**Project:** Digital Library Content Integration and Findability: Strategic Informal Learning and Social Networking

**Challenge:** Providing employees seamless, 24/7 access to information at the point of need. This entails knowing the information gaps and needs of employees; having the ability to get the information integrated into the employees' workflow so it's always top of mind and at their fingertips; and ensuring the information is findable any time, anywhere.

**Solution:** The multifaceted solution includes:

- Learning Search (driven by the Google Search Appliance), which features internal informal learning content (such as competitive documents, technical reports, product information, sales and marketing information), as well as subscription-based trusted external sources of informal learning (such as eBooks and eJournals). Learning Search is integrated into the MyLearning portal, the single source for all learning across Sun.
- Sun Grokker enables employees to do deeper research and discovery across many informal learning resources: ACM, EBSCOhost, IEEE, Safari, NetLibrary, Wikipedia, Yahoo! and a few internal resources at Sun.
- Safari Books Online, which is integrated into both Learning Search and Sun Grokker. Sun also integrated and mapped informal learning content into other key parts of the company, such as MySales, MyMarketing, and the central engineering sites.
- Virtual Worlds such as Second Life, which offer opportunities to incorporate key informal learning resources into the environment (such as SMI Press books via Safari).

**Results:** Sun Microsystems' financial analysis demonstrated an annual ROI of 1,328 percent, including a savings of \$930 per user based on central library cost avoidance, individual cost avoidance, and increased productivity. Surveys showed that Safari saves users 13.5 hours per month (162 hours per year) searching for information (technology workers spend 350 hours per year on average searching for information).

#### **Judges' comments:**

- Single point of access to content.
- Integration of informal learning into other internal sites.
- Use of Second Life as a business social tool.
- Wide range of cutting-edge technologies.
- Well-stated objectives that were fulfilled.

#### **Knowledge Management Project of the Year: Allstate Life Insurance Company**

**Project:** Allstate Financial Operations Knowledge Management System

**Challenge** Creating a centralized knowledge repository to support the Allstate Financial Contact and Service Center reps.

**Solution:** The KM solution is a customized knowledge repository with both keyword search and taxonomy browse functionality. It includes:

- An SQL database that supports the content requirements of a minimum of 800 employees.
- Keyword search functionality for forms, product information, and general reference materials.
- A customized taxonomy (content categorization) to enable browsing and search criteria filters.
- A customized work area on Interwoven Teamsite 6.1 for managing content.
- Dynamic data capture templates used to publish content to Service Center Desktop.
- Content standards, content types, content version controls, and approval workflows.
- Repository maintenance reports used to add/delete user roles, modify the taxonomy, manage expired content, manage meta-tags, and check validity of content linked externally.
- Customized reports on user experience via HBX WebSideStory

**Results:**

- Reduced average Call Center call handling time.
- Increased the ability of new hires to become effective quicker.
- Reduced the average time spent researching information for problem solving and decreased individual time spent replicating resource materials.
- Increased the successful implementation of outsourcing opportunities.

**Judges' comments:**

- Forced the training department to understand how employees seek and use knowledge.
- Repositioned the training function and forced learning culture change in the organization.
- Managed content by its multiple dimensions (e.g., roles, type, and use.)
- Addressed the performance support side of learning (at the moment of need).
- Delivered measurable impact and bottom-line value to the overall organization.

**Soft Skills/Business Simulation Project of the Year (Tie): Cisco Systems, Inc. and Hong Kong Police Force**

**Cisco Systems, Inc. (vendor: Enspire Learning)**

**Project:** Mastering Communications Using Rich Media

**Challenge:** Improving sales presentation skills and giving more effective presentations using virtual mediums such as Cisco's Unified Communications MeetingPlace, WebEx Web conferencing, and Cisco Unified Communications Video Advantage.

**Solution:** Cisco Systems, Inc., partnered with Enspire Learning to develop Mastering Communications Using Rich Media, a curriculum that includes an introductory module and three simulation modules, all targeted at sales personnel. At the beginning of each simulation, learners take part in a case study based on a video presentation of a Cisco salesperson. In the Virtual Presentation game-like simulation, learners earn points to achieve a total score. The learner's goal is to satisfy the virtual audience by building a deck of relevant presentation slides and delivering a clear presentation. The slide deck developed in the Preparation stage is passed to the Presentation Delivery stage, where it helps to define learner actions and audience reactions. The final part of the simulation module is the Performance Review. Learners receive their Virtual Presentation score, along with some high-level performance feedback. Learners' scores are based on the composition of the slide deck and audience mood at the end of Presentation Delivery. Each virtual audience member has his or her own mood meter. Learners must not only clearly deliver their presentations, but must manage the audience on an ongoing basis. Failure to interact with the audience or to complete the presentation within the time allotted results in falling audience mood scores. Audience mood scores also may be affected by the presentation of complex or non-relevant slides.

