ELEARNINGNEWS ARTICLE

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Content care vs creating eLearning content

Is it better to "take care" of eLearning content, using and organizing already existing resources, or create them from scratch?

There are two different approaches to designing eLearning courses. The first is to create content from scratch, writing every single module of an **online course** entirely, including videos and podcasts. The second, starts from existing material that is selected and organized with the specific objectives of the course being implemented in mind. Rather than wondering what is the best approach, the right question would be: is it possible to draw a clear line between content creation and the use of existing material?

Advantages and disadvantages in eLearning content creation

Creating content from scratch for an online course seems a very difficult task for several reasons. First of all, with the vastness of resources produced on the internet, in the company or by research institutions, it is really difficult for an **instructional designer** to think of creating totally new content. Let's say, however, that you want to create a completely customized course for a client. Taking into account the **training needs**, the creation of an unpublished content can be based on the knowledge of experts, authoritative sources, studies and research in the field. All this explains the difficulties involved in creating content: the time and resources required to produce the unpublished material. Among the advantages, we certainly find the originality, consistency and customization of content for the company.

Taking care of eLearning content, pros and cons

Taking care of content for an online course means to make a research and select the best resources that there are in the network or in the company and organize them into easily accessible **training modules**. Taking care of eLearning content is a bit like taking care of the works of an exhibition, in the sense that once you have chosen the theme you find the best pieces and organize them with a specific purpose. The advantage of this approach is that it saves time and money, since it leverages millions of images, videos, pdf, **PowerPoint** presentations already existing. The risks are related to the authoritativeness and topicality of the sources. An instructional designer must always verify that the information he uses is not only correct, but also current. It is obvious that an article from a reliable source that does not take into account the latest legal changes can be counterproductive and detrimental to the image of the company.

Editing and creating content for an online course: what is the boundary?

From what we have seen so far, in the process of content creation there is always the possibility to select already existing material because, with the diffusion of knowledge, it is possible to find millions of resources on the subject of a course. At the same time, taking existing material and simply organizing it into coherent modules is not enough to create an effective course. Resources need to be optimized, updated, so there is always a "creation" component.

Being able to draw a clear boundary between creation and content care is not only not possible, but it is also not useful. The approach most used by instructional designers is the mixed one, depending on the type of course you are preparing. For training on an unpublished topic, you can start with field research and experts in the field and complete the course with videos, podcasts, existing texts as an in-depth study. In the same way, if you start from already existing materials, it is essential to insert unpublished parts creating from scratch more current and relevant content for the beneficiaries.

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