

hp success story



SWISS POST 



Swiss Post uses
integrated learning
with great success

“There is no investment that gives a quicker return than in education and knowledge” – Bill Clinton’s short and pragmatic words of two years ago at the World Economic Forum could just as easily be Swiss Post’s motto. And it’s not just words – this tradition-conscious company with its 55,000 employees proved it by easily adapting to the most modern information technology. In fact Swiss Post is now leading the way amongst large Swiss companies with its education and training.

“Naturally,” says Hans Gurtner, director of employee development “we have not just blindly added e-learning to our programme – but where it really made sense – namely, when there is some new or updated knowledge to be shared between a large group of people. The primary objective of our training programme is that our people are able to meet the constantly changing demands”.

The Post made its first steps some years ago with Computer Based Training (CBT), which brought courseware to the desktop. Using this method the company was able to reach many more employees than through conventional classroom teaching, and users were able to access course content without time restrictions, and at their own pace. In spite of these indisputable advantages, the success of CBT is relatively limited according to Hans Gurtner. The only project which had any efficient and lasting effect, was specific training in the area of Postautodienst.

A standard IT application takes on the administration of training in many large companies. It was no different at the Post: to keep track of the level of knowledge of individual employees or of groups, there has always been a solution for course registration and a program for the management of training events. But these were separate systems.

The company-wide upgrade to Windows 2000 triggered the replacement of the existing learning program. The time was right to contemplate a broader learning-platform. Choosing the ideal partner was important for the Post and they found a competent partner with HP Education Services. HP Education Services was able to offer a flexible, specific solution, which could take into account the demanding and complex linking of the different internal post systems.

Important for this collaboration was also the flexibility of HP Education Services and Docent System as well as the cost-performance ratio. The Post decided on the modern and professional Learning Management System (LMS). In a Learning Management System (LMS) web-based course content is available, as well as all learning activities and

traditional courses – all integrally managed. In other words, a programme which can control all training across the entire business, while combining all costs involved. It includes course curriculums and catalogues, allocates resources, accepts online registrations, consolidates skills and competencies and enables the accurate management of participant profiles.

stringent system selection

Finding a Learning Management system to meet the needs of The Post was no easy task. Of the 120 software platforms which the Post's IT specialists evaluated on behalf of the employee development department, none met all its requirements precisely. Nevertheless there were a few promising solutions. 14 of the offerings made it through to the intermediate round, and after the final evaluation there were three left.

The Post's favourite came from a US manufacturer called Docent. "Rather amazingly", said Marco Sommer, e-learning product manager. "In Europe, with the differences in culture, you wouldn't expect an American product to best meet local needs". However, Docent's system was so innovative and flexible, that it fulfilled the requirements for the Swiss Post-specific applications outstandingly. Also as a company, Docent made a good and stable impression on the Post's executive managers. An important point made by Marco Sommer, "of the top 14 we previously mentioned, there are few who are still active in this area".

The fact that Docent never implements its LMS alone, but in partnership with HP Education Services, was another point in favour of the solution. Marco Sommer said, "The name HP gave the offering the solidarity we were looking for. We were not disappointed.

challenge

- **Combine the abilities of the existing training systems which track course registrations and the management of training events separately**
- **Implement a broader learning platform in the shape of a Learning Management System (LMS) for employees**

solution

- **Implement a Learning Management System (LMS) from Docent**
- **hp education services to provide training and project management**

results

- **Reduced cost of training through electronic training capabilities**
- **The reduction in both teaching and travelling time**
- **Minimises employee's time out of the office leading to increased productivity**

why hp?

- **Flexibility of hp education services**
- **hp could offer a solution which could link the Swiss Post's various internal post systems**
- **The name hp gave the offering the solidarity the Swiss Post was looking for**

Although there were a few suggestions to improve the project, the collaboration was excellent from the start".

