



# Using an Avatar for Sales Training

Manufacturing Industry

# Manufacturing Industry



### Background

CommLab India designed and developed an online course for one of its biggest Fortune clients, which is a leading global manufacturer of weighing instruments used in different applications. Apart from the products, their manufacturing facilities - located in the UK, Germany, the USA, Switzerland, and the People's Republic of China - also offer a broad range of services in their industry globally. These services are used in research, quality control labs, chemical, pharmacy, food industries etc. The course is designed and aimed at providing product training to sales executives who seek to enhance their knowledge and skills in selling their products effectively.

### Client Requirement

The client, one of the global manufacturers of precision instruments used in industries, laboratories and food retailing applications, needed to train its sales executives on the fundamentals of using the checkweighing instrument. This was to ensure that sales people could highlight how their product helped customers to increase productivity, achieve higher yield, lower material usage and create less wastage, thereby improving the sustainability of their business.

To meet this need, they decided that the best solution would be to provide an eLearning course to their internal customers i.e. sales executives.

The client wanted the course to be a basic level course offering fundamental knowledge of the product so that their sales force could serve their customers better, sell more products in the market, establish the company brand value globally, and improve their job position in the company as well.

The customer provided us with a Power point presentation and PDFs which contained information related to the basic concepts of the checkweighing machine.

### Challenge

As the content contained a series of complex conceptual information about the product, one of the main challenges was engaging learners and encouraging them in going through the course.

The training material also contained some calculations on measuring the accuracy of measurement of the product; simplifying this numerical data also proved to be a challenge. Also, making the e-learning experience user friendly proved to be yet another challenge because it was not a very familiar medium for most of the sales people.

### Solution

A guided learning model was used to engage the learners by providing them with the required mental stimulus and interactive exercises. After considering the different modes of eLearning, avatars seemed to be the most effective tool to enhance the quality of learning and ensuring the fulfillment of this training need. Many advocates of this strategy say *"Using avatars for corporate training can combine the best parts of face-to-face interaction and computer-based learning"*.

# Using an Avatar for Sales Training

## Our Approach:

In this context, our instructional approach was to divide the whole product training program into four phases such as Understanding product, Understanding customers, Understanding Competition in the market and Real sales training.

The course started with a setting of the context, describing the challenging times salespeople faced and the increasing competition in this sphere. WIIFMs (**What's In It for Me**) such as **"The more you know the product, the more your sales figures will grow"**, were also used to engage and motivate the learners from the word 'Go'.

Since the course was developed in flash, we made effective use of its inherent capability by introducing an avatar on screen, in the form of a "Gram". One key reason to do this was because the course revolved around the importance of a gram and how it makes a huge difference in checkweighing. The decision to use an avatar brought in many benefits - it made the course creative, interesting, engaging, and realistic. It also helped in **engaging learners emotionally and intellectually** throughout the course.

This avatar took the role of a pedagogical agent and made the learners walk-through the course. He explained his importance in checkweighing and covered various topics such as **accuracy, precision, limits** and **performance** etc. through different **interactivities** and **appropriate instructions**.

Each concept was attractively presented with relevant cartoons, so that learners wouldn't feel bored or over-burdened with heavy on-screen text. We followed a step-by-step procedure for calculations, where the key points were highlighted and formulas were shown in separate tables. This helped the learners understand each and every feature and benefit of the product easily.

Assessments or knowledge checks were also included at the end of every topic in the course to increase the learner's retention levels and reinforce the learning. This helped the learners to be well equipped with the required knowledge of the product – helping improve their selling skills of weighing instruments and sell more and more products to their customers – thus meeting the training need as well. Learners were also provided with Job-Aids in the course interface, which could be accessed at any stage of the course.

Choosing this learning model of personalizing the course and increasing its "human-ness" created a sense of relationship between the learners and the content presented in the course. This proved to be a winning strategy.

## Result

The developed course was highly interactive and provided an effective learning experience. The good quality of the narration further added value. The course included flash interactivities and animations, which made the course visually rich. It also had a quiz per module to test and reinforce learning. The course was presented so well that it created a **"Wow"** feeling for the client. They were very satisfied with the final product – which far exceeded their expectations.

## About CommLab India

CommLab India ([www.commlabindia.com](http://www.commlabindia.com)) is a Custom eLearning Solutions Company based in India. Since 2000, it has been providing state-of-the-art eLearning services to organizations across the world in the areas of Learning Consultancy, Custom Courseware, and Learning Technology. Some of our reputed clients are **BC Hydro, George Washington University, Kawasaki** and **Deloitte**. We are preferred vendors to some of the Fortune 500 companies like **Alcoa, Unilever** and **Pepco Holdings Inc.**

# Using an Avatar for Sales Training

## Sample Screenshots:

