

Success Story

CERTILEARN USES INTRALEARN TO BRING ASAE ONLINE

ASAE to use e-Learning to bring management training to more members

Learning about the experiences of other associations can accelerate the learning process. With that in mind, this “Case Study” focuses on how the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) adopted e-Learning.

For over 20 years, ASAE has offered The “School of Association Management” as multi-day face-to-face conference. From February to May 2001, ASAE offered 5 “School of Association Management” courses online. The online courses, in 5 separate subject areas, were either 4 weeks long or 6 weeks long in duration, depending on the course objectives and content.

The courses featured a “hybrid” design that combined asynchronous, self-paced learning with online interaction. Students proceeded at their own pace asynchronously, but within an established timeframe of weekly modules. Online facilitators not only served as subject matter experts, and answered questions from students, but also served as catalysts to stimulate discussion via e-mail or threaded discussion. Because few of the facilitators has ever experienced online learning, they all participated in pre-course training that focused on tips and techniques for facilitating online discussion, stimulating participation and creating engaging online dialogue.

Students were required to complete each weekly module in sequence before proceeding to the next. Weekly modules included exercises, which required the student to take some action, such as conduct research, respond with an opinion or complete an assignment. Most courses also included “quizzes” which were used to provide feedback and reinforcement for the student, not for grading purposes.

ASAE’s courses did not include video or any other multi-media. This decision reflected ASAE’s focus on student-to-student and student-faculty interaction as essential to the learning experience. Active participation in the learning process was the goal.

Another feature was the tie-in of a book to each course. Included with the price of each course, students received their books prior to the start of each course. Course content was derived from the books. Students were required to refer to their books to fully engage in threaded discussions and other online interaction.

Results and evaluations were very positive. Courses were offered at \$299 for the 4-week courses and \$399 for the 6-week courses. Every course met or exceeded registration goals. Post-course evaluations showed that 94% of students rated the online learning experience as either “satisfactory” or “very satisfactory.” When asked if they would recommend the course to a friend or colleague, 96% said “yes.” And 97% said that they would take another ASAE online course.

ASAE plans to add 2 additional online courses in early 2002, bringing their offering to 7. Two more are expected later in 2002. The “School of Association Management” will no longer be offered as a face-to-face conference in favor of the online version.

For more information about ASAE’s e-learning experience, please feel free to call Sharon Huey, Manager of Blended Learning at ASAE: 202-626-2893. *This article was written by Gary LeBranche, CEO of CertiLearn and appeared in the winter edition of “Performance in Practice” published by the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD).*