Online Training Program
Information Communications Technology (ICT) Innovations

Contact: Tara Roberson-Moore, Information Services Coordinator, tara.roberson-moore@omes.ok.gov, (405) 522-1724

Office of Management and Enterprises Services
Information Services Division (OMES ISD)
State of Oklahoma

Project Initiation: Jan.15, 2013
Project Completion: Aug. 30, 2013
Executive Summary

OMES ISD-Enterprise Business Services (EBS) was tasked with training all new end-users statewide, as well as providing continuing education to more than 20,000 existing users of the PeopleSoft Enterprise modules currently implemented by the State of Oklahoma.

There were several variables to look at when planning the implementation of the program:

1. Consistency of content for training.
2. Cost of travel.
3. Availability of materials.
4. Cost of resources.

The OMES ISD Online Training Program was implemented to offer cost effective, on-demand, innovative and engaging online training options.
Business Problem and Solution

OMES ISD implements and supports all PeopleSoft Enterprise systems for the State of Oklahoma. On any given day, there are in excess of 20,000 users at more than 150 state agencies, boards and commissions using these systems, which include financial and human capital management modules. From hiring to processing payroll, from budgets to expenditures, from procurement to asset retirement – there are an infinite number of tasks performed daily in state government.

Within an entity that employs nearly 35,000 individuals, there are continuously people leaving or joining the ranks of state employees. One of the many training challenges faced by OMES ISD is the steady flow of newly hired employees – many of whom have never even heard of PeopleSoft Enterprises. However, in order to gain access to the state’s secure systems, new users must complete training for the individual modules they will use in their job duties. This naturally results in an endless number of training requirements.

When the PeopleSoft system was first implemented, all users were trained by subject matter experts (SMEs) in a classroom environment. As the system matured and experienced and knowledgeable users were established, individual agencies were allowed to implement in-house training. This option became the new norm.

Although both of these options offer benefits, areas were identified with each method that needed to be addressed.

For instance, classroom training presented issues related to its lack of efficiency and convenience which contributed to inconsistencies in the quality of training. The high cost of employees traveling to training was also a major issue.

Prior to the Online Training Program, agencies contacted OMES ISD to find out when classes would be offered. Because available training sessions were limited or the required courses weren’t scheduled until a later date, agency partners had to develop a stopgap strategy to get by in the interim. Usually, a coworker would be assigned to train the employee in some basic tasks. Unfortunately, the “trainer” might have possessed only a working knowledge of a few specific tasks.

The shortcomings of classroom training were emphasized in 2013 when thousands of purchasing employees across the state required training in a new software application. These employees were required to attend training in Oklahoma City, OK in order to gain access to the new system.

It proved to be incredibly inefficient, inconvenient and costly to require employees, some located more than 300 miles away, to travel to Oklahoma City for a one-hour training session. While this was not an isolated incident, it served to highlight the inherent inefficiencies associated with training large numbers of people from various geographic regions in a classroom setting.
In contrast, in-house training presented its own issues. Two consequences that became immediately apparent were the lack of consistent quality and uniformity. These inconsistencies were made obvious by the types of questions users asked once they gained access to the system. For example, when the majority of calls pertained to basic use questions, e.g., what button to push next, it became clear that users were not being trained properly.

An additional problem that applied equally to both methods of training was availability. Although in-house training provided convenient, on-demand scheduling, problems arose when there was no agency personnel available to conduct the required training. Conversely, classroom training took time to schedule and was not useful in addressing immediate training needs.

In January 2013, OMES ISD made the commitment to create an online training program. Key elements of the project included:

- Employing a staff member with education and instructional design experience;
- Purchasing commercial, off-the-shelf, development software, including Camtasia by TechSmith and Captivate by Adobe; and,
- Changing business practices to adopt online training as the method that would replace all in-house and some classroom training.

The objective of the project was to develop on-demand, innovative and engaging online training options that could be accessed from multiple devices. User demand, implementation barriers, and other factors were considered in determining project priorities including the types of online learning that would be appropriate for individual courses. Currently, there are three types of online learning options:

1. **Video Tutorials** – These videos were developed as an alternative to classroom training that took one hour or less. Two versions of each tutorial were created; one version included a quiz function and the other version did not. Tutorials that included the quiz function were required training before new users could gain access to certain secure systems. The alternative, non-quiz versions were adapted to provide existing users access to refresher materials.

