

SUCCESS STORY



The Society of Actuaries (SOA) is an educational, research and professional organization dedicated to serving the public, its members and its candidates. The SOA's mission is to advance actuarial knowledge and to enhance the ability of actuaries to provide expert advice and relevant solutions for financial, business and societal problems. The SOA's vision is for actuaries to be the leading professionals in the measurement and management of risk. The organization has more than 26,000 members around the world.

BUSINESS CHALLENGES

- Propriety Learning Management System (LMS) was not SCORM compliant, required expensive, time-consuming customizations and lacked multi-language support
- Content was written in Dreamweaver, making developing and editing courses difficult and cumbersome
- Needed an enterprise LMS to integrate with current systems and easily deliver and manage learning activities

SOLUTION

- Meridian Global[®] LMS

RESULTS

- Deployed an enterprise LMS to better deliver, track and manage over 30 courses and certifications for 26,000 association members around the world
- Seamless integration with a proprietary LMS and Claro made it easy to create, edit and deploy courses and grade assessments
- Deep integration capabilities between Meridian and Personify allows users to securely purchase modules and courses
- Saved a significant amount of time developing and managing learning activities

EXTENDING LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES TO BETTER SERVE COMMUNITIES

The Society of Actuaries (SOA) is the largest professional organization dedicated to serving 26,000 actuarial members worldwide. A major part of SOA's vision is to further the professional development and continuing education of its members so they are fully equipped to better serve their communities. In order to make this vision a reality, in 2006 the SOA debuted a proprietary LMS to deliver e-Learning courses to its candidates and members around the world.

"In order to best serve society, our members need the opportunity to continuously advance their knowledge of the measurement and management of risk," said Leslie Fausher, e-Learning manager for the Society of Actuaries. "Education comes in several different forms. We offer everything from the Associateship-level Fundamentals of Actuarial Practice (FAP) course and Fellowship modules to Professional Development e-Courses. Our candidates and

members look to us to earn their Associateship or Fellowship and continue their education so they are fully prepared to serve their communities in their actuarial roles.”

The SOA’s proprietary LMS was created in 2006 to manage and track the learning and assessment activities of more than 20,000 candidates in 40 countries. Content was created by dozens of subject matter experts, written in Adobe Dreamweaver, an HTML editing tool, and uploaded into the LMS where it was then made available to SOA candidates and ultimately members.

Members have the opportunity to enroll in professional development courses aimed at strengthening their soft skills and achieve varying levels of recognized actuarial certifications.

Once a course has been completed, the associated assessment is uploaded to the LMS where it is scanned for viruses, run through

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plagiarism software and graded. As the demand for multi-language support and need for a SCORM-based solution increased, SOA realized the proprietary LMS limited their ability to meet those needs.

The issue was twofold, explains Fausher. First, because all of the courses were written in HTML they were not SCORM compliant, and if content needed to be updated or modified, the HTML code needed to be rewritten. Second, the LMS lacked the robust management, tracking and reporting capabilities of traditional enterprise learning management systems.

“Our proprietary LMS is a fantastic tool to facilitate our grading, assessment and plagiarism requirements; however, when it came to managing content and tracking and reporting learner activities, we were limited in what we could do,” said Fausher. “We needed a more efficient way to develop and manage course content.”

SELECTING AND DEPLOYING AN ENTERPRISE LMS

With ease of use and powerful integration features as top priorities for an enterprise LMS, SOA began evaluating learning technology and content authoring vendors that supported their specific business and integration needs. After evaluating several leading technology vendors, SOA selected Claro as its learning content management system (LCMS) and Meridian Knowledge Solutions as its enterprise LMS. The association was already using Personify to

manage its ecommerce functionalities.

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“Meridian’s API capabilities made connecting all of our technology easy. Content is developed in Claro, uploaded into Meridian Global where the user can browse, enroll and purchase courses using Personify’s ecommerce plugin. Upon course completion, assessments are uploaded via Meridian and delivered to our proprietary LMS where they are scanned for viruses, run through plagiarism checking software and graded by volunteers. The user experience is smooth, secure and seamless,” said Fausher.

Meridian’s customer success team worked closely and diligently with the SOA to ensure each requirement was met and the technology was integrated correctly. The fully-integrated enterprise LMS powered by Meridian was deployed in two phases. The first phase included nineteen professional development e-Courses such as Straight Talk, Decision Making and Communication (DMAC), several professionalism courses, Financial Economics and Enterprise Risk Management (ERM). Soon after, SOA launched its first course in Traditional Chinese. The second phase, which involved the delivery of complex

and lengthy prequalification courses, launched one year later. Currently the system supports several thousand learners.

“With Meridian as the foundation of our external learning program, we’re able to focus less attention on manually managing, tracking and reporting on learning and more attention on offering learning, development and accreditation opportunities to our members,” said Fausher. “The seamless integration with our proprietary LMS, Claro and Personify has given us the perfect learning technology structure to meet and scale with our growing needs.”

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