



SmartBuilder Users Create Serious eLearning Faster

SmartBuilder
Best Advance in Content Authoring Technology
February 2018



Company Background



Company At-a-Glance	
Headquarters	Encinitas, CA
Year Founded	1999
Global Scale	U.S., Canada, U.K., Netherlands, Switzerland, Australia, New Zealand
Customers/Output, etc.	Key Clients, Authoring Software: Asurion, Dept. of State, Dept. of Veterans Affairs, Honda, Huthwaite International, IDeaS, Norton Healthcare, OptumInsight, Sellafield, Sonic Health, Vivint Solar, USPS, Vivint Solar, Yamaha, YMCA. Key Clients, Authoring Software and Consulting Services: Ascend Learning, Google, Kaiser Permanente, LIMRA International, Qualcomm, Swarovski, US Courts, UNEP-WCMC
Industry	eLearning Authoring Software and Services
Website	www.smartbuilder.com

Value Proposition

Serious eLearning is Created Faster

SmartBuilder is the first and only HTML5 eLearning authoring tool to provide the power of programming to instructional designers, educators, and other non-programmers. This



allows users to create games, scenarios, performance support tools, and serious eLearning faster.

Most mainstream authoring tools can create tell-and-test content efficiently. However, these tools become much more difficult and time consuming to use when authors need to create rich interactivity.

In many cases, authors must use complex JavaScript to perform tasks that aren't supported within the tools. As a result, we believe that most eLearning fails to live up to its promise.

An examination of examples showcased on authoring tool websites indicates that authors do a great job of providing polished graphics and animations. But however nice the examples look, they rarely follow the core principles of serious eLearning.

What authors need is an efficient tool that can create the logic and structure required for meaningful and memorable interactivity. SmartBuilder provides this through a number of innovations. The core of these is a system of action blocks that can be snapped together like puzzle pieces to create rich interaction logic.

Client Use

Experienced instructional designers are currently using SmartBuilder to create effective learning experiences that include multi-step tasks, delayed feedback, intrinsic feedback, risk, and other techniques to engage and challenge learners.

For example, the University of Sydney uses the tool to create training for doctors on how to use pediatric ultrasounds in an acute care environment. The training is provided to over 300 doctors annually, resulting tens of thousands of babies receiving improved neonatal care.

Testimonial: Dr. Nicholas Evans

"I'm not a typical eLearning developer. I'm a full-time doctor and lecturer, so I was excited to find that I could quickly produce eLearning content using SmartBuilder, even before the training materials for the new SmartBuilder had been released. We needed a tool that is powerful enough to create multi-layered interactions which allow doctors to explore a 3D model of a heart from various perspectives and make simulated diagnostic decisions. The original version of the course was developed in Authorware and I was concerned that I wouldn't be able to find an authoring tool with all the functionality I needed for this interactive course. However, using SmartBuilder, I have been able to produce all the

content I need, with the added benefit of being able to develop it on a Mac, and deliver the course on tablets as well as computers.”
—Nicholas Evans, PhD., Clinical Associate Professor, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, University of Sydney

Product or Program Innovation

Objects and Action Blocks

SmartBuilder’s breakthrough innovation is a system of objects and action blocks, that provide two key benefits.

1. The system provides greater power for creating more meaningful and memorable eLearning than other technologies.
2. Feedback from comparison tests and from users indicates that SmartBuilder’s authoring process is faster.

True Object-Based Authoring for More Power

Most authoring tools provide objects like text, images, and buttons, which can be independently positioned, sized, and styled. However, when it comes to creating logic, all objects in these tools share a common/generic set of behaviors like show, hide, pause, and play.

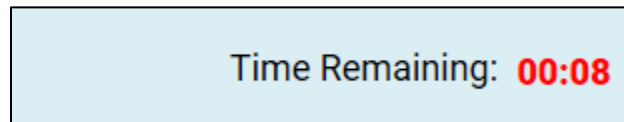
Figure 1: Authoring Tools

Common
Change state of
Show layer
Hide layer
Jump to slide
Jump to scene
Lightbox slide
Close lightbox
Move
Media
Play media
Pause media
Stop media

Source: SmartBuilder 2018

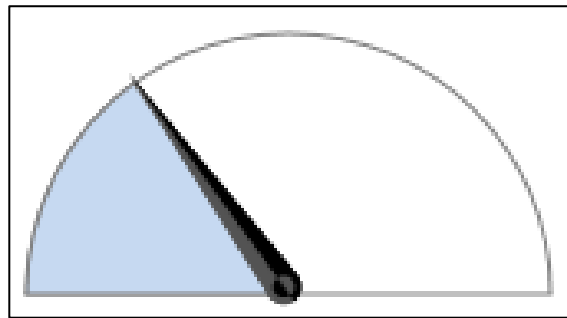
On the other hand, SmartBuilder is a true object-based authoring tool that provides unique behaviors for each type of object, which offers much greater power.