**Results:** Cisco successfully launched the program in July 2007 and has received a positive response from the sales team. Enspire plans to integrate the Presentation Challenge simulation engine into future soft skills training courses to improve presentation building and delivery skills.

**Judges' comments:**

- Excellent program.
- The tone, writing, and design were innovative and useful since communications skills are important in business.
- Excellent writing, scenarios, interactivity.
- "This was my favorite submission this year," one judge wrote.

**Hong Kong Police Force**

**Project:** Scenario-Based Multiplayer Simulation (SIMS)

**Challenge:** Training senior and middle rank officers in multiple units and agencies in various locations to handle critical incidents in the wake of the 9/11 attacks and SARS outbreak.

**Solution:** SIMS is a computer-based interactive system that allows the facilitator to create and control a series of interactive scenarios for analytical assessment of the operational and management ability of the participants. SIMS provides an all-in-one platform for users to communicate via text, voice, and video. It also provides functions to manage and record those communications. There are only two kinds of interfaces in SIMS—Controller and Player. They encapsulate 10 essential functions: Video Clip Broadcast and Schedule; Live Video Broadcast; Logs; Time Control; Chat; E-mail; Walkie-Talkie; Phone; System Configuration; and Information Center.

**Results:** With SIMS, all physical props are not necessary, so it is estimated that U.S. \$46,000 can be saved for each exercise, and a total of U.S.\$320,000 has been saved for the seven exercises conducted in the last six months. There is no restriction on the venue in running SIMS as it can be delivered through a LAN, Intranet, or Internet. In

addition, reusability of resources is high. Post-exercise evaluation indicates that training with SIMS has achieved an average of 8.5 on a 10-point scale.

**Judges' comments:**

- Excellent combination and use of media.
- The design enabled the instructor to vary the training depending on responses.
- A lot of flexibility was built in for live interactions and collaboration—very impressive.

**Learning Content Management Project of the Year: National Science Teachers Association (vendor: Evolution)**

**Project:** The NSTA Learning Center (NCL) and SciPacks: Building Content Knowledge

**Challenge:** The U.S. faces a shortage of qualified science educators, and data from the National Center for Education Statistics reveal that significant numbers of educators do not have degrees or even college coursework in the science they are assigned to teach.

**Solution:** NSTA initiated an \$8 million effort to develop 30 comprehensive online learning experiences for K-12 science teachers focusing on science content. Called SciPacks, these online modules are delivered through The NSTA Learning Center. The OutStart Evolution Learning Content Management System (LCMS) creates reusable and repurposable interactive content with built-in metrics for evaluation of use and formative learner feedback and provides the opportunity for summary final assessment for certification.

**Results:** In 2006, NSTA personnel presented The NSTA Learning Center and SciPacks at the U.S. Department of Education's four mathematics-science partnership regional conferences in Chicago, IL; Phoenix, AZ; Washington, D.C.; and Dallas, TX. As a result, NSTA now is partnering with several state departments of education for large-scale deployments. With several states and multiple districts across the U.S. already utilizing the NLC and SciPacks, the scales are beginning to tip toward more effective and efficient professional development for K-12 science educators.

**Judges' comments:**

- Not just used for developing page-turning content; adds some level of engaging and interactive content.
- Integrates industry standards, LMS, LCMS, interactive content, and target audience to achieve learning outcomes.
- Improves student learning by engaging teachers.
- Great use of industry standards, especially for tagging IEEE LOM and Dublin-Core extended metadata, etc.

**Rapid Development Project of the Year: New Balance Athletic Shoe, Inc. (vendor: BPTech)**

**Project:** Quarterly New Product Introductions

**Challenge:** Getting new product information and training to the field on a timely and effective basis.

**Solution:** The solution involves two primary components: 1) A server-side Web application that enables product managers and instructional designers to review, edit,

annotate, and approve course content for publication, while product photographers asynchronously assign product imagery; and 2) A client-side custom Adobe Flash player that guarantees a rich user experience but also provides the ability to keep the learning content up to date and, through the use of Web services, the ability for students to pass information back to the sales management team.

**Results:** New Balance now consistently delivers training for all new product introductions to its sales team and stores in time for each quarter's product release. This allows the sales team to be more productive, sooner, and with less reliance on product managers to assist with sales calls in the field. An online interface within each course collects student feedback in a separate reportable database. Also, embedded within the training are screens to capture initial forecast needs for each new product.

