



Powering the e-Learning Revolution

BELGACOM CASE STUDY

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Jean-Pierre Dekocker, Belgacom



BELGACOM

THE BUSINESS CHALLENGE

The challenge facing Belgacom is how to effectively keep its employees and partners informed and trained. Belgacom's 22,000 employees are widely dispersed from a geographical standpoint. Belgacom has 10 main offices in Belgium as well as point of sale offices located in almost every town in Belgium and further offices located in France, Germany, and Holland. The company also has a large partner network dispersed throughout Belgium.

One of the biggest issues facing Belgacom, therefore, is ensuring that information and knowledge is distributed to these employees and partners in an effective and efficient way. Belgacom recognizes that competitive advantage is increasingly gained and maintained by the knowledge and skills of its people and partners.

“Our markets are extremely competitive and having a system that will ensure that our employees and partners are quickly the best trained is essential to our corporate strategy,” said Belgacom's Learning and Development Director, Jean-Pierre Dekocker. “We have complex systems and products which must be available 24 hours a day with no allowance for downtime. Our organization depends on all our employees and partners being highly skilled and well trained quickly.”

Belgacom's training and learning solutions are driven by the centralized Learning and Development Academy which is located in Brussels. The Learning and Development Academy focuses on four main areas of training – Products and Services Training, Sales training, Technology and IT training, Business Management training and People Management training.

Business Profile

Belgacom SA is the leading supplier of global telecommunications solutions on the Belgian market. The company is owned by the Belgian state and ADSB Telecommunications, an international consortium made up of SBC, Singapore Telecom, Tele Danmark, and a group of investors from the financial sector.

Solution Overview

Internal communications and knowledge flow at Belgacom, as well as external communication flows to Belgacom's partners, have been greatly improved by implementing WBTV's TopClass. Belgacom has made significant cost savings over the past number of years since it has deployed WBTV's TopClass e-Learning solution.

Travel and accommodation expenses have been reduced significantly as more and more people at Belgacom are enrolling in on-line courses. Offering the option to take courses on-line has significantly reduced downtime and lowered opportunity costs within Belgacom.

TopClass has successfully enabled Belgacom to speed the flow of business information and allowed Belgacom employees and partners to access relevant knowledge and information pools in a just-in-time fashion.

It is also the Learning and Development Academy's responsibility to provide more efficient and effective training and training delivery methods to Belgacom's employees. In 1997, the Learning and Development Academy began assessing new ways of delivering training which would complement traditional instructor-led training classes.

With a growing network of partners and large employee base, Belgacom needed a robust e-Learning solution which would support both internally- and externally-developed content in local language.

THE BUSINESS SOLUTION

Belgacom spent two years evaluating a number of e-Learning solutions and finally chose WBT's comprehensive e-Learning solution, TopClass™, as the system of choice. TopClass manages all aspects of the e-Learning life cycle: the creation of courses, publishing an online catalog, course delivery and the provision of feedback through testing, reporting and integration with other enterprise applications. "TopClass' e-Learning infrastructure helps us to effectively deliver and manage just-in-time training at Belgacom," said Emmanuel Van Tomme, Educational ICT Manager at Belgacom.

Belgacom now use a variety of methods to distribute knowledge effectively throughout the organization, including WBT's TopClass e-Learning solution, video conferencing solutions, and traditional instructor-led training classes.

TopClass combines both live and on-demand access to information and also provides a mechanism for delivering "blended" training, including traditional classroom training. "TopClass is a complementary solution to our diverse training requirements at Belgacom," said Van Tomme.

"People learn in groups, and the collaboration features within TopClass greatly assist this method of learning at Belgacom"

WHY TOP CLASS?

Van Tomme cited a number of key reasons why Belgacom chose TopClass as their e-Learning system of choice.

Open architecture

Using TopClass, authors can combine any web compatible content through a flexible content assembly environment which supports key industry standards. Belgacom's internal training department, different content providers, multimedia development companies, and WBT partners, like NETg, all develop content. "Using Topclass' powerful course development environment, the creation and assembly of complete training courses for company procedures, processes, and products is extremely efficient," said Van Tomme.

Collaboration tools

TopClass' powerful collaboration features include discussion groups, built-in mentoring and email. According to van Tomme, "people learn in groups and the collaboration features within TopClass greatly assist this method of learning at Belgacom."

Tracking and Reporting

Class registration is handled automatically by TopClass, and can be integrated with other enrollment or user management systems. Tracking information can also be exported to human resources or ERP applications. These features are very useful for Belgacom as they allow the organization to track all development efforts from an HR perspective.

Compatible with existing technologies

When choosing an e-Learning solution, Belgacom needed to ensure that the solution would be compatible with existing technology frameworks. TopClass is built upon Oracle's relational database technology and provides many advantages in accessing, maintaining, and exchanging information. The Oracle-based TopClass system ensures compatibility with Belgacom's existing Oracle back-end system and is a major advantage for Belgacom.



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