Figure 2: Timer



Source: SmartBuilder 2018

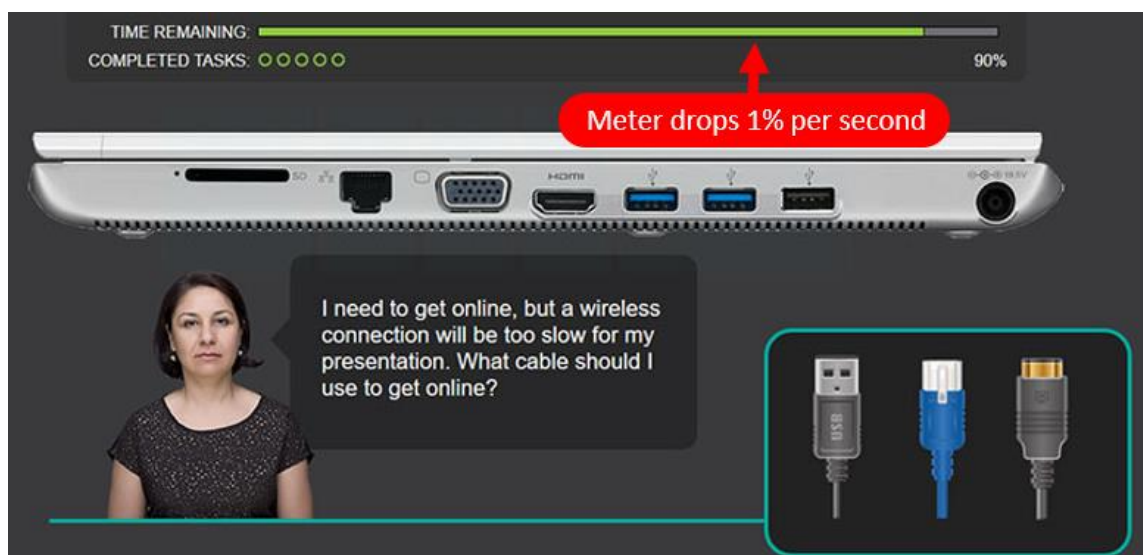
Figure 3: Performance Meter



Source: SmartBuilder 2018

You need to add an element of risk to an interaction by using a timer, but you want to represent the time remaining compared to total time by using a meter bar.

Figure 4: Time Remaining



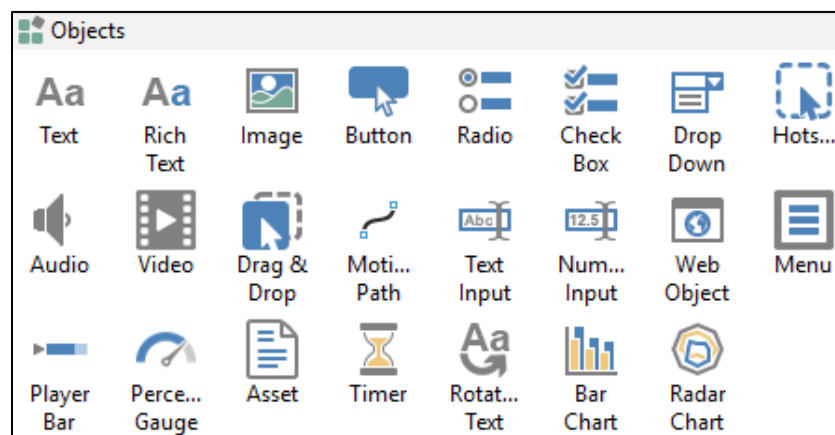
Source: SmartBuilder 2018

As a true object-based tool, SmartBuilder provides a variety of objects like a meter object and a timer object, but more importantly, it allows the two objects to communicate with each other. You can set the value of the meter to the time remaining in the timer. This type of logic, where one object can be adjusted based on a dynamic value from another object, is very difficult or impossible without a true object-based authoring system.

Larger Object Library

An object-based approach also opens the door to having a larger selection of interactive objects that can be seamlessly added to the tool. The image below shows the current library of objects, and more are being added with each release.

Figure 5: Object Library



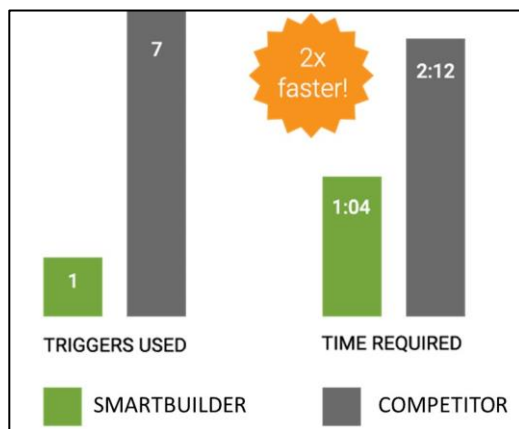
Source: SmartBuilder 2018

Faster Development

SmartBuilder's system of objects and action blocks is the key reason why it takes less time to set up rich interactions compared to other authoring tools. Several typical interactions were built in SmartBuilder and a competitor's tool, and they evaluated how long each took. SmartBuilder was faster substantially and, in several situations, the interactions simply couldn't be built in other tools.