**Judges' comments:**

- Integrated e-learning production as a part of new product development cycle.
- Sound instructional approach; downloadable transcript is a nice feature.
- Effective user interface and menu for browsing and easy navigation; bonus points for working cross-browser (Firefox) and cross-platform (Mac).
- Combined storyboarding with content development using PowerPoint; quick conversion of data into courses.

**Software Simulation Project of the Year: CFSATE (vendor: NGRAIN)**

**Project:** Reducing Training Time with a 3-D Virtual Trainer

**Challenge:** The Canadian Forces School of Aerospace Technology and Engineering (CFSATE), which provides the Canadian Air Force with qualified personnel to service aircraft, was experiencing aircraft technician training shortcomings including a lack of effective training materials and insufficient practical "hands-on" training within the school environments.

**Solution:** Development of 3-D Virtual Trainer, which includes:

- Instructional materials from CFSATE including text descriptions, diagrams, video, and photos.
- NGRAIN software with high-fidelity, interactive, 3-D virtual models of equipment sub-systems and assemblies that enables students to learn and practice complex installation, inspection, assembly, disassembly, repair, and overhaul tasks.
- CAE Simfinity and computer-based training courseware that allows students to interact with a "virtual aircraft" for context, familiarization, procedural, and troubleshooting training using FAA Level D full fidelity aircraft simulation software.

**Results:** Students using the one-day 3-D Virtual Trainer all passed the practical exam with an average grade of 94 percent after one day of instruction and study and no prior training. Historical results based on two-and-a-half days of training using the existing learning program (and 12 months of prior maintenance training) show an average student grade of 95 percent.

**Judges' comments:**

- The study creating a control group and 3-D sim learning group was innovative in that it provided a factual basis.
- Very well thought out.

- Users can "freely explore" and interact with the virtual equipment parts—resulting in active and engaging learning.
- Immediate feedback on performance.

### **Workplace Learning Project of the Year: NorthPoint Group Real Estate Investment Services**

**Project:** Training Payback Training & Performance System (TPS)

**Challenge:** NorthPoint rolled out a new and technically complex training course in real estate investment strategy and sales, but the first group of sales staff to complete the course did not meet sales expectations.

**Solution:** [www.TrainingPayback.com](http://www.TrainingPayback.com), a learning platform company, provided the Web 2.0 and learning platform solution.

Participant functions include:

- Preview online topics, lessons, and reference materials.
- Enter performance ideas gathered during training and create actionable goals. By design, the system requires goals to have measurable outcomes and time lines.
- Create action plans to achieve the goals.
- Invite leaders, trainers, peers, and co-trainees to review the goals and ask for assistance.
- Update the goals and action items in real time.
- Use social networking to share goals with trainers, supervisors, peers, and mentors.
- Preview documented threads of conversations.
- Receive and report measurable outcomes in real time.
- Share learning experiences and goal accomplishments.

Manager, trainer, and administrator functions:

- Real-time, online review of goals and action plans by individual participant; provide real-time feedback.
- Observe action item progress toward goals online in real time.
- Gather sales results and goal accomplishment data in real time.
- Gather and assess the financial impact of training by learner and group.
- Study which training goals yield the greatest results.
- Publish lessons in Flash, video, audio, PDF, etc., rapidly without dependency on IT staff.
- Create training topics and assign trainers quickly.

**Results:** Rapid deployment, low cost, low time/labor requirements, effective learning, proof of measurable results, build and utilize social networks. Operational efficiencies realized included:

- 63 percent increase in number of training participants with sales within the first 30 days of training.
- \$4,000 saved as a result of eliminated need for retraining.

**Judges' comments:**

- Application of state-of-the-art technology ("LMS on steroids").
- Activities of application tied directly to results.
- Process-centric interface with performance-centered attributes; direct connection between training and performance.
- Social networking integration.
- Increased training participation; decreased retraining costs.

**Sidebar: Lessons Learned**

**Allstate:**

- Find individuals passionate about changing the culture and creating a knowledge-driven organization.
- Leadership buy-in across the organization is crucial to the success of the project.
- Do not take on the world—define project scope and stick to it.
- Bring knowledge management expertise into your organization.
- An equal partnership with information technology can impact the successful delivery of a knowledge management solution.

**Ameriprise:**

- Due diligence for selecting the best LMS system and vendor is critical for short-term rollout and long-term success.
- Use professional trainers and design the sessions using distance learning guidelines.
- Establish an infrastructure to train the trainers and producers on how to conduct virtual led training (for virtual live online distance learning systems).
- Maintain constant, consistent communication with stakeholders (i.e., senior leaders, business partners, field users).
- Train field leaders—this helps to gain buy-in, implementation, and ongoing support for the overall initiative.

