

case study

Mitel

Mitel Deploys a Global Training Operation with Saba®

Solution Overview

Industry — Telecommunications

Challenge

Deploy a global training strategy in a compressed time-frame

Benefits

- Created global training operation
- More than doubled training in first three months
- Improved efficiencies enough to redeploy training staff to more strategic functions
- Increased revenue from training department

Solution

Saba® Learning Suite
 Saba® Publisher
 Centra® Symposium

Mitel is a market leader for voice, video and data convergence over broadband networks. With a focus on the user experience, the company delivers advanced communications solutions that are easily customized for individual business needs. Mitel solutions extend from intuitive desktop appliances and applications through to applications and services gateways that enable business-process integration and enhancement. Customers are provided with innovative ways to leverage their resources and migrate to the benefits of IP communications at their own pace. Mitel is headquartered in Ottawa, Canada, with offices, partners and resellers worldwide.

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Lynn McCormick, Manager, HR and Training Systems
 Mitel

Saba Closes the Gap

With the move from traditional telephony solutions (PBX's) in the late 1990s to voice-over-IP (VoIP) solutions, Mitel knew its existing reseller channels would experience a large training gap. The resellers knew voice technology very well, but IP and data networks were completely new to most. Mitel also had rapidly growing channels to support its new product lines with experience in data, but not in voice. The company had a policy requiring that resellers maintain training on the latest product releases in order to get support from Mitel and to be able to order products.

At the time, the majority of Mitel's training was delivered via leader-led courses in one of the regional training centers. Registration, student file management and other training administration functions were mainly manual processes. The cost of printing and shipping training materials was rapidly increasing. “We had two home-grown Lotus Notes-based online testing systems — one in North America and one in the United

Kingdom. Not only were these systems not designed for high volumes or delivering Web-based learning, but also, the systems were not integrated. We did not have a global view of training nor were we able to share content,” said Lynn McCormick, manager, HR and training systems at Mitel.

With the anticipated demand and growth of training with the new technology, Mitel needed a more versatile, robust and global solution. Mitel had to reach a broader audience with a more diverse and blended set of course offerings that leveraged the Web and e-learning technologies. After a thorough review process, Saba Learning was Mitel’s ultimate choice.

Saba Supports Global Strategy

In 2001, Mitel implemented Saba Learning to the North American employees and resellers. Mitel customized Saba, adding customer- and employee-requested enhancements and functionality. This customized system required maintenance and support from a resource perspective.

In 2003, Mitel began working on upgrading to a newer release of Saba. “Our goal was to minimize the number of customizations and the resulting support and maintenance, take advantage of Saba’s new features, and end up with a single global learning management system. We successfully accomplished this in two phases — upgrading the Americas and then deploying globally. The Americas go-live date was November 2004 and the final global go-live was completed in May 2005,” said McCormick.

Mitel has deployed Saba in every country where Mitel has operations or customers. Currently, Saba supports 25,000 external users and 1,700 internal employees. “Our strategy for learning is definitely changing now that Mitel has expanded globally. We have a global training operation now. No matter where our internal or external users are located, they have many options. Whether it’s a leader-led or virtual class or self-studies — Saba Learning helps Mitel realize our globalization strategy,” said McCormick.

Quick and Cost-Saving Results

Within the first three months of the Saba implementation, Mitel processed over 7,000 registrations, representing more than the entire preceding year of 6,500. This year, Mitel

anticipates processing approximately 45,000 registrations in North America alone. “With Saba, we have not needed to add any additional training facilities or the associated costs as customers are taking advantage of the other training delivery methods and a more blended learning approach. Leader-led courses that were once two to three weeks are now only one week with the rest of the content taken via self-study and Web-based courses,” said McCormick.

Saba has enabled Mitel to realize a reduction in costs in many areas. The number of administrative support staff previously required to do all the manual processes has dropped significantly from nine to four because of Saba’s automation. “We’ve redeployed those employees into more proactive roles so they are selling some of the training. Our training revenue has increased because it’s much easier to deliver now,” explained McCormick. In addition, because training materials and certificates are downloaded on the Web, Mitel’s printing and associated costs have become almost nonexistent.

Mitel’s customers also benefit greatly from Saba Learning. “Our customers have access to training 24x7 from anywhere. They can now access a wider variety of training courses and delivery methods, selecting those that best suit their needs and budget. And, they don’t have to wait to get the results of tests or certificates to be mailed, as it is now online,” McCormick said.

Mitel has been using Centra Symposium to deliver virtual training since the late 1990s. “When we launched Saba, we were able to seamlessly integrate Saba and Centra to provide a single point of access to the virtual classroom from Saba,” explained McCormick. “We no longer need to send out detailed instructions to each student on how to use Centra. They simply click the ‘Launch’ link from within Saba and immediately join the virtual session.”

Saba Publisher – Integration Saves Time

All of Mitel’s content is developed in-house using Saba Publisher. Because Saba Publisher is integrated with Saba Learning, Mitel didn’t have to be concerned about linking into a database with a custom solution. “No doubt, Saba Publisher saved Mitel a lot of time. We set up a number of

templates for the different types of courses we offer. Our content developers just had to plug in their content. It was very straightforward,” said McCormick.

Moving Forward

“We are very pleased and proud of our ability to deploy learning globally. It was in our original business plan four years ago and we finally accomplished it. We worked with Saba Support and Saba Consulting to accomplish this goal in a fairly short amount of time,” explained McCormick.

Currently, Saba Learning is integrated with Mitel’s Extranet. Mitel’s customers log into the Extranet using a single sign-on. Mitel then updates all the customer data from the Extranet database. “Over the coming year, we plan to integrate our HR training as well as third-party content (NETg),” said McCormick. “In addition, we have two more phased projects planned to further deploy Saba functionality and/or enhancements. The Information Technology department is now looking at leveraging Saba to deliver training for more of our in-house developed and standard business applications — something we have only done on an ad hoc basis,” concluded McCormick.