ELEARNINGNEWS ARTICLE

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4 tools to improve the engagement of your courses

Before designing eLearning courses for our customers or our company, we must necessarily come to terms with the expectations of course success.

Here are 5 tools you cannot do without to **improve the engagement of your audience**.

Analysing the audience and proposing suitable content

When I attend matching events with large companies, one of the questions I am often asked is: 'we have a lot of courses on our LMS platform but we struggle to get people to follow them'.

This is one of the most interesting points in the design of eLearning courses: very often we forget that, on the other side of the screen, there are people like us who experience all kinds of emotions such as boredom, sadness, enthusiasm, joy or dissatisfaction.

Moreover, not all people have the same socio-cultural background or, similarly, may not be interested in a certain topic.

How, then, to propose content that engages people and enables eLearning experiences to be converted into useful results for the company?

The first, useful, activity is certainly to analyse the metrics available. If we have an LMS, we can certainly see the completion rate of a course or a group of courses belonging to the same training area (e.g. skills for managing IT security in the company or first aid at sea).

These data are really useful for the verification of learner groups who have had the opportunity to take the course but, above all, for those who, although subscribed to the platform, have not yet had the opportunity or the desire to do so.

There are therefore two critical points here: the first is related to the need to complete a course; the other is related to the ability to involve and, above all, convince people to follow a given course in eLearning mode.

With regard to the first critical issue, i.e. the need to complete a course, the data can tell us which training unit has a higher drop-out rate: is the content too 'heavy'? Or do people not have enough incentive to complete the course because it is about skills they already have?

In addition to the data provided by the platform, you could imagine interviewing, in a short survey, the people who have participated in your eLearning courses and checking their feedback, asking what critical issues they have encountered and whether they have any suggestions for improvement.

The second critical issue, the need to get people to start the course, prompts us to create a real internal marketing campaign. First of all, a sense of necessity, i.e. awareness, of the topics covered in the course must be created in people. A video trailer of the course can entice people to learn about the risks of incorrect use of web tools in the office: by showing a series of images of possible cyber attacks or, simply, what could happen in the event of a mistake, we can anticipate the themes of the course and create curiosity.

Therefore, do not underestimate the power of social networks and internal groups in your company or that of your customers: these groups are inhabited by people who may not feel the need to train simply by browsing through an LMS catalogue. People want to be involved and feel part of the company and contribute to improvement.

Mega Italia Media's DynDevice LMS platform allows you to have an extra valuable tool for your measurements: we are talking about the **Performance Management Tool** that allows you to manage the evaluation process of human resources within your organisation, according to a logic that is development-oriented.

Building engaging content

Whether you are a freelance instructional designer or work in a company that produces eLearning courses, you will need to continually update to ensure content that follows the best trends and adapts to market demands.

Creating engaging content for your audience means using at least three important 'ingredients' that you will have to learn to govern and, above all, update over time:

- Storytelling
- Eye-catching graphics
- Interactivity

1. STORYTELLING

On the pages of this blog we have often talked about **Storytelling**, but the real challenge is to create content that is engaging and engages our learners. To achieve this, once we have collected all the materials from our client, we must necessarily turn them into a product that manages to pragmatically capture people's attention.
Crafting a good storytelling is a job of writing and rewriting and, above all, analysing and feedbacking the corporate culture, as well as the need to make stories inclusive and respectful of all people.
Producing a story is certainly more complex than presenting a series of animated slides: we need to write the story line, manage a series of episodes if necessary, write the lines of actors or animated characters, manage all the possible ramifications of the story and, not least, adapt all the content provided by the client or customer in a new format.
Storytelling, however, is an ingredient for eLearning courses that will give you great satisfaction in terms of engagement: creating a character that people can identify with will allow you to create a series of adventures that will find their way into the hearts and attention of your learners.

2. EYE-CATCHING GRAPHICS

What you should never forget to manage within your eLearning productions is the ability to create content that is beautiful to look at. The mistake that is often made by those who realise eLearning courses is to limit themselves to 'as long as it works'. Spoiler: a course also, and above all, works if it is pleasant to look at.
For this reason, one of the main efforts I require of my collaborators is to study the graphic lines of clients and to propose solutions in compliance with graphic trends: what works in the USA? What in Europe? What are the latest trends in graphic interface design? What is the latest in motion graphics design? Avoid proposing graphic libraries updated to 2012, we are now in 2022. And, if you just can't do without them, try to make them more modern with new graphic elements and a minimalist design.

3. INTERACTIVITY

The DynDevice content creation platform allows you to create content for your courses using a range of interaction tools.
When creating eLearning courses, try to think of the course as an interactive tool rather than a passive delivery of content: the result will be much more engaging!
People may perceive your proposal to take a course as a mere educational obligation, nothing could be more wrong! A course without interactions might result in passive reproduction of content without real involvement of people: are we creating content because we were asked to or because we actually have to create value around that information?
The next time you design and develop eLearning courses, ask yourself how you can keep your learners' attention.

Re-engineering content

Gary Vaynerchuck is one of the most interesting entrepreneurs on the international scene. His fortune has been his ability to understand his audience and deliver the right content at the right time.

One of his 'tricks' that has always fascinated me, and that I want to share with you, is the ability to produce content, de-structure it and reconstruct it for a new use and an alternative channel.
In a nutshell: a long interview or a long conference for a tech event can become, with the right editing, a 20-minute podcast on tech topics or a series of 5 videos of a few seconds in a vertical format that we use on social media to focus on a particular quote or content of interest to our audience.
Making eLearning courses is exactly that: taking a piece of content and transforming it over and over again, doing A/B tests on our audience, reconstructing the graphics, using parts of the course to raise awareness on social media, creating storytelling on a piece of content that might be long and boring.
Try taking a long lecture by a professor presenting a series of static slides and turn them into dynamic, graphically appealing material. You will realise the value that content can achieve simply by transforming it.

Using innovative technologies

One of the tools we have at our disposal is, in a nutshell, innovation. There are plenty of start-ups offering brand new tools that enable us, mainly thanks to artificial intelligence and machine learning, to achieve things that a few years ago we could only observe in science fiction films.
Try to attend trade fairs, study the market and don't be satisfied with the tools you use every day: the web is full of new solutions that will allow you to create interactive videos, cloud solutions that allow you to produce automated content, libraries of images produced by artificial intelligence and virtual assistants of all kinds.
We are in the era of Industrial Revolution 4.0, don't limit yourself to proposing linear solutions to your learners, your imagination can open up unexpected avenues for the people you engage with your eLearning courses.

What will be your next tool to improve the engagement of your learners?

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