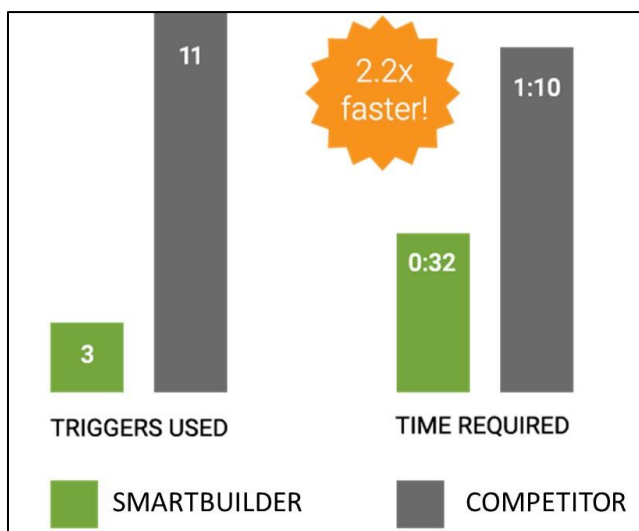


Figure 6: Create a Fill-in-the-Blank Exercise



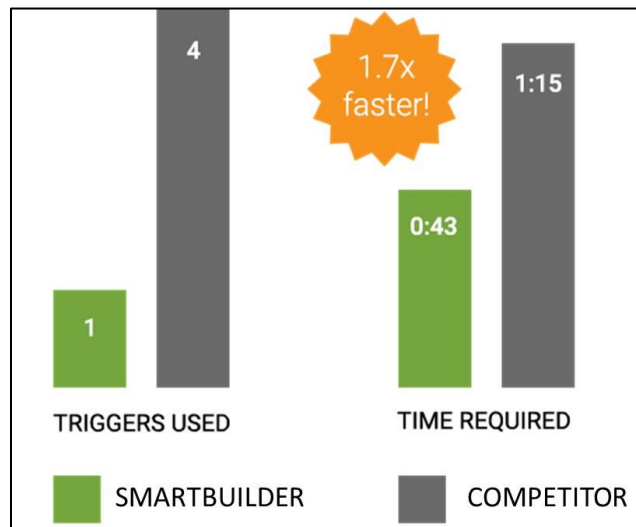
Source: SmartBuilder 2018

Figure 7: Create an FAQ Resource



Source: SmartBuilder 2018

Figure 8: Create a Hint Counter



Source: SmartBuilder 2018

Unique Differentiators

5 Key Differentiators

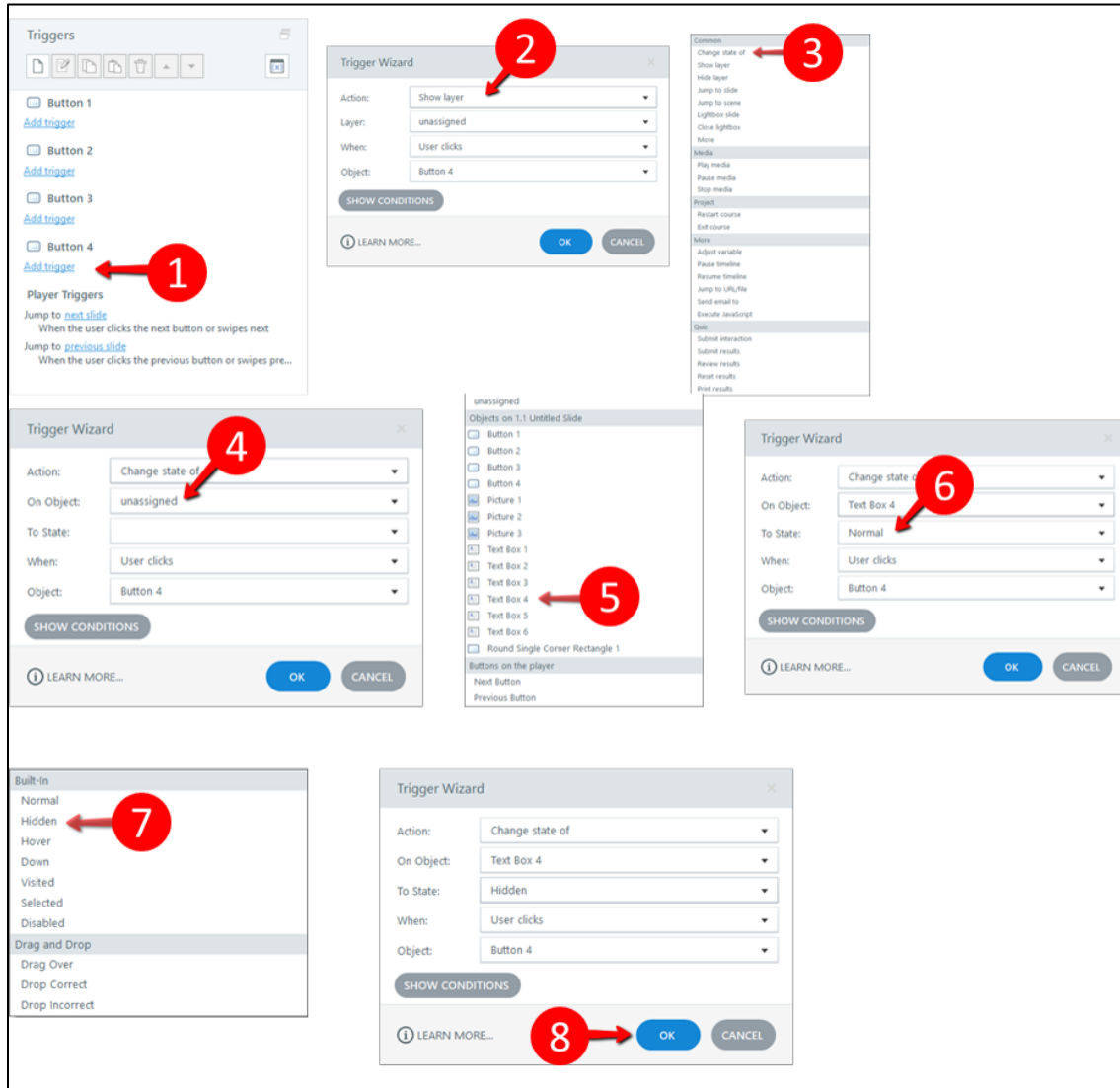
SmartBuilder provides five key differentiators that make it more powerful and faster than other tools for creating serious eLearning.

