	<p>Next Generation Learning @ Work</p> <p>Outstanding success in the Police</p>
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In the 2008 e-learning Awards the National Centre of Applied Learning Technologies (NCALT) achieved unprecedented success as winner of the ‘**e-learning industry award for outstanding achievement - corporate**’, Gold Winner for ‘**Excellence in the Production of Learning Content**’ and earning ‘Special Mention’ in the ‘**Best e-learning project securing widespread adoption**’.

We are all on a journey to improve the results of our learning interventions – so what can we learn NCALT’s experiences?

Over the last three years NCALT has challenged technical and cultural barriers within the UK police service. At the forefront of a radical shift in the way training is delivered, NCALT designs innovative learning solutions and provides almost 200,000 police officers and staff with the learning they need, when they need it. The complexity, diversity and sheer scale of the 43 Forces in the UK represented a massive challenge for NCALT to not only develop high-quality e-learning but to ensure that it was culturally acceptable in an environment where traditional methods of learning prevailed.

The Challenge

The NCALT team has faced significant challenges in implementing high quality and accessible e-learning solutions to learners including:

- meeting a national accessible learning requirement;
- developing and delivering e-learning solutions for use locally and nationally;
- developing and delivering e-learning as part of complex blends of learning;
- offering rapidity and flexibility to meet the demands of policing requirements;
- developing and supporting the delivery platform centrally
- facing extensive cultural resistance locally;
- working with variable local IT infrastructures.

Does some of that sound familiar in your organisation as you strive to implement new ways of learning? The NCALT team encourage a philosophy where team members mix seamlessly with operational police officers to ensure output meets the strict learning requirements of modern policing.

They have successfully delivered over 420,000 completed e-learning courses to learners all over the UK, and the products were produced with end-user and community consultation and subject matter expertise engagement as standard. Courses are often designed to be contextualised locally and also used within the classroom for refresher or re-enforcement of learning and that has helped to overcome resistance to new ways of learning.

Let us examine a couple of examples, commended by this year's award judges:

Example #1 – Helping staff deal with difficult and sensitive incidents

'Sudden Death' was the Gold Winner for **'Excellence in the Production of Learning Content'** and this winning submission is a great example of **Next Generation Learning @ Work**.

New recruit training in the Police is underpinned by 22 National Occupational Standards (NOS) and delivered within the context of 16 case studies, for example, robbery, counter terrorism, domestic violence and sudden death. To ensure the most applicable 16 case studies were chosen, a comprehensive survey was conducted among the 43 Forces and attending an incident where a **Sudden Death** has occurred came second as being the incident that gave officers the greatest degree of apprehension (after counter terrorism).

Officers were anxious about many of the issues surrounding attending a sudden death: encountering their first dead body; ensuring the scene is correctly preserved; delivering the death message to friends and family of the

deceased and coping with the reactions of the bereaved; as well as the personal impact of the experience.

Sudden Death is traditionally taught in the classroom, and while the procedural side – preserving the scene, working with the coroner's office and record keeping – can be taught with consistency and clarity, it was recognised that the 'emotional intelligence' side of handling a Sudden Death varied, and often depended on the tutor. Also, officers were often unsure as to where scene preservation requirements ended and the rights of relatives on the scene began so officers felt an additional online resource, if handled sensitively, could be of great benefit.

