



SSP DIGITISES AND INTEGRATES CONTENT WITHIN 70:20:10

In the third of four articles, Peter Gray outlines the integration process at food travel experts SSP. His case study shows how traditional L&D content is digitised and incorporated into the 70:20:10 model.

In previous articles, we've covered how the digital capability of the SSP workforce has been a key driver in the development and success of the learning programmes. However, it is important to note that simply having 'digital capability' is not the answer to all of the challenges faced by the company's L&D department. Harnessing the undoubted and growing digital capability of staff is proving to be the key to ensuring that the development initiative is successful. Digital learning should be seen as the enabler, not the solution.

In deploying the online learning portal SSP

Academy Live, the L&D team is asking the people to embrace the vision: "Here is an engaging online learning and personal development environment. If you take the time to visit and use it, you will add hugely to your opportunities for growth both personally and within the organisation."

Interestingly (and because the firm has a global footprint), there is clear evidence to suggest that people from different cultures or locations, display different desires to learn and self-develop within the context of workplace learning. When compared with some cultures – it is not unfair to say that UK learners may, at times, appear to be less

motivated to self-develop, whereas those (for example) in the Nordic countries have embraced self-development much more readily.

Against this background, SSP's Academy Live portal has a simple, yet ambitious aim – to empower learning anytime, anywhere, to all of the workforce.

The Academy fosters a culture of self-paced development to enable people to develop to their full potential. The organisation is committed and passionate about creating an environment that gets the most out of their people and they realise that to achieve

this, they must present a compelling, online opportunity to encourage engagement. We know of course that the 70:20:10 framework encourages experiential learning. Learning whilst we're 'doing', if you like. But the 'doing' must be combined with the 'developing' and this is where integrating 'doing' with technology can be hugely beneficial.

LIVE PORTAL

Bearing in mind that 70% of what we learn about our work and how to do it is gathered from experiential on-the-job learning, the challenge is more about supporting that learning with technology. Put another way, integrating that learning into the developing piece. As it happens, about 70% of what SSP does to train its people happens on the job – the key challenge is to not only ensure that the online development portal is used to create and hold content to act as an *aide memoire* for key operational skills or tasks but also to extend people's knowledge of the subject (the 10% part) and of course, provide evidence of that learning.

Providing a digital world for the purposes of personal development relies on the user not only being told to visit that world, but also wanting to visit it. The learning portal must

Online Workbooks have led to measurable cost savings for SSP. In Germany, for example, each time a development programme using this content is run, an €8,000 saving is made.

make a real contribution to encouraging the concept of self-development, but there are some rules that seem to be writing themselves. Bearing in mind the constant need to quantify an ROI from the 'digital dividend' SSP has chosen to digitise the content that serves the largest audience group. This has generated the highest return.

In many ways L&D professionals simply have to look around themselves at their wider business environment and see the impact of technology on their business day, to get a hint of what they can do to 'integrate' their L&D initiatives into the online world. The photocopier was once the most important machine in the building. Since the introduction of e-mail and attachments, it is less so. We can apply digital thinking to traditional learning approaches. Why wouldn't we try to remove paper workbooks, traditional flipcharts and PowerPoint presentations? The same can be said for more recent training technologies.

Once there was the training video – produced at great expense. Many readers will recall the days of the £10k budget, 20-minute long, company bespoke training video. No need now. The learning portal offers the flexibility for learners and L&D professionals alike, to upload their own video blogs simply and quickly as well, of course, embed YouTube clips. Importantly, wherever the content is originating from now, it's being seen and used within the same seamless and consistent environment for the user. Increasingly, the portal, or in SSP's case Academy Live, is becoming an engaging place for the learner and self-developer to be.