1. Create Logic by Selecting Objects Directly on the Page

SmartBuilder allows authors to create action logic by selecting objects directly on the page, rather than by drilling down through popups and menus.

For example, to create a simple action such as click a button to hide some text, the process typically requires eight steps in other authoring tools.

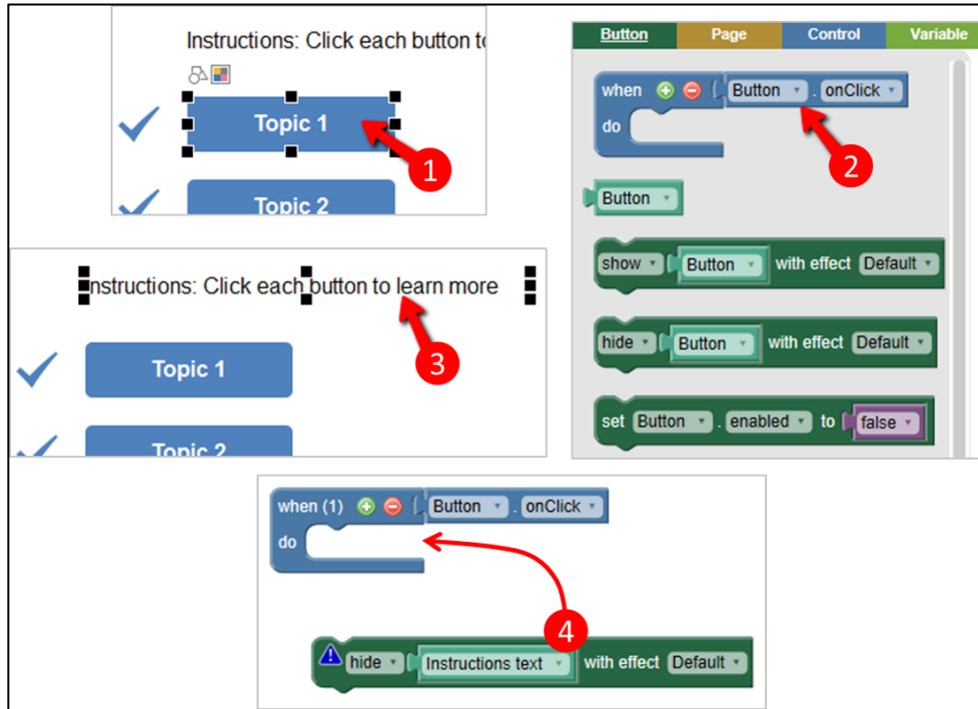
Figure 9: Selecting Objects



Source: SmartBuilder 2018

On the other hand, using SmartBuilder, the author selects the button object directly on the page and chooses the “on click” action block, then they select the text object and snap in the “hide” block. This requires half as many steps, but equally importantly, it is more visual and intuitive.

Figure 10: "On Click" Action Block

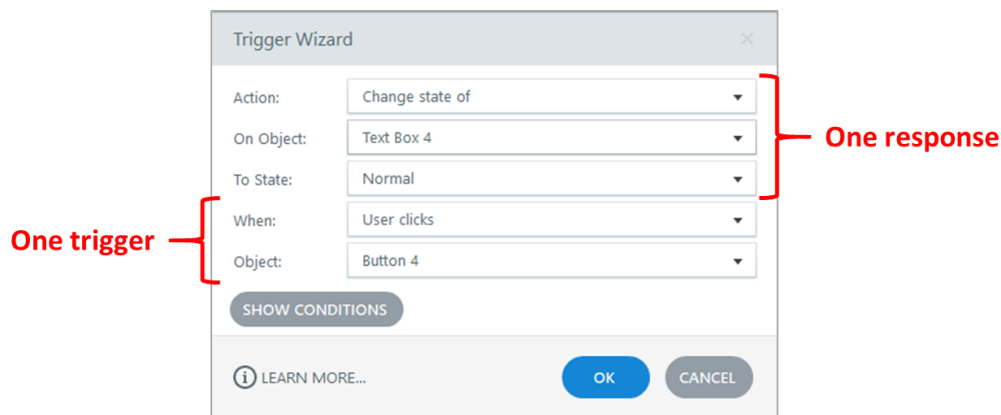


Source: SmartBuilder 2018

2. Actions with Multiple Responses

Other authoring tools only allow single trigger, condition, and response combinations.

