Brandon Hall
GROUP

Akamai Offers Personalized English Improvement through Borderless Learning

Akamai Technologies
Best Unique or Innovative Learning and Development Program
November 2018

Brandon Hall
GROUP
HCM EXCELLENCE AWARDS
SILVER
EXCELLENCE IN
LEARNING
2018

Company Background

Company-at-a-Glance	Akamai is revolutionizing how businesses optimize consumer, enterprise and entertainment experiences.
Headquarters	Cambridge, Massachusetts
Year Founded	1998
Revenue	$2.5 billion
Employees	7,600-plus
Global Scale	130 countries
Customers/Output, etc. (Key customers and services offered)	Content Delivery Network (CDN) services to 50 percent of Global 500 companies, 55 percent of Fortune 500 companies, 28 of the top 30 Zenith "Global Media Owners," 18 of the top 20 global e-commerce sites, more than 150 of the world's leading news portals, 18 of the top 20 global asset managers, seven of the top 10 global insurers, eight of the top10 Global FinTech firms, seven of the top 10 global newspapers, eight of the top online publishers, 19 of the top 20 global social media sites, three of the top five semiconductor companies, eight of the top 10 global auto manufacturers, 13 of the top 15 global pharmaceutical companies and nine of the top 10 global computer hardware manufacturers.
Industry	IT services
Stock Symbol	NASDAQ: AKAM
Website	www.akamai.com

Budget and Timeframe

Budget and Timeframe	Cohort 1: April 2016 to October 2016; Cohort 2: November 2016 to May 2017; Cohort 3: August 2017 to January 2018; and Cohort 4: March 2018 to September 2018.
Overall budget	Confidential
Number of (HR, Learning, Talent) employees involved with the implementation?	Akamai: Two employees; GlobalEnglish: six employees.
Number of Operations or Subject Matter Expert employees involved with the implementation?	Cohort 1: 63 learners (Virtual Group); Cohort 2: 75 learners (Virtual Group); Cohort 3: 46 learners (Virtual Group) and 28 learners (coach); and Cohort 4: 48 learners (Virtual Group) and 19 learners (coach).
Number of contractors involved with implementation	N/A
Timeframe to implement	Three weeks: pre-assessment; one week: pre-grouping (Virtual Group); and two weeks: weeks: registration and finalizing grouping.
Start date of the program	Since April 2016.

Business Conditions and Business Needs

The internet plays a crucial role in the way companies, government agencies and other enterprises conduct business and reach the public, but the world is rapidly evolving. In recent years, there has been a dramatic increase in the use of social media for sharing photos, videos and ideas. More consumers are "cutting the cord" and consuming entertainment over the internet rather than through traditional cable. Web pages are more complex with advertisements, videos, graphics and other third-party content, causing speed and reliability to suffer. Online transactions and media are increasingly moving to mobile devices. More and more, government agencies want citizens to pay their taxes, submit applications and request information online. Security threats have grown more complex and arise more frequently. Enterprise applications are moving from behind the firewall to the cloud. Smart enterprises want to take advantage of these trends safely, profitably and intelligently.

Akamai provides cloud services for delivering, optimizing and securing content and business applications over the internet. The key factors that influence their financial success are their ability to build on recurring revenue commitments for their performance and security offerings, increase media traffic on their network, develop new products and carefully manage their capital spending and other expenses.

For most of their solutions, their customers commit to contracts having terms of a year or longer, which allows Akamai Technologies to have a consistent and predictable base level of revenue. In addition to a base level of revenue, the firm also is dependent on media customers where usage of their services is more variable. As a result, Akami's revenue is impacted by the amount of media and software download traffic they serve on their network, the rate of adoption of social media and video platform capabilities, the timing and variability of customer-specific one-time events and the impact of seasonal variations on their business. Akamai's ability to expand its product portfolio and to maintain the prices it charges for its services also are key factors impacting its revenue growth.

The organization has over 7,600 employees with nearly half of the employees in sales/service/marketing roles in 60 offices. If Akamai is unable to retain key employees and hire and retain qualified sales, technical, marketing and support personnel, its ability to compete could be harmed. There is significant competition for talented individuals in the regions in which Akamai's primary offices are located, which affects both the firm's ability to retain key employees and hire new ones. These departments have had continued headcount growth over the last few years, coupled with strategic acquisitions to augment and complement existing technological capabilities in 2014-16. To streamline operations and efficiencies, there was a restructuring in 2016 that organized the sales/service/marketing departments in to three divisions, centered on solutions.

1. Media Division.
2. Web Division.
3. Enterprise and Carrier Division.

Of significance is the international markets' aggressive double-digit growth. International revenue for 2017 was $855 million, a 19% increase over 2016 revenue.

Akamai is consistently ranked among the best places to work — whether at its Cambridge, Massachusetts home or around the globe. Keeping Akamai positioned as a great place to work takes focus and resource dedication by the field and technical enablement

department which operates independently in regions. This case study focuses on Akamai's Asia geographies of China, Korea, Japan, Taiwan and India, which have the largest teams and were identified as having the largest skill gaps in terms of business English proficiency. GlobalEnglish has been working with Akamai in the region for three years within the sales/support/marketing roles to reduce this language skills gap. For example, when town-hall meetings were held out of the Massachusetts headquarters, an English/Japanese translator was hired for the Tokyo office. The Tokyo office did have an onsite, traditional classroom English learning model but the impact was minimal with low attendance and there wasn't any synergy across the region as each country had its own offering.

Overview

Historically, face-to-face English learning was the single solution of choice for most companies. But attendance is typically low, quality is difficult to control, costs are high and consistency is all but impossible to maintain. With these challenges in mind, there was a shift to the online environment, which resolved several issues but presented new challenges, for instance, on how to keep people motivated with a purely technology-driven approach.

GlobalEnglish designs Business English programs that deliver measurable impact by removing language and cultural barriers so every global worker is empowered to contribute and thrive.

A new model of training was born called Virtual Group. GlobalEnglish's Virtual Group combines the best of both worlds: the important aspects of human-based training and the best of technology innovations. This image depicts how these two modes come together in blended learning.

Figure 1: Two Modes Collide in Blended Learning
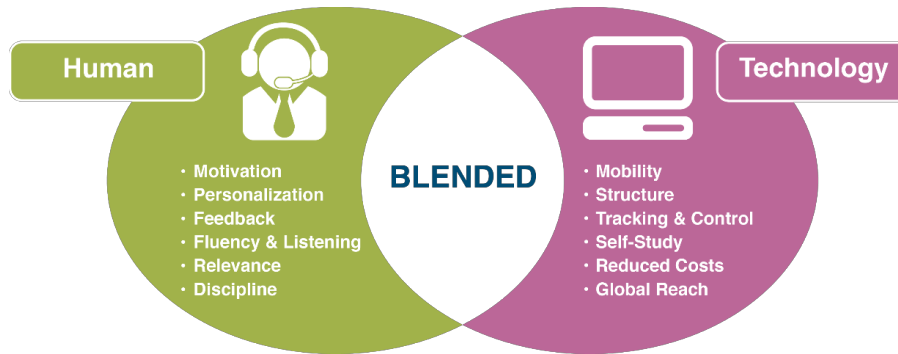
Source: Akamai

Pushing adult-learning to the next level is GlobalEnglish's delivery of "the flipped classroom." This model moves the lecture out of the classroom to pre-class preparation and uses valuable classroom time for active learning. Learning is weaved throughout GlobalEnglish's implementation, planning and deployment and supported with online learning tools and the live coaching sessions.
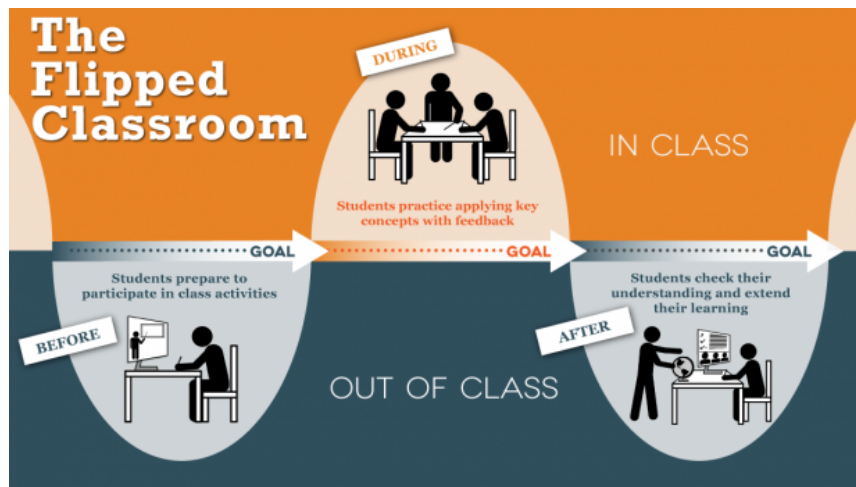
Figure 2: The Flipped Classroom

Image is courtesy of: University of California San Marcos

Source: Akamai Technologies

A final core concept of the GlobalEnglish program is that it's based on the 70/20/10 framework — the notion that 70% of learning comes through experiential on-the-job learning, 20% through social connections such as working with others and 10% through structured courses and programs.

A customer success-driven approach is at the heart of the framework developed for Akamai. It encompasses the entire lifecycle of the program and is benchmarked with goals and a dedicated customer success program manager to provide program management support.

Figure 3: Lifecycle of the Program

Source: Akamai Technologies

It was determined the best product solution mix for Akamai was GlobalEnglish Coach and GlobalEnglish Virtual Group plus GlobalEnglish Assessment to place people into the right learning environment and to set a pre- and post-program measurement index. Segmenting the learners was done to provide a more exclusive learning program for management with GlobalEnglish Coach, providing one-on-one learning/speaking time. Coach also is used as an incentive and reward program internally. GlobalEnglish Virtual Group is the first experience learners have with the program after they are hand-selected to join the program. Learning is arranged in small groups of three to four to provide an opportunity to speak among other learners in the same learning level with mixed country participants in each class to ensure participants do not resort to using local language during class time.

Figure 4: GlobalEnglish Product Portfolio

Source: Akamai Technologies

In Asia, English education and the main competency test called TOEIC is based on reading and listening skills leading to a passive approach to learning language. Speaking is the GlobalEnglish program priority for participant roles within sales/marketing and technical support (conference calls, presentations, reporting to management in America, consensus building, etc.). This is the opposite of the traditional schooling provided and as a result, new participants to Virtual Group usually have a lack of practical speaking confidence.

Akamai had a high interest in the holistic benefits of the English learning program rather than on specific scoring levels of the learners. The goals for the program are more "soft" and target collaboration and day-to-day ease of interactions. Collaboration and teamwork are valued skills in the regional cultures.

Akamai and GlobalEnglish partnered to set the following goals for the program:

- Streamline Akamai's vendor operations throughout the region.
  - o More judicious spending of learning budget.
- Increase collaboration of the L&D managers.
  - o Increased visibility of the English learning program within region.
- Demonstrated Agile response to the business requirements of a high level of English proficiency within the identified roles. Improved communications with

headquarters in Massachusetts and enhance the working relationship within Asia to reduce misunderstandings and promote global alignment.

o Remove the language barrier to meet the challenges of this fast-paced technology marketplace.

FIgure 5: Coach and Virtual Group

GlobalEnglish
Coach

Taiwan 1

Japan 13

China 2

South Korea 7

India 1

Hong Kong 1

GlobalEnglish
Virtual Group

Japan 19

China 8

Taiwan 3

South Korea 14
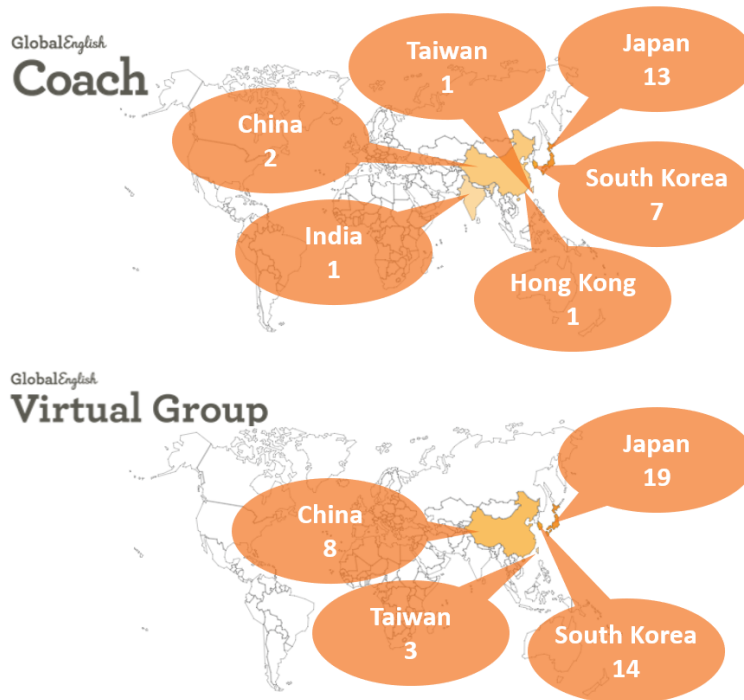
Source: Akamai Technologies