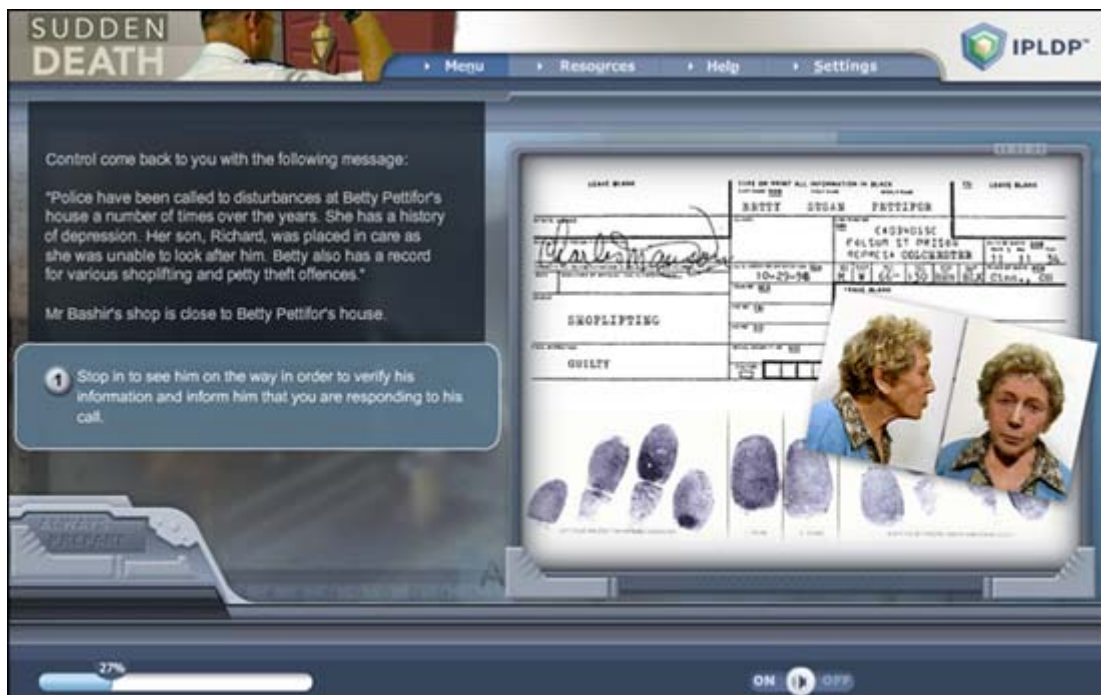
There is a resistance among police trainers as to whether a subject as emotive as sudden death could be successfully covered in an e-learning package, so there was work to be done to overcome those concerns.

The Learning Chapters in Sudden Death

The learning followed good practice by splitting into two learn and two apply chapters.

The first 'learn' chapter introduces procedural issues when called to a sudden death, and the second 'learn' chapter expands on core 'at the scene' issues, and gives more emphasis to 'between the cracks' learning with regard to family sensitivities.

This high degree of sensitivity requires appropriate content treatment.



The first 'apply' chapter, a branching scenario, asks the learner to attend the early stages of a potential Sudden Death investigation and make decisions on how to handle the case and the final 'apply' chapter starts with a scenario that asks the learner to deliver a death message *before* presenting the learning.

At each step of the process, DC Ron Cuthbertson QPM, a world authority on working with bereaved families, offers advice, through a series of video interviews, from his considerable reservoir of experience.

The chapter ends by giving a second chance to deliver the difficult message.

NCALT was conscious to avoid developing a course that was overwhelmingly grim, so emphasis was given to interactions such as tabloid newspaper interactions, animated sequences, case studies and scenarios.

Example #2 - Management of Police Information Programme

Earning a 'Special Mention' in the '**Best e-learning project securing widespread adoption**', this Management of Police Information (MoPI) programme, shows how the Police achieved widespread adoption, again with highly sensitive subject matter.

The background to this programme started on August 4 2002 when Jessica Chapman and Holly Wells disappeared from Soham – a quiet Cambridgeshire village. Two weeks later, their bodies were found in a ditch 25 miles away, sparking one of the largest man hunts in the history of the UK police. Ian Huntley was convicted of the murders and Maxine Carr was found guilty of conspiring to pervert the course of justice.

The Home Secretary launched the Bichard Inquiry, which examined the manner in which the police had handled intelligence about Ian Huntley's past and about the vetting processes which ultimately led to his employment in a local school. One of the key recommendations was to create a Code of Practice to cover the key principles of good information management (capture, review, detention, deletion and sharing).

The 'Guidance on the Management of Police Information 2006' document, was rolled out to support the Code of Practice, explaining the processes and procedures to have in place to meet the performance gap identified in the Bichard Inquiry. MoPI was identified as one of the largest training requirements to hit the police service since the Police and Criminal Evidence Act in the 1980s. It involves training areas of the subject to virtually all police officers and police staff to enable individual forces to sign themselves as MoPI compliant by the end of 2010. This made the programme an obvious candidate for e-learning.