Figure 11: Trigger Wizard



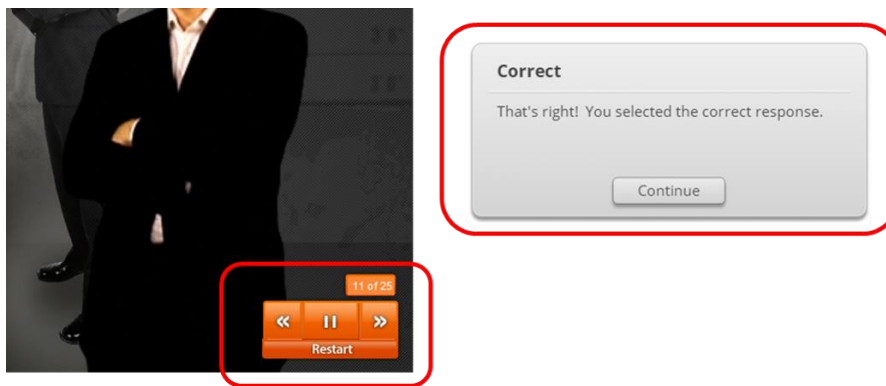
Source: SmartBuilder 2018

SmartBuilder allows authors to combine multiple triggers, conditions and responses in a single action. For example, to add more responses to this action, the author simply snaps in more blocks. This is a huge time saver.

3. Powerful Master Pages

Other tools use masters almost exclusively for navigation and question feedback.

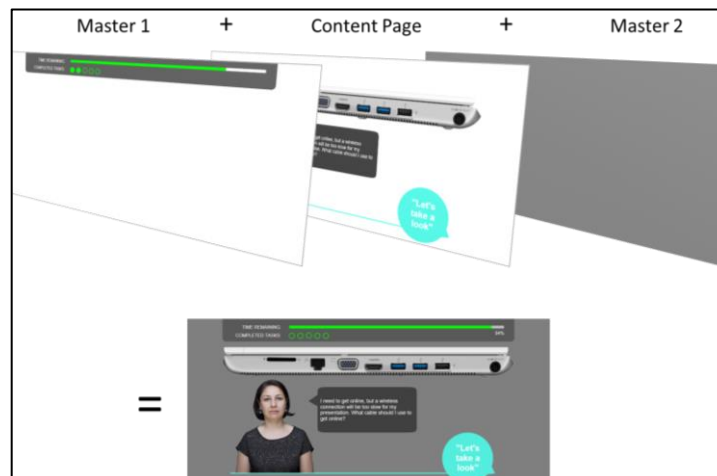
Figure 12: Powerful Master Pages



Source: SmartBuilder 2018

On the other hand, using SmartBuilder master pages, authors can also create unique resources for an entire course, or just selected pages. Masters can be layered above or below content pages, and multiple masters can be linked to a single page. This flexibility is essential for creating case scenarios and gamification where authors need persistent items across multiple pages of a course.

Figure 13: SmartBuilder Master Pages



Source: SmartBuilder 2018

Example 1

This scenario uses a highly customized menu sidebar with performance meters and multiple pages containing interactions that update the meters.

Figure 14: Customized Menu Sidebar

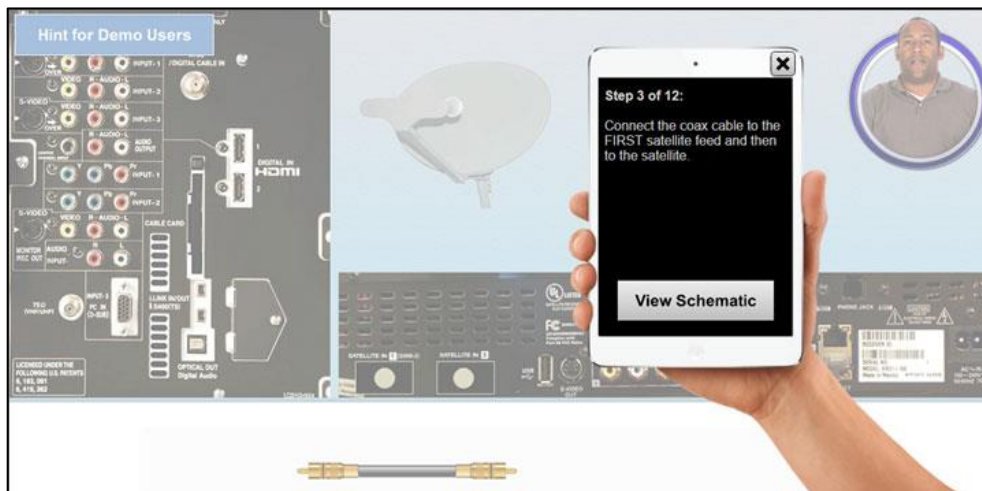


Source: SmartBuilder 2018

Example 2

This scenario contains a simulated performance support popup created on a master and referenced throughout the scenario.