"I was looking for an English learning solution with professional quality, innovative edge and yet, cost effective. Plus, it had to meet our unique challenge of consistent delivery across several countries in APJ region. Two years passed since our first introduction and the participants feedback proves that we made a right choice!" — **Yasuo Takahashi**, Akamai Program Manager for L&D

Overall, the competitive advantage of the GlobalEnglish platform revolves on the fact that learners from different areas and cultures from Japan, China, South Korea, Taiwan, Hon Kong and India are able learn together how to communicate, collaborate and perform their work in Business English. By extension, this program reduces the language barrier and improves the global operations of any globally minded company operating in APAC.

Design of the Program

Many considerations take place to align the company culture, region, learner levels, and expectations of the English programs with the best GlobalEnglish solution configuration.

Low-Context Culture vs. High-Context Culture

This chart describes the essence of two types of cultures and soft skills required to succeed, plus illustrates potential challenges.

Figure 6: Low-Context vs. High-Context

	Low-Context	High-Context
Example Countries	US, UK, Canada, Germany, Denmark, Norway	Japan, China, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, France, Italy, Spain
Business Outlook	Competitive	Cooperative
Work Ethic	Task-oriented	Relationship-oriented
Work Style	Individualistic	Team-oriented
Employee Desires	Individual achievement	Team achievement
Relationships	Many, looser, short-term	Fewer, tighter, long-term
Decision Process	Logical, linear, rule-oriented	Intuitive, relational
Communication	Verbal over Non-verbal	Non-verbal over Verbal
Planning Horizons	More explicit, written, formal	More implicit, oral, informal
Sense of Time	Present/Future-oriented	Deep respect for the past
View of Change	Change over tradition	Tradition over change
Knowledge	Explicit, conscious	Implicit, not fully conscious
Learning	Knowledge is transferable (above the waterline)	Knowledge is situational (below the waterline)

Source: Akamai Technologies

Akamai is built on an American culture with a low-context culture and the Asian region of Akamai functions as a high-context culture. GlobalEnglish coaches and materials (i.e., culture notes) adapt to the high-context way of communicating to the low-context

business culture of Akamai's headquarters. Coupling this cultural difference with the education approach previously mentioned throughout Asia guided the GlobalEnglish account team to recommend GlobalEnglish Coach, GlobalEnglish Virtual Group and GlobalEnglish Assessment.

The GlobalEnglish solution offering is unique in its ability to factor in and address a multitude of variables. The program design mixes the diversity of the Asian workforce of Akamai to not only improve their Business English skills but also integrates a multi-cultural aspect into the team's communication process. For example, a role-playing scenario is being added to the Virtual Group and Coach sessions since research demonstrates this is the best way for a high-context culture to learn. Recently, upper level learners (CEFR B2) are asking for more role-play sessions designed around giving business presentations or leading meetings (focusing on specific skills). In response, GlobalEnglish is preparing a focus version for Akamai in a group learning environment to match their new needs.

To place everyone in appropriate learning groups for Virtual Group and deliver aligned level learning materials, GlobalEnglish Assessments were used. With the results from Assessments, GlobalEnglish identified the skills gap for Akamai and assembled a suitable learning program.

The data helped Akamai management realize its employees were beginners in speaking so GlobalEnglish created a special bilingual class (meaning the teacher was bilingual) for low-level speaking groups (CEFR A1-A2 level). The purpose of this specifically created group is to quickly allow learners to move up their level (general English, grammar, vocabulary and cultural aspect) of Business English.

Two classes of four learners began in 2016 and are reset every year. Of those who started in March 2016, 100% of them are now in upper classes (CEFR B1) or were upgraded to GlobalEnglish Coach.

