ELEARNINGNEWS ARTICLE

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# Realising micro content for e-learning

***The creation of eLearning courses must take into account the needs of learners who have countless sources from which to draw content. Let's find out how to create effective content.***

The ever-increasing use of social networks as a communication and information tool has led, in recent years, to a need for communication that is more and more engaging and that allows, in short, to keep people's attention on a given topic.

The increasingly aggressive use of videos on social networks has led to users being fed hundreds (if not thousands for the most engaged) of content per day.

How, then, to find the right time and, above all, the right focus for training content?

The **design of courses in eLearning** mode must necessarily come to terms with the possibility of users being able to retrieve segmented and unstructured information on the web: the contents must therefore follow rules that are useful for adjusting training to a new, current need.

**Microlearning** is one of the possible innovations in the field of training: with contents lasting between 30 seconds and 3 minutes, it allows learners to update themselves with training pills that can be 'administered' during the day: a car journey, while settling in at home in smart working, during a moment when one is free.

To prevent this kind of training from harming people, who are already enormously harassed by their multi-tasking status, a good instructional designer (and content creator) must necessarily create useful and engaging content for eLearning courses.

## What kind of content

The most commonly used content for micro-learning is audio and video content.
Therefore, two types of media must be taken into account when designing the training solution.

In this article, I will talk to you about microlearning products where we will use ourselves as actors and trainers of the course, but, with due care, you will be able to stand behind the recording tool and direct the people who are to do the training for your courses in eLearning mode.

### Podcasts

A really **effective audio content** for microlearning is the podcast. This product is particularly easy to make and can be structured in different ways.

Personally, I do not prefer the podcast recorded and 'obtained' by remixing other content: very often people tend to take bits of conversations or webinars on zoom and reuse them to create podcasts and save time.
This practice often makes eLearning courses inaccessible as, with poor audio, poorly defined information and lengthy reasoning, it becomes very tedious to follow the topic and keep attention.

I therefore advise you to create original audio content of a certain quality.

But how?

You will have to equip yourself with some tools, which are really useful for the realisation of eLearning courses with micro-content.

The first tool, which is fundamental, is writing software that allows you to manage and organise content before recording it. It is not necessary for you to write a script and slavishly follow a text, but it will tend to be useful for you to have an outline of contents and a base of texts from which you can draw during recordings.
To cover this need, I remind you that the **DynDevice LMS** platform is equipped with an excellent **micro-learning content creation and management tool** where you can import all the material you need.

The second tool you will need to equip yourself with is, which is not trivial, a microphone that allows you to professionally record your productions. The latest generation of smartphones covers this need quite well, especially if they are medium-high-end. However, I advise you to equip yourself with a condenser microphone of the latest generation: a quick search on the web will find models for all budgets that will allow you to start with your podcast production fairly quickly and, above all, with a professional performance.

Once we have produced our audio stream and our content (remember that it should only last a few minutes at most!) let's make sure we make it engaging for our learners.
One of the practices I often use is to create a short acronym to be inserted at the beginning and end of each podcast, you can also insert a title that reminds your audience of the topic we are about to cover.

The creation of an acronym cannot be separated from the use of specific libraries of music and tracks with a commercial licence, which you can find on the web with a quick search: there are tracks for which you can purchase a single licence or, something I promote with some insistence to those who produce content on an ongoing basis, you can subscribe to a service with an annual payment that will allow you to download as many tracks as you want while keeping your lifetime licence or for as long as you keep your subscription active.

## Video Pills

One of my favourite contents for the eLearning courses I create for my clients are **video pills**.

A new trend, resulting from the increasingly connected use of social media for training, is to use video content in a vertical format (9:16) rather than the traditional horizontal format (16:9).

This is because, in a social content fruition with a mobile vocation that we are therefore used to using on smartphones and tablets, the model of creating training and information content in a **horizontal format** is slowly disappearing or, at least, becoming antiquated.

Thus, the design of micro-content in a **vertical format** is taking over for the creation of eLearning courses that can be enjoyed on LMS platforms but, above all, on new types of apps and services that we could not even imagine before.

Every day, thanks to the diversity of the market, new solutions are born for the eLearning market and we can see new content that can become engaging for our learners.

But, how to produce such content?

Regardless of the type of production you want to undertake, my advice is to, where and when possible, design your content from scratch in a vertical format and not adapt pre-existing content to the new format.

This is a constraint that, in eLearning courses of a certain duration, will make it more difficult to use and the relative attention of your learners will wane.

Again, we have to start with an idea: we use the DynDevice platform to organise the topic and content of our video and prepare to record it.

Whether you are a culinary expert or a professional in the construction industry, it is always important to select your audience and understand what your vocabulary will be: express yourself simply and speak directly about useful topics, remember that you have little time.

For micro-learning the golden rule applies: less is more.

It is not wrong to target your content only at people who are beginners, the important thing is to base your content on a useful duration to keep the attention.

So what is the tool to make good quality video content suitable for micro learning?

Again, we need a recording tool: a video camera with a tripod that you can position in a vertical format, an action camera or, even easier, your smartphone will do.

You can also use a three-axis stabiliser to allow your video to have the right dynamic and a more professional feel throughout the course.

To shoot a video for micro-learning you must, in any case, follow the rules for the composition of a shot that will give your content a professional look. First of all, the choice of framing and location will be crucial for success. You only have to look at the results achieved by communication professionals who, every day, post small educational content on social networks to realise how important it is to choose the right framing.

Have you ever tried to think about framing in order to build an appealing image?

When you make a micro-content video for your eLearning courses, divide the screen into 9 imaginary rectangles (or use the grid function on your smartphone or camera) and position yourself in such a way that you harmoniously occupy the space between these lines or along their intersections.

Aligning yourself or a subject at these points creates more tension, energy and interest in the composition than simply trying to centre the frame.

This is why I always advise you to think before shooting a video for your micro-content, look for the right framing, tell what you want to express through a different, personal point of view.

Sometimes even just the camera angle can really make a difference and bring new meaning to your content.

Once you have made your video content, you will have to edit it ad-hoc: you will need video editing software and some practice. There are many smartphone apps that allow you to make quick and effective edits seconds after shooting. I, for example, use the pre-installed software on my smartphone when I don't have time to manage all the content directly from my PC. Easy, no?

What will be your next micro-learning project?

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