



Before investing fully in an e-learning initiative, arvato embarked upon a six-month e-learning project, hosted by Larmer Brown, in order to evaluate its overall effectiveness and deliver a solid business case for the organisation

Part of the Bertelsmann Group, one of the world's largest media and services companies, arvato is a global outsourcing partner to the public and private sectors with over 50 years experience in delivering results for some of the world's most respected brands, including Microsoft, Sony Music and Renault.

The Challenge - to reduce training costs

In October 2008 arvato signed a 10-year public-private partnership with Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council, to deliver a range of customer service, finance, HR and ICT services. Part of the agreement was to introduce e-learning for staff, to reduce down-time for classroom training, introduce training at the point of need and deliver significant cost savings.

There were no quantifiable benefits available to justify an investment in an e-learning solution. However, arvato were able to make some assumptions on savings - the removal of printing and production costs, together with an estimated reduction in trainer facilitation time by up to 50 per cent - to build the business case.

External sources also provided arvato with an indication of the benefits that could be realised. Research by Brandon Hall stated, 'Web-based training estimates a reduction in training time due to e-learning between 40 and 80 per cent.' JD Fletcher quoted, 'Increased knowledge retention by 25 per cent.'



Hosting



Content
Development



Training

The Solution - to pilot e-learning

Before investing fully in an e-learning initiative, arvato decided on a six-month e-learning pilot project, covering three important 'soft skills' topics - Equality and Diversity, Customer Focus and Data Protection - involving more than 370 staff.

arvato had worked with Larmer Brown on a previous project with its public-private partner, East Riding of Yorkshire Council. arvato's Sefton team therefore approached Larmer Brown and, following an evaluation of a number of potential e-learning tools, they selected Larmer Brown to develop their e-learning solution using Atlantic Link's Content Point and Knowledge Point modules.

Larmer Brown proposed that they host the pilot project, to enable arvato to test the effectiveness of their chosen e-learning solution before committing to any significant investment. Their pre-development work, including creation of a corporate design template and content storyboard, ensured arvato's requirements for a programme that was arvato-branded, intuitive and engaging, were fully met.

A total of 15 modules of e-learning content (five modules for each course) were developed by Larmer Brown over a period of ten days. Extensive feedback was gathered remotely from arvato's project team during the development phase - using a function called Issue Management in Atlantic Link - avoiding any delays in progress.

All courses were deployed and made available online to staff through a simple configuration change rolled out centrally by arvato.

The e-learning content was structured in a manner that ensured each user had to complete all of the modules in order. Quizzes, puzzles and opinion polls were used to engage users, reinforce the

areas of learning, track results and gain feedback.

arvato's transformation and change team proactively promoted and pushed the benefits to ensure users utilised the e-learning tool. Using a change and communication management strategy the team were able to monitor access to content, track completed training and deliver feedback to operational managers.

The Results - Staff up-skilled, costs downsized

arvato conducted a full cost/benefit analysis of the pilot to evaluate effectiveness and determine the business case for extending the use of e-learning for further projects.

Over a period of 54 days arvato calculated the total number of operational hours saved by utilising the e-learning solution, versus the equivalent in classroom hours.

An aggregated saving of over **82 days** was made across the three course topics. This equated to a saving of more than **1.5 Full Time Equivalents (FTEs)**.

arvato also solicited feedback from users who had completed each of the course topics. This related to their understanding of the learning content as well as the benefit and effectiveness of the learning style.

More than **70 per cent** of users across all topics rated the e-learning solution as or more effective than other training methods.

Over 70 per cent of users also demonstrated that they fully understood the Equality and Diversity and Customer Focus course topics.

The Data Protection course rated lower, with **50 per cent** of users fully understanding the content.

This demonstrated to arvato the importance of interaction within certain self learning methods - particularly where the topic is dry and technical, so as to stimulate the learner.

The Future

arvato intends to continue training using the Atlantic Link modules. Hosting of the e-learning portal and future content development will be conducted by arvato and Sefton Council. Larmer Brown will manage the installation of the tool and provide training and support for arvato's IT personnel and content developers.

About arvato

arvato client partnerships are based on mutual trust, respect and collaboration, maintaining an open dialogue, celebrating success and being honest about improvements needed. They believe in sharing the risks and rewards, investing in people, infrastructure and facilities for the future. This long-term thinking cultivates enduring relationships that deliver sustainable business results for arvato's clients.

About Larmer Brown

Larmer Brown is experienced in large content development projects, utilising a number of e-learning development and software tools. Our offerings accelerate each stage of a project, including Change and Communication, process mapping, user acceptance testing, training and support, to ensure that our clients' risks are minimised and the benefits are realised.

Larmer Brown is an Oracle Gold Partner. We are also a Reseller and Services Partner for dominKnow Learning Systems and ENGAGE, and a Services Partner for CA Technologies.