2. **E-Learning Modules** – These modules were designed to replace classroom training that took longer than one hour to teach. They included video demonstrations in conjunction with narration and slides and were developed both with and without quiz functions.

3. **Interactive E-Learning Modules** – Using *Teach Me, Let Me* and *Quiz Me* methodology, interactive components gave learners a simulated environment within the learning module to practice what they learned.
Significance

The pilot project for the online training program was a video tutorial for the purchasing application mentioned earlier. Although the vast majority of application users had been trained prior to the release of the tutorial, this new training option had a huge impact when it was released in August 2013. For example:

- 142 new users from 18 different agencies completed the training and obtained access to the secure system; and
- 100 additional users accessed the video tutorial as a refresher course.

Since that time, more than 500 diverse users have accessed the other available video tutorials.

Performance Measures

Users who completed the purchasing application training video for security access (with a quiz function) were sent follow-up surveys about the training method. The survey response rate was 33% from August to December 2013.

The number of users who completed the training and were located more than 45 miles from the Oklahoma City metro area more than doubled since the pilot program.

Overall, users enjoyed the training, liked the format, learned what they needed, felt confident they could explain the process to someone else; and would use the knowledge gained from the course.

### COURSE EVALUATION (N=40)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It was fun.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>72.5</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like learning this way.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The length was appropriate.</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I liked the format.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I learned what I needed to know.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will use what I learned.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am able to explain this process to others.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>77.5</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Costs

Even though the quality and effectiveness of training were significant issues, reducing training costs and inefficiencies were also major goals of the project. In 2011, OMES was tasked with reducing the size of government by improving the utilization of IT resources. This project had a direct impact on reaching these goals.

The SMEs who were assigned to train new users represented valuable IT resources. Since there was no designated training staff in OMES ISD, the SMEs, who were all functional experts in budget, general ledger, accounts receivable, billing, payroll, etc., were often required to juggle their full-time responsibilities in order to conduct training.

A typical eight-hour training class required between 20 to 40 hours of personal time. Classrooms had to be reserved, materials and exercises had to be developed or updated, and security access had to be arranged. When you consider the additional eight hours of actual instruction time, a valuable professional was removed from their day-to-day job duties for at least one week.

Although online training development often takes longer than one week to complete, OMES ISD staff assistance has been reduced to anywhere from five to ten hours. This equated to huge cost-savings for the State of Oklahoma, and a better use of IT staff resources.

Our partner agencies were also pleased they could reduce travel costs related to employee training and keep productivity losses to a minimum.
Benefits

The OMES ISD Online Training Program resulted in immediate benefits, not only to OMES, but also to all agency partners.

Consistent, Quality Training: This project has allowed OMES ISD to ensure that all users are receiving the same training and the same level of training in a more efficient manner. In the example of the purchasing application tutorial, the one-hour classroom training event was condensed to a 12-minute video. The tutorial includes a quiz which, on average, takes less than three minutes to complete and has a 92% success rate.

End-User Satisfaction: Performance measures on the pilot project indicated that end-users wanted online training options for more applications. Additional indicators of end-user satisfaction include ease of use, relevant material, and positive feedback. These are all important components of adult education, and they indicate the acceptance rate for this new program will be high. One end-user summed it up best, “This method of training is a more effective and efficient use of time.”

Mobile Access: Course development is specially geared toward multi-platform delivery of training material. This allows learners to access the material at their leisure. These courses are available whenever there is a need.

Low Development Start-up Costs: The use of off-the-shelf development materials made the launch of the project move quickly. Likewise, the hiring of a staff member with an education and instructional design background provided the expertise to develop a high-quality learning tool.

Access for Users with Disabilities: All online training products were developed with built-in accessibility components so training is available to all employees.

Agency Savings: Offering our agency partners a cost-saving way to train their employees is probably the greatest benefit of this program. Whether it is an employee who has to travel or just someone who cannot be available because of work load, training can be a burden.

24/7 Availability and Easy to Locate: Users who need to access the training can easily do so from the OMES website. Additionally, users are regularly notified about new learning opportunities. These notifications include links they can use or share. This is notable as statistics indicate that nearly 80% of users access the online training via links contained in emails from co-workers or from the OMES ISD Training Coordinator.