Swiss Post as pioneers

The results are clear to see. "What the Post aims for" clarifies Marco Sommer, "is continuous self-determined learning. The new learning management system comes very close to achieving this goal. The lifecycle of a learning management system is not completed with the implementation. The collaboration with HP Education Services is equally as important, and progressing excellently.

One thing is certain: with its company-wide learning platform, Swiss Post is amongst the pioneers in this field – a position held by few. It is already thinking about possibilities for the future.

"Why shouldn't we offer e-learning to our customers?" reflects Marco Sommer. "For example we could use it to show our business customers the advantages of Yellow Billing. Equally for private customers, investment trusts might be an interesting topic." The delivery medium for this would be the internet with the portal www.post.ch, which would be better used as a result.

what, who, how – integrated learning at the post

For Hans Gurtner, director of employee development at the Post, a Learning Management System is a platform that

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helps provide employees with the education and training they need. They have proven particularly useful where dozens or even hundreds of people need training – really pushing the organisational and administrative boundaries of traditional teaching.

According to Gurtner "In these cases I would love to see LMS as the learning solution of the future."

what – software

- Training Catalogue (also available in pdf format)
- Computer Based Training (CBT) in CD-ROM format
- Web Based Training (WBT). Here on the one hand existing products are used (particularly for PC applications training), and on the other Post-specific content that is for the most part externally developed.
- Platform for Specialised Forums; the system allocates to the participants the respective moderator dependent on location and language.
- Tests with automatic evaluation – data can be aquired on an individual or group level
- Software-Tool, to easily set tests
- Training Administration (gives an overview and enables education management)

what – hardware

- Two redundant and therefore almost fail-safe systems (operating system Windows 2000 Server)
- A so-called Mail-to-Paper-Portal that automatically translates electronic messages into words on paper

who

- Trainees: prospective traders, computer scientist, logistics assistant, car mechanic

- New employees for induction training
- Employees who are confronted with new methods, markets or customer segments

how

Integrated learning at the Post is built on hybrid methods: initial information acquired from a CD or Web Based Training (WBT) can be built on in workshops. The system registers each stage and the success of the learning is evaluated on the basis of tests. This way learning is not over or under-demanding for the employees, and their efforts are recognised and recompensed by the enterprise.

A third of the workforce (approx. 19,000 people), are directly connected to the intranet. The others are reached using the Mail-to-Paper-Portal mentioned above. Some course documents (CD's and pdf files) are also distributed this way.

a worthwhile Investment

A Learning Management System, as at the Post, requires significant investment – but inevitably sees a quick return. Integrated Learning:

- Reduces both teaching and travelling time and minimises time away from the office for training
- Gives freedom of choice of when to learn and at what pace
- Allows quicker reaction times as new modules can be accessed at any time and adapted simply
- Gives measured examinable variables. Custom-made training courses can be arranged and the transparency of the level of knowledge of both individuals and groups

Simplifies the administration of the training. Far-reaching automatic processes supply a complete and

current overview of all learning records in the company.

How rapidly the costs start to show returns, can be seen in the case of the Post's delivery services. In order to prepare the 2200 drivers for the introduction of the new ticket issuing machines, the Post developed four hour-long training units and put them onto CD-ROM. The drivers would then work through these during downtimes on a PC in the bus depot. If they wanted to they could also take the CD-ROM home with them.

The success exceeded all expectations. Users were inspired, gained knowledge in a shorter time, and the Post saved 2200 course days that would have been necessary via conventional delivery methods. This cost alone would have been three times the total cost of the electronic training.

For more information on how working with Hewlett-Packard can benefit you, please contact your local HP sales representative or reseller, or visit:
<http://www.hp.com>

customer at a glance:



industry sector: logistics

name: Swiss Post

number of employees: 55,000

Last year's revenue (also in Euros €):

6 billion Swiss francs (4.8 billion euros)

URL: www.post.ch

Services highlights:

- **Learning Management System (LMS) from Docent**
- **Training from hp education services**
- **Project management**

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