



CASE STUDY

Boots

With over 2,500 stores, Boots are one of the leading pharmacy-based and beauty led retailers in the UK. Every year in November and December they deliver training to distribute knowledge to over 45,000 users (including temporary Christmas staff) about their Christmas offers, products and services.

Challenge

Historically this training had consisted of a standard 20 minute e-learning module, but with the high volume of new offers and products they receive at Christmas, Boots decided it was time to try something different in order to refresh their training approach, encouraging excitement and generating emotional responses from their learners.

This work was undertaken with Mind Click prior to it's acquisition with Learning Pool and having worked with Mind Click for over 5 years, Boots entrusted them with the difficult challenge of creating a unique and innovative solution that would reinvigorate their Christmas training.

“ We trusted the team to come up with a great solution when we set them the difficult challenge of creating something wildly different to our previous training delivery.

Steven Evans,
Retail Learning Academy Manager at Boots



Solution

As Boots wanted to change the way their employees felt about their training, it was decided to introduce a learning game utilising our Articulate Storyline game engine, which would specifically tap into the promotion of an emotional reaction from players through game mechanics such as competition and reward.

Boots' retail stores and colleagues naturally compete with each other in terms of sales and store successes, so they leveraged this sentiment this by adopting internal store leader boards of the game scores. This helped to promote healthy competition and collaboration amongst staff, as well as encouraging learners to repeat the game more than once; increasing their knowledge and score whilst exhibiting what's possible with perseverance.

As gamification allows the learning content to be presented in an entertaining way, the employees at Boots found that learning was an enjoyable experience and so they began to willingly opt into training. Steven Evans comments:

“ Gamification brought an element of fun that was lacking in our previous L&D offer. We wanted people to be excited about the breadth of new products at Christmas and feel differently about the learning we offered around those products, and the game really did that.

The Articulate Storyline game engine is fully customised to suit Boots' branding and it was entirely Christmas themed to reflect their seasonal promotions. When beginning the game, the learner selects a Christmas themed avatar and their store location; then they make their way around the board using a die to unlock 10 mini challenges. This is where the learning content is incorporated within the game: a suite of 10 unique, gamified e-learning modules were created by the Boots in-house team which work with the game engine to highlight some of the key products, promotions and services that Boots were offering around Christmas. These modules complimented the gaming environment without feeling excessively gamified and ultimately still focused on learning outcomes.

After each mini e-learning challenge the learner is awarded a blue or grey star for their efforts, with grey suggesting that particular module must be taken again. Each star is worth a certain amount of gems, with the aim of the game to collect as many gems as possible throughout the 20 minute experience. This incentivises users to repeat the game more than once, increasing their knowledge and beating their high score. Each learner's score was also recorded on an internal store leader board to promote natural competition amongst employees.



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Deployment

How does the game engine work?

The technology behind the Boots product knowledge game is the reusable, game engine, coded in JavaScript and HTML5 by in-house developers. The game engine can be reconfigured to suit different contexts and brands and is very flexible in terms of layout, with the 10 bespoke e-learning modules included as standard.

Fully SCORM compliant, users' progress can be fully monitored and tracked when hosted on a LMS. Multi-device and responsive, the game engine is fully compatible with both Android, iOS (and of course, desktop) so the game is great for modern learners on the go.

Since the launch of the product knowledge game Boots have seen a significant impact driven fully by their usage statistics. For the Christmas 2015 season when the game was launched, Boots saw a massive increase in users from 15,000 in 2014 to over 45,000 by Christmas 2015. This is a massive 200% increase in users in just one year, highlighting

the massive impact the game has had on learner's engagement and driving the emotional response Boots desired.

The powerful influence the game made on learners is also reflected in their increase in completion rates, rising a huge 50% from the previous year.

Gamification has transformed training at Boots, provoking emotional responses and enthusiasm in their learners, which ultimately reenergised how they feel about L&D. The buzz generated from the game even managed to reach key stakeholders in Boots, who have now requested to gamify their departments' training also. As well as this the Christmas game secured the silver award for 'Best Learning Game' at the 2016 Learning Technologies Awards.

Looking forward, Boots now plan to use gamification as a key part of their L&D offering and they are looking into opportunities to repeat the game format again in different learning contexts.



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