Like all NCALT programmes, the MoPI course was delivered via the NCALT **Managed Learning Environment (MLE)**, which is accessible to all UK police forces and the wider policing community via the secure criminal justice extranet and over the internet. This provides a platform for the hosting, management and delivery of e-learning and associated resources which automates training initiatives such as requesting a proof of completion or certification.

Great programmes but will they be used?

NCALT had created an engaging programme, available to all but usage was not guaranteed. The main obstacles that NCALT came across were cultural resistance to e-learning within the forces; negative experiences of e-learning and technical limitations. But NCALT used various interventions to overcome these obstacles, which included:

- Involving users through a user group from different forces to review the project throughout its main stages and who engaged users from those forces as part of an end user testing programme;
- A communications plan was developed to engage a potential target audience of around 200,000 individuals - all of whom are expected to complete this e-learning by 2010. The plan helped to ensure that all 43 forces and the relevant departments within them were aware of the e-learning.
- **The Learning Outreach Team (LOT) provided the personal touch.** Independent surveys and capability assessments identified issues such as difficulty in registering staff onto the MLE, slow systems and PCs which did not meet the required specification to view the e-learning. A Learning Outreach Team (LOT) was tasked to ascertain where the problems lay. LOT worked with Forces through MoPI implementation officers to ensure a smooth programme roll-out locally. They created a Senior User Group which is made up of 43 Heads of Learning and Development to ensure Forces are updated on production progress and roll-out plans. LOT has also held Discovery Workshops with Forces to ensure local IT and cultural issues are addressed, and has implemented regional action plans which have seen slow adopter forces use of e-learning and MoPI in particular rise by over 90%.

What results were achieved?

Sudden Death was initially piloted by the Initial Police Learning & Development Programme (IPLDP) student officers in the Metropolitan Police Service. The reaction was extremely positive and the course is now being officially rolled out to all 43 forces. In addition, more than 500 people have completed the Incident Closure Assessment.

“I didn’t think that you could cover such an emotive subject such as dealing with bereaved families using online learning. However, I found that the NCALT package is an excellent tool for letting you deal with this difficult subject in a safe environment” Geoff Williams (MPS), Police Training Advisor

MoPI is being rolled out by all Forces around the UK to meet the 2010 deadline and is already the most completed e-learning course since its launch; the MoPI Programme Board stakeholders praised the contribution given by the NCALT team.

“It is clear that forces are now beginning to use NCALT as an alternative/addition to classroom-based training. The indications received so far is that the products produced by NCALT working in conjunction with the MoPI Implementation Team are of a very high standard both in terms of quality of the material and style of the modules.” Martin Hollingsworth, MoPI Senior Subject Matter Expert

In conclusion

This overall case study provides an excellent example of Next Generation Learning @ Work - NCALT has tackled an age-old problem where a traditional training need is now being effectively supported and enhanced through the application of learning technologies, and that’s real progress. In addition the subject matter is often highly sensitive and emotionally charged so the fact that learning technologies are being used in this way shows that there are few subjects that cannot be supported.

The lesson for us all must be that if NCALT can achieve so much in an organisation as complex and diverse as the Police then ask yourself *“Am I doing all I can to achieve comparable success in my organisation?”*

Top 10 Tips for engaging organisations with sensitive learning content

1. Align directly to business priorities and needs by surveying key users and allocate your resources accordingly;
2. Respect sensitivity of subject matter and audience expectations;
3. Devolve ownership and identify 'local' champions;
4. Forge collaborative efforts with key stakeholders to ensure high adoption rates, engagement and positive use;
5. Overcome resistance of user groups, review forums and regular updates as part of a strong customer relationship management approach;
6. Survey users on IT infrastructure, accessibility and usability;
7. Establish levels of support to address technical, product and implementation queries;
8. Imbed e-learning into classroom delivery as well as functioning stand-alone;
9. Network through local and national events to broaden knowledge and constantly improve;
10. Strive for excellence and don't stand still.