GlobalEnglish Assessment (Step+)

GlobalEnglish Assessment is a suite of tools that quickly and effectively evaluates spoken and written Business English proficiency and various specific sub-scores such as vocabulary, grammar, fluency and listening. Customers access the easily administered assessments via Akamai's online dashboard. Tests can be taken onsite or remotely. Assessment sessions range from 15 to 60 minutes depending on the most appropriate test for the client.

With the ability to objectively measure candidates in different locations against the same requirements, Assessment provides the ideal pre-screening tool for international recruitment. Assessment also measures individual requirements and progress as part of a Business English learning program. Candidates can be evaluated for positions with broader English requirements, while assessments can benchmark them against each other, industry standards or specific-job requirements. Assessment scores prescribe placement into learning programs or into other programs using scores Akamai provides for globally recognized language scales such as CEFR, TOEFL and TOEIC.

Figure 7: Assessment
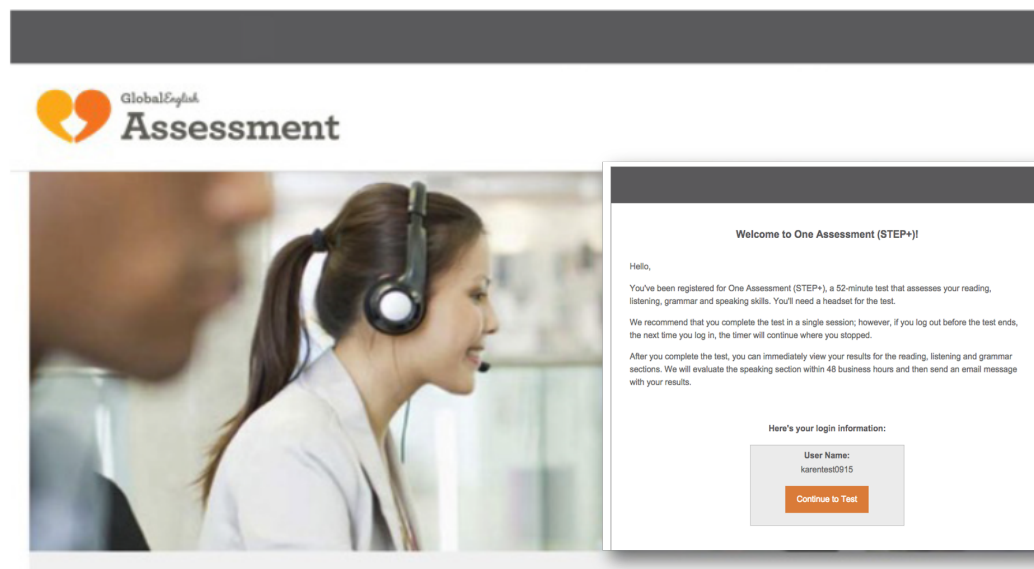
Automated assessment for fast, accurate results

Source: Akamai Technologies

Scalability and Flexibility of Program

With a distributed talent pool across multiple locations and heterogeneous work hours, there was clear need for a program that could be used at any time and at any place. Akamai already had used a classroom learning model and was challenged by the model's limitations. Akamai is a technology company, so why shouldn't its learning programs be designed around technology, too. An online English learning program would be most efficacious to meet the requirements set for the learning platforms. First, the system had to prove efficacious and be able to deliver against individual and organizational objectives. Second, the system had to be scalable — it had to work across every territory,

not just selective countries in the region. Third, it had to be financially viable across every region.

GlobalEnglish One is the base learning feature across the lineup. Its unique design as a web-based platform is meant to be accessed from multiple device types, anytime and anywhere.

- Within the study section there is a variety of additional targeted practice opportunities. Two examples from the section are the "Sounds of English" (a more in-depth look at speech patterns and an individual's pronunciation problems) and Business Situations (an important feature that helps learners to target specific business scenarios).
- Within the work tab there are features that enable learners to work in English more efficiently and effectively. For example, the "email templates" feature or the writing center focuses on improving writing skills and the culture notes aims to improve efficacy during interactions in English with clients, colleagues or suppliers from different countries or accents and dialects, which is a listening exercise of hearing people speaking English from different countries around the world. This is great preparation for conference calls because it allows learners to "tune their ear" to different accents from non-English native speakers.
- The Interact tab contains features that allow learners to interact with other GlobalEnglish One users.

