

The Phones 4U e-Learning project

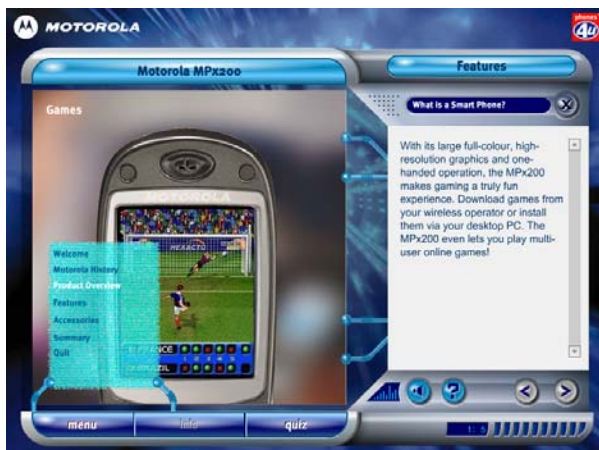
Phones 4U is a rapidly growing UK retailer of mobile phones with 350 stores and 4,000 employees. This is a fast-moving, technology-driven, price-sensitive business with little time to spare for the luxury of traditional training courses. Management needed a better way of efficiently training their staff at their workplace on the key features of new products, network services and technologies. A parallel objective was also to closely track each employee's learning progress and quiz scores and to report these achievements by store, area and region.

In January 2003, TNA was selected from a shortlist of 10 leading developers to take complete responsibility for delivering a corporate e-Learning solution. The requirements were for :

- an intranet-based Learning Management System to control access to all learning modules and to track usage and quiz scores
- a range of engaging ('game style') multimedia learning modules, each taking no more than 10 minutes to complete plus a 5 minute quiz. The modules had to be usable from the in-store sales tills (EPOS terminals).
- a set of management reports which extract learner usage data from the LMS

Technical challenges

Phones 4U wanted rich e-Learning content but the available bandwidth of their intranet (less than a dial-up connection) ruled out *on-line* access to the modules. The solution was to create the modules in Macromedia Flash (typically 3-5Mb each) and then download them overnight from the server to the tills. When a learner logs on to the LMS (**The Enterprise Knowledge Platform of NetDimensions**) and selects a module, it is remotely launched in a browser window on his/her local system.



This *local* execution means that the modules (all of them professionally narrated) start immediately and run without hesitation. When the quiz has been taken, the learner's score and other usage data are immediately sent back to update their LMS record.

Modules may also be remotely deleted from local systems by the Phones 4U IT staff, giving them complete control over the library of training in each store.

To date (start of May 2004), TNA has delivered 17 e-Learning modules and new title production is running at approximately 3-4 per month. Fast module turnaround was a crucial requirement and this is now down to less than 3 weeks, from definition of the title to delivery to stores, including scripting, programming, voice recording, animations and testing.

TNA (now a **NetDimensions** distribution partner) installed and implemented the EKP Silver system at Phones 4U and has provided technical support throughout the project. This included integrating all modules using AICC exchanges and setting up efficient procedures for loading the EKP database from existing HR records.



Benefits

The major benefits to Phones 4U are that every employee can now choose when and where they learn, their knowledge and skills are improving through this fun and easy method and management knows literally at every moment who has achieved what and when.

This intelligence, together with other data such as sales and profitability figures, enables managers to assess the true picture and act accordingly.

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