

Nokia

Collaboration Initiative

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Monarch View

L. Allan Austin

Nokia Global Online Collaboration Initiative

Rebecca L. Smith and Paul Pettersson of Nokia decided in March, 2002 to launch a global elearning initiative using the Centra software platform offering both voice and video over IP and using a collaboration training program that had been delivered across Nokia worldwide for three years by L. Allan Austin. The online program consisted of four, two-hour modules for four days with a follow-up session 3-4 weeks later. Two groups of Nokia managers participated in the online versions co-facilitated by L. Allan Austin and Henry E. Liebling.

Activities of particular note were:

- ✚ Nokia's new collaboration competencies were reviewed and incorporated in the course design for delivering the required skill sets. Nokia senior and partnering managers and legal counselors were video taped for use in the program.
- ✚ Both Microsoft and Centra technical software developers were called upon to help redesign code. The result is that the program materials and delivery mechanisms push the envelop of both elearning and windows media technologies.
- ✚ The technical problems experienced were significant. Almost 30% of the participants experienced difficulties logging on or being kick-off and having to relog on. Most of these problems were resolved so that on the last day of each group's session, everyone joined early and completed the two-hour sessions without difficulty. Additionally, as evidenced by the problems encountered, most were due to a failure to follow the instructions provided in advance (including directions for getting technical support). It should be further noted that those who followed the instructions provided in advance experienced the least difficulties. Web surfing as become easy. It is a challenge to convince people that they need to configure things like microphones, headsets, and proxy servers.

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The results of two groups of Nokia managers participating are as follows:

Participant Satisfaction

On a six-point scale, with one being poor and six being excellent, the sessions finished with nearly all 5's and 6's. Comparing these figures to similar ratings of classroom sessions, the elearning ratings were actually higher. Some of the participants actually said they felt the online sessions were better than their experiences with classroom sessions.

Cost Savings

Calculation of costs showed *a savings of \$9,000 per session over the traditional delivery scenario*, not considering participant travel, which will yield further savings.

Learning

The same pre and post-test was used in the in-classroom sessions and the online sessions. The participants actually performed better in the online sessions, answering all questions correctly.

Productivity

The total time per participant in the virtual sessions was 12 hours v. 14 hours for the in-classroom sessions, a productivity savings of two hours per participant over typical classroom instruction, or a timesaving of 15%.

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