Figure 15: Performance Support Popup

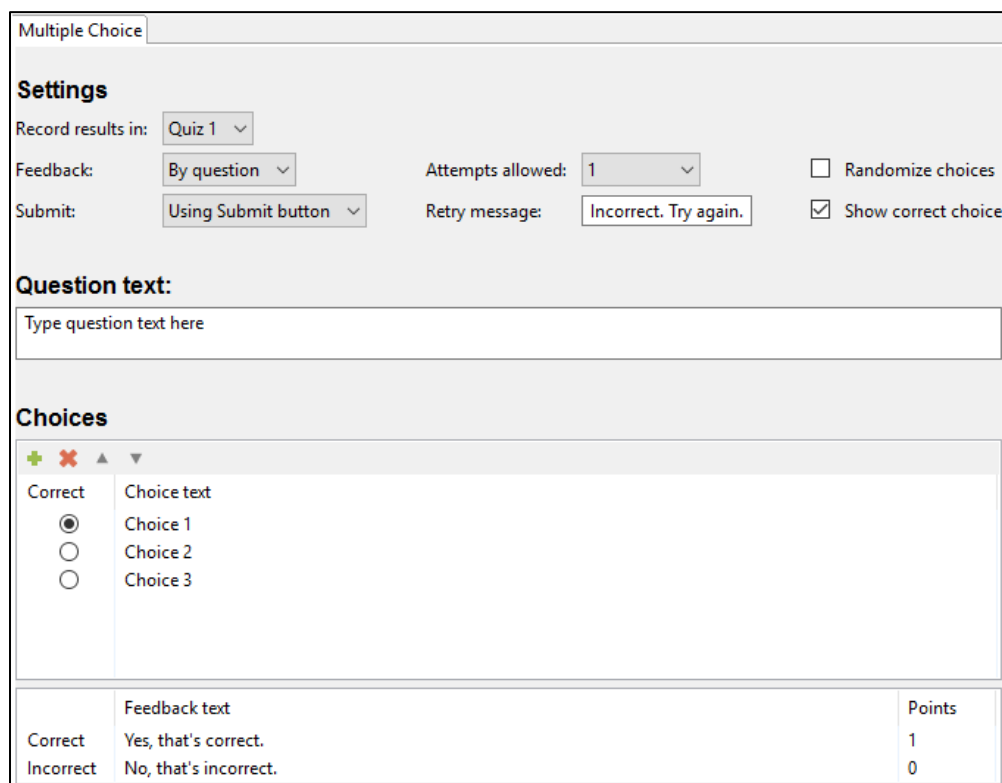


Source: SmartBuilder 2018

4. Wizard-based Templates

Most eLearning tools provide templates, and some of these include form-field or wizard-based interfaces. SmartBuilder takes this one step further and allows advanced authors to create new wizard-based templates by using the SmartBuilder tool itself. This results in a growing library of wizard-based templates which allow beginner authors to create content using form fields rather than having to learn the intricacies of the tool.

Figure 16: Settings



The screenshot shows the 'Multiple Choice' settings interface. It includes sections for 'Settings', 'Question text', 'Choices', and a feedback table.

Settings

Record results in: Quiz 1

Feedback: By question

Attempts allowed: 1

Submit: Using Submit button

Retry message: Incorrect. Try again.

Randomize choices

Show correct choice

Question text:

Type question text here

Choices

Correct

Choice 1

Choice 2

Choice 3

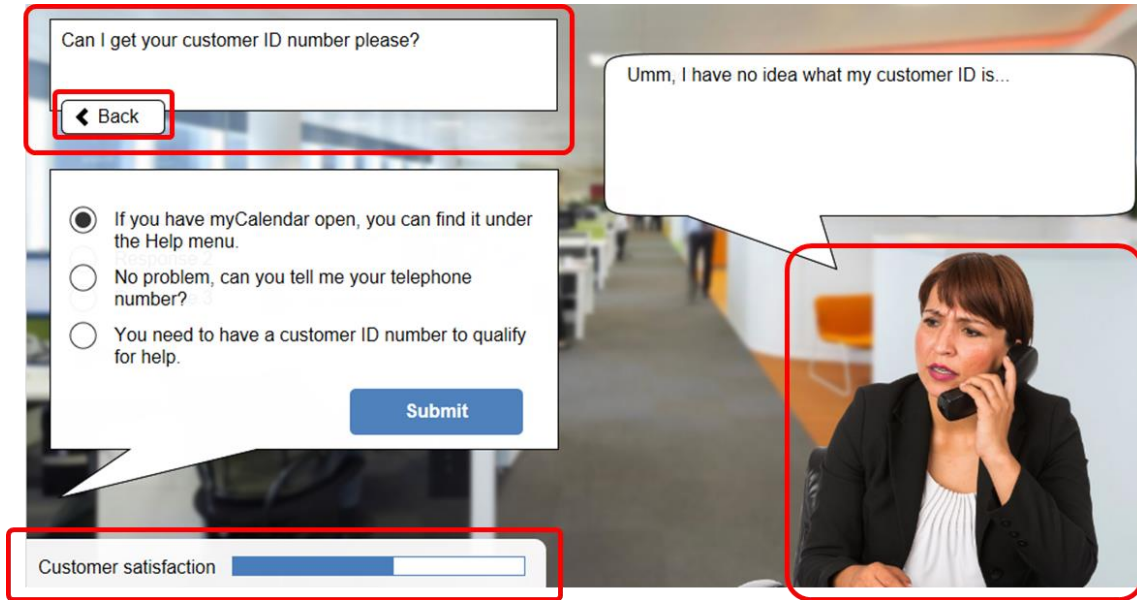
	Feedback text	Points
Correct	Yes, that's correct.	1
Incorrect	No, that's incorrect.	0

Source: SmartBuilder 2018

For example, users recently requested a template to make it easier to create branching scenarios. So, the SmartBuilder team developed a template, using SmartBuilder, that provides rich branching scenario features including:

- automatic linking of the previous choice to the next branch in the scenario to maintain context
- settings to configure emotions for the scenario character
- settings for points tied to a performance meter
- the capability to step back in the scenario.