ENGAGEMENT

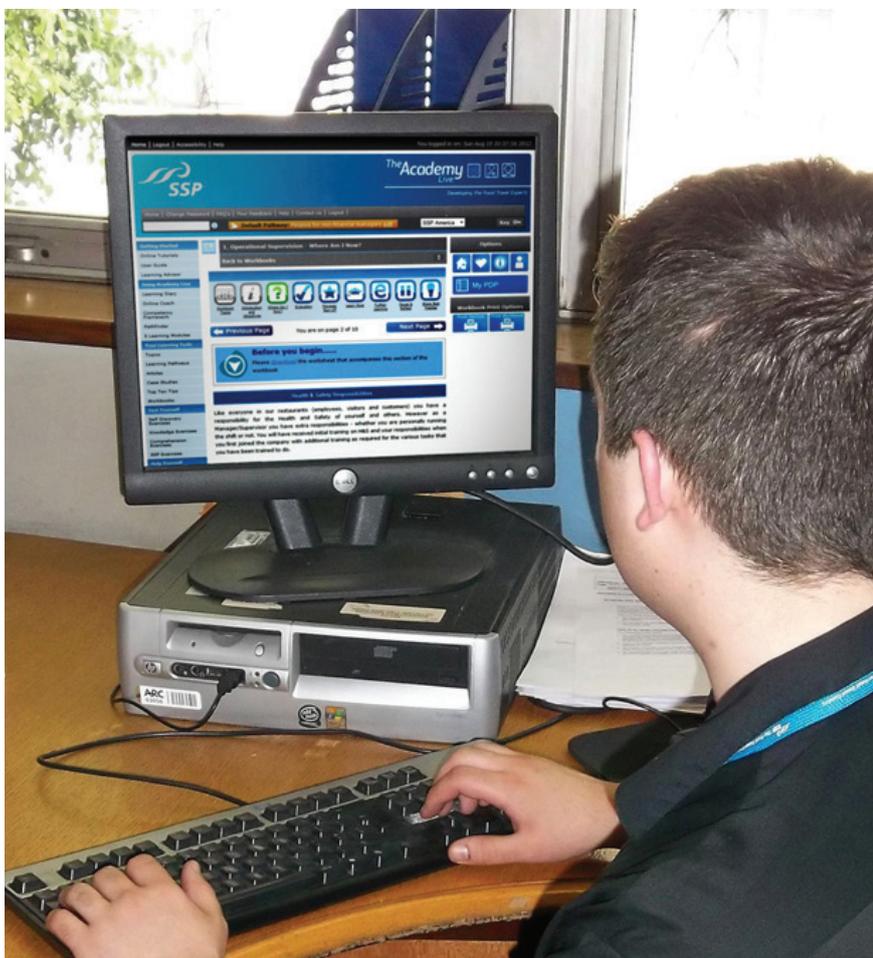
History tells us that, in due course, our relationship with the learning and development portal will become second nature. It's simply a new deployment of technology into our everyday lives at work.

There was a time when the word processor (remember those) was like this! Now, using our keyboards is a very natural process, as is the thinking and approach we take with 'word processing'. For those who have access to an online learning portal, people are accessing their learning in a very similar way. But we, as learning technologists, must make that journey as simple as we can. As we do so, the process of adoption by both learner and L&D professional is speeding up.

While the process of digitising learning content enables a digital solution, the process must be seen in the context of using that content digitally, in an online environment which also offers an opportunity for learners to interact, collaborate and share – even showcase their achievements. This is what is meant by incorporating informal learning into your digital learning strategy.

In an informal online environment, learners need guidance. It is here that technology can really come into its own; deploying, for example, expert led FAQs using the 'Q&A' tool within a collaborative space in the portal. Apart from the obvious benefits of this, allowing L&D to think less about content upkeep and ownership, resulting discussions feed back into the learning cycle by providing rich content for L&D to work into the induction process.

Far from being flung in drawers and forgotten about, SSP has deployed digital



workbooks, keeping the material alive, engaging the learner and involving their line managers. As well as equipping the business with a tool to keep materials up to date, digital workbooks are enabling on-the-job learning activities to be incorporated and this learning is evidenced as part of the solution. The benefits of the online workbook tool don't stop there either. Each time a development programme is initiated in Germany alone, a measurable cost saving of €8,000 to the German print bill is registered!

JOINED-UP THINKING

Those of us who are learning technology solution providers should thank the CIPD for pointing out that 74% of organisations now use some form of eLearning. Clearly though, many of those organisations are looking to the next phase of adoption – which is how to make their online offerings more effective and how to link them more to overall business or organisational need.

Evidencing learning is a very good place to start. The new, more informal approach to learning portals where the learner takes control, allows the person to add their own evidence that they have learnt and

developed. This recognises the individual and the commitment they have made to the self-development and learning culture. It also provides an opportunity to share alternative learning activities with peers who may be outside the core learning programme. This is a massive opportunity to enrich the programme into the future. It is about placing more focus on the learning that has happened rather than the knowledge that may or may not have been absorbed. Learners can demonstrate that they have learnt but in a way that suits them.

Simply digitising content and making it available is not enough. Joined-up thinking between capturing the experiential (on-the-job) learning (70%), the face-to-face (20% learning from others input) and the formal 'online' (10%) is paramount. Still, more than half of most outputs of the L&D function are provided in the classroom. The desire to reduce classroom time and costs is understandable, but in working towards benefiting from the power of experiential learning, organisations need a glue to bind the elements of the 70:20:10 numbers. This is where SSP's Academy Live most overtly manifests its value.

SSP's Group Learning & Development Manager, Daniel Mills, says: "Academy Live for us is the glue! It's what sticks together and holds together the blended solution applied to the bigger picture. It's a digital environment, with digitised learning assets, but it's the place where we can most effectively support and build on the learning needs of all of our people and keep their development in line with the business at the same time."

Part 1 October: A first class learning solution at SSP

Part 2 November: How SSP delivers measurable ROI

Part 3 December: *(this issue)*

Part 4 January: How SSP capitalises on its learning technology to deliver success

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