**CFSATe:**

- Use a relatively small training module as a test case.
- Conduct a specific study to measure both quantitative and qualitative results.
- Identify the root issue and problems faced by your training organization before determining potential solutions.
- Involve the technology vendors throughout the process.

- Set and communicate the expectations, goals, and long-term plans with all parties involved, especially the instructors. And provide all participants with sufficient training on the new technologies used to ensure they are comfortable with it.

### **Cisco**

- Get definitive design feedback for the entire suite of a course before creating assets to fit together throughout the curriculum.
- Ensure client reviewers are educated on the drivers of the project.
- Balance the number of features in the course with the user group. Do a pretest to determine their learning threshold.
- Help the client advocate the solution to his or her company. Be the best partner to your client champion.
- Utilize new technologies, such as wikis, for documentation.

### **Hong Kong Police Force**

- Be vigilant about technology.
- Create a simple, all-in-one interface for non-technical users.
- Use an open design.
- Encourage engaging and collaborative learning.
- Recognize bandwidth limitation.

### **National Science Teachers Association**

- In-house production expertise is paramount when forging a new product line.
- Articulate all roles and responsibilities. Begin each launch of a new production team with a synchronous "kick-off" planning session to review roles, expectations, and time lines.
- Consider utilizing a Web-based project management tool such as Groove.net or Basecamp.com to facilitate collaborative editing and to monitor the assigned production roles, critical milestones, and overall production time line.
- Create standardized Web style guides and templates for simulations to ensure a consistent look and consumption efficacy across multiple instances of a product line.
- Establish frequent multiple end-user, small group, and pilot group feedback reviews. Back this up with valid and reliable third-party efficacy studies.

### **New Balance**

- Learning is what the user gets out of it in order to become as productive as possible—timeliness, accuracy, and detail are important elements.
- Not all learning takes conventional form.
- When learning development becomes part of the business process, it becomes relevant in the minds of users, developers, and management.
- Integrating learning into existing business process so course development is not a separate project unto itself makes it easier for already busy subject matter experts to

take on the responsibility of building out content.

- Understand your core competencies.

### **Northpoint**

- DO measure the financial impact of your training and any modifications you make to curriculum.
- Social networking technology is an invaluable resource for learners, trainers, and managers, each potentially deriving a different—but valuable—set of insights.
- DON'T assume your learners' previous success means they are highly skilled. Other factors may have driven their success in spite of missing critical skills.
- When working with distributed, remote workforces, leveraging technology can replace—or even improve upon—proximity. The key is being diligent in continually exploring the massive diversity of available solutions.
- The best tool does not have to be highly technical.

### **Peace Corps**

- Buy-in from all levels of an organization is essential. Keep in mind that during periods of inactivity, key stakeholders can move onto more pressing issues and forget about the progress and/or decisions that have been made.
- Clear articulation of roles, especially for staff who are adding additional responsibilities, is essential.
- Community forums allow for great peer-to-peer interactions, but steps need to be taken to make the knowledge in discussion threads more accessible. Long threads can be summarized in FAQs. Staff can monitor traffic and ensure that information is responded to in a timely fashion.
- With the high level of decentralization and staff turnover, continuous marketing and ongoing rollouts help keep the project fresh in people's minds.
- The Field of Dreams slogan, "If you build it, they will come," does not work when implementing technology. Champions need to be recruited to remind people to come back to the tool and encourage them to post.

### **PricewaterhouseCoopers**

- Avoid jumping to quick solutions, and challenge those who believe "it can't be done here."
- Get leadership behind your plans.
- Take some calculated risks.
- Build a team of technical experts, out-of-the-box thinkers, and project managers. You need those who can imagine and those who can get it done.
- Involve people along the way to provide you feedback on your product to ensure it will hit the mark and achieve the goals.

### **Sun Microsystems**

- Take risks to reach new users via new tools and to enhance your current users' experience via new tools. Try a blog to reach those who are blog readers. Try new

ways of integrating informal learning and social networking into the mix (i.e., Second Life, Twitter, Ning, Facebook, etc.).

- Partner, partner, partner. Work closely with your internal and external partners to get things done quickly and correctly. Have ownership and buy-in throughout the process.
- Know the content and skills needed. What information does your audience need? Evaluate subscription-based or other services that fill the gap, conduct a free pilot, and gather data to make a solid decision. Having librarians or information experts part of the learning team will enable an organization to do this informal learning work more efficiently—they know information, how to find information, know the users, know how to communicate the value of the resources and work with the audiences on their information strategies, and typically are engaged strategically with these groups across the company.
- Know your audience. Where does that audience go day to day for information? Build your services into their workflow.
- Feedback loops: Engage your learners, users, and stakeholders on a regular basis to keep the services useful, to get input on future needs, and to build out the next phase of your strategy.

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