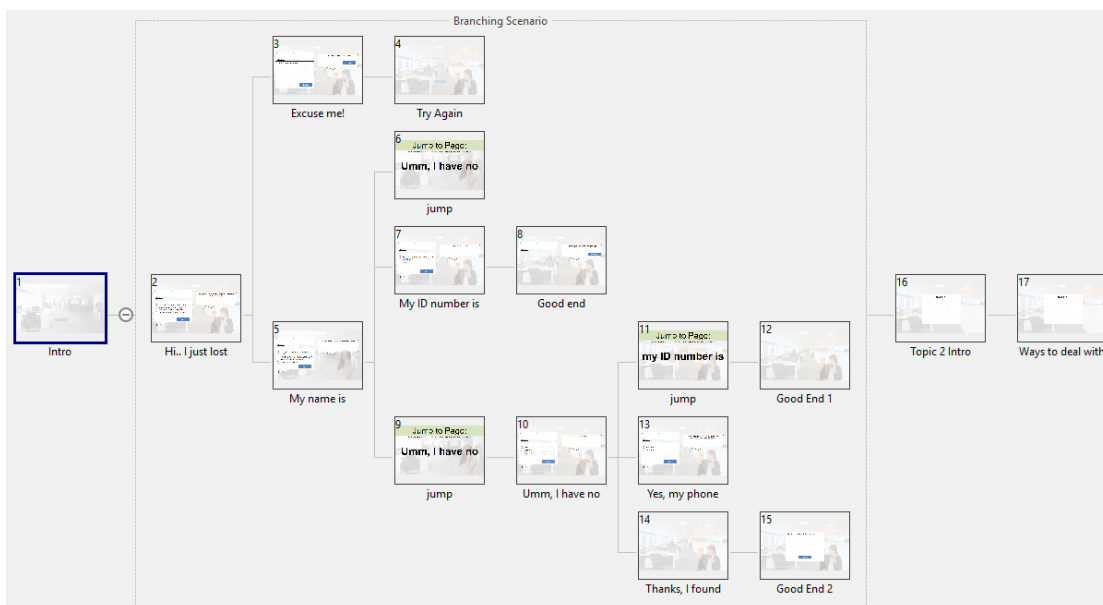
Figure 17: Example Scenario



Source: SmartBuilder 2018

Finally, each scene is tied together in a visual flow chart to make branching logic more visible. These combinations of features can only be matched by specialist tools that focus singularly on creating branching scenarios.

Figure 18: Visual Flow Chart

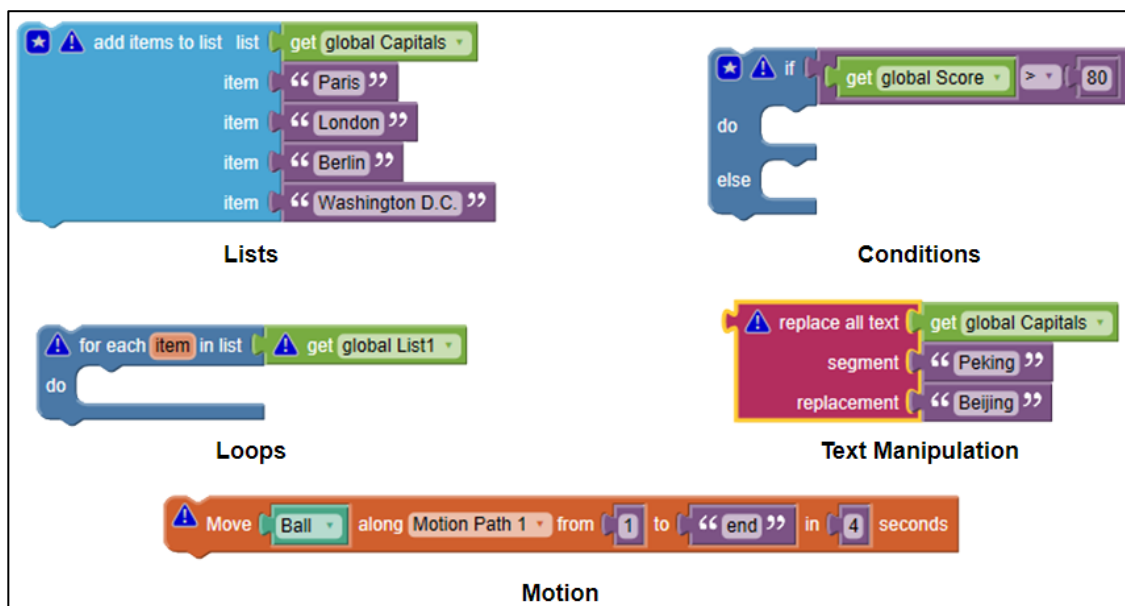


Source: SmartBuilder 2018

5. Advanced Logic

SmartBuilder actions can expand to match authors' skills and imagination thanks to advanced logical structures such as lists, conditions, loops, text manipulation and motion. This flexibility allows authors to create rich content that would be impossible in other tools.

Figure 19: Advanced Logic



Source: SmartBuilder 2018

6. Cross Platform Support

Many authoring tools only support development on Windows. SmartBuilder supports development on both Windows and Mac OSX. Projects created on one operating system can be opened on the other, allowing team members to share files regardless of hardware preference.



Measurable Results

Client 1: Vivint Solar, Industry: Home Solar Energy

Vivint Solar is a leading full-service residential solar provider in the United States (<https://www.vivintsolar.com/>). The Vivint Solar Performance Center uses SmartBuilder to create a variety of eLearning experiences for employees and for Vivint Solar customers.

Using SmartBuilder's math and logic blocks, Vivint Solar has also created performance support tools, such as calculators, that sales representatives use on iPads while visiting customers at their homes. These tools calculate product and labor cost estimates, electrical requirements, and incentive program ROI based on numerous inputs such as average utility bill, interest rates, and existing electrical components in the customer's home.

Measurable Benefits

Due to complex functionality, Vivint Solar had originally considered the development of performance support tools to be an IT department project. However, after seeing how quickly the training team was able to produce the tools in SmartBuilder, the projects were handed over to the Performance Center.

On average, what was estimated to take IT months to produce was created in SmartBuilder in just days. Additionally, the tools were created from start to end by a single developer because of the efficiencies of the software. Overall, the development savings on these tools resulted in thousands of dollars and weeks of development time. The quick deployment matched the speed of the company's need.

Vivint Solar employees rave about the quality and accuracy of the performance support tools. They find themselves saving countless hours of work time as they implement the tools on their teams.

"This new version of SmartBuilder is amazing! My company has already made some incredible learning and performance experiences with SmartBuilder and our stakeholders are amazed at what we can do with it. We tried to build several of our recent projects using other tools and hit walls in terms of functionality. We then started using the new SmartBuilder and have yet to come up with a design that we can't implement. Stakeholders have started to send the Performance Center their projects because we can get it done extremely fast with SB V4." –J. L. Pope, Performance Center Manager, Vivint Solar



Client 2: Active Mind Solutions/Artemis eLearning, Industry: Social Care

The Artemis Project (<https://www.artemis-online.org.uk/index.php>) was created out of a need for common orientation across local government entities in the United Kingdom. Active Mind Solutions (AMS) led the course development for this project.

Following the principles of serious eLearning, each module contains meaningful interactivity including scenarios and other thought provoking exercises.

Using SmartBuilder, AMS worked closely with subject matter experts to rapidly create functional prototypes prior to final development. This enabled the design team to ensure that interactions were effective and motivating for learners. SmartBuilder was also used for the final development after prototypes were approved.

Measurable Benefits

- Over 120,000 learners have completed Artemis courses to date.
- A 5:1 return on Investment over five years based on an estimated return of £2,053,000 and costs of £408,765, funded by subscriptions.
- An 87% cost reduction compared to proving the same training via face to face.

“For the Artemis project, we needed an authoring tool that would allow us to make a wide variety of rich learning experiences. Many of these included branching scenarios and gamification elements. The SmartBuilder software was always up to the task. We also appreciate the capability to quickly prototype activities and obtain feedback from stakeholders before diving into full development. The courses have received excellent ratings from users and from the six Children’s Trusts that funded the initial development.”

–Gulliver Gray, Director, Active Mind Solutions

About Brandon Hall Group

Brandon Hall Group is a HCM research and advisory services firm that provides insights around key performance areas, including Learning and Development, Talent Management, Leadership Development, Talent Acquisition, and HR/Workforce Management. With more than 10,000 clients globally and more than 20 years of delivering world-class research and advisory services, Brandon Hall Group is focused on developing research that drives performance in emerging and large organizations, and provides strategic insights for executives and practitioners responsible for growth and business results.

Inspiring a Better Workplace Experience

Our mission: Empower excellence in organizations around the world through our research and tools each and every day. At the core of our offerings is a Membership Program that combines research, benchmarking and unlimited access to data and analysts. The Membership Program offers insights and best practices to enable executives and practitioners to make the right decisions about people, processes, and systems, coalesced with analyst advisory services which aim to put the research into action in a way that is practical and efficient.

Membership Offers Tailored Support

Our membership delivers much more than research. Membership provides you direct access to our seasoned team of thought leaders dedicated to your success, backed by a rich member community, and proactive support from our client services team.

RESEARCH ACCESS & EVENTS

- Reports
- Case Studies, Frameworks & Tools
- DataNow® & TotalTech®
- Webinars and Research Spotlights
- Annual HCM Conference

ADVISORY SUPPORT

- Ask the Expert
- 1 on 1 Consultations
- Research Briefings
- Benchmarking



CLIENT SUCCESS PLAN

- Your Priorities
- Executive Sponsor
- Client Associate
- Monthly Meetings

Strategic Consulting Offers Expert Solution Development

Our consulting draws on constantly updated research and hundreds of case studies from around the globe. We provide services that simplify and target efforts to produce business results.

BENCHMARKING

- Competitive/Comparative
- Maturity Model
- Custom Research

STRATEGY

- Business Case
- Planning
- Organization & Governance

TECHNOLOGY SELECTION

- Vendor Selection
- Architecture Design
- Systems Evaluation

DEVELOPMENT & INTEGRATION

- Program Design
- Assessment
- Survey
- Process Integration

For more information, contact us at success@brandonhall.com.