Figure 8: Collaborative Learning and Productivity Tools
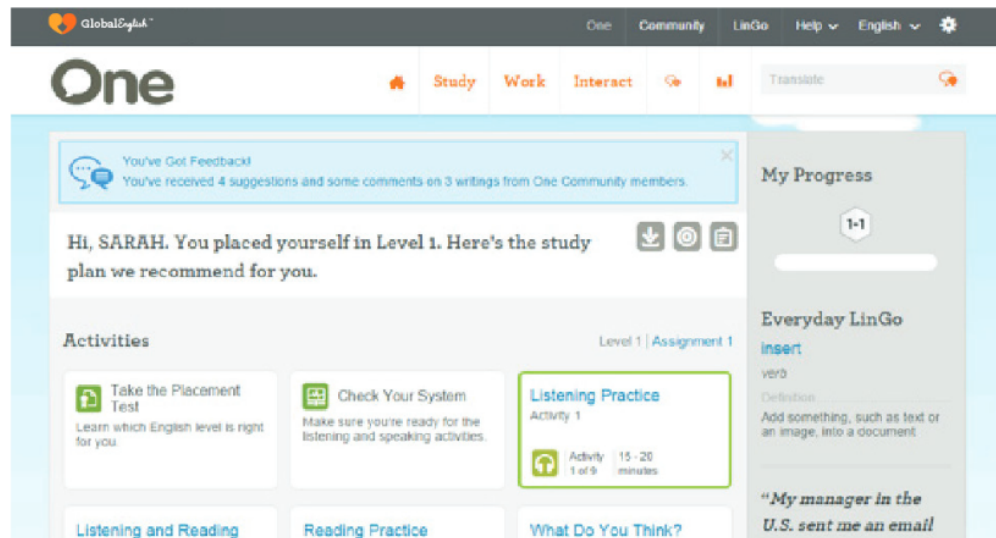
Collaborative learning and productivity tools

Source: Akamai Technologies

GlobalEnglish Coach

GlobalEnglish Coach consists of personalized one-on-one conversation sessions with a coach who is hand-selected to match the user's profile. These calls can be conducted virtually via landline or Skype. Conversations are personalized to the single learner's needs, which ensures faster progress. The coaches are up to date with the latest activities on "One," so they personally check and fine-tune progress, ensuring that everyone develops at the pace they need to succeed.

- The program consists of two modules with tightly integrated curriculum: 30 hours of e-learning (24/7) and sessions with a dedicated coach who is assigned at the beginning of the course**.** Sessions with the coach last 30 minutes each and the participant will be called by the coach at the time agreed.
- Coach will follow the participant throughout the course, providing motivation to achieve the learning objectives. He/she will help the participant to plan the sessions and distribute them evenly during the period.
- Oral sessions will be planned with the same assigned coach if he/she is appreciated by the participant; otherwise, he/she can be replaced.
- Availability for coach session from Monday to Saturday, 24 hours a day.

- Oral sessions (via telephone/Skype) must be planned at the beginning of the course.
- Microphone and headset are required to perform the eLearning activities.
- Learners will be able to monitor their learning progress on the platform anytime.

Figure 9: Personal Coaching

Personal coaching accelerates learning and boosts confidence

Source: Akamai Technologies

In addition to the regular Coach sessions, learners who scored lower than Level 4 (CEFR A0-A2) were provided 22 sessions at 30 minutes a week with a bilingual coach to level up their general English skills and move them to Business English skills.

Virtual Group

Virtual Group brings together learners from different locations in a virtual classroom to extend their language and business skills learning through shared collaborative experiences. Highly qualified business coaches help learners improve their conversational skills in a collaborative environment that builds confidence as well as ability. Diverse groups of professionals' exchange ideas and discuss relevant business topics as they advance their ability to talk with customers, negotiate with clients and collaborate with colleagues.

Figure 10: Expert-led Collaborative Learning

Expert-led collaborative learning

Source: Akamai Technologies

There's a virtual classroom for groups to extend their language and business skills through shared collaborative experiences.

- Improve conversational skills in a collaborative environment that builds confidence as well as ability.
- Diverse groups work together from remote locations on real-time issues.
- Highly qualified business coaches ensure group discussions address the needs of every participant.

This solution allowed three to four learners from any of Akamai's APAC participating countries a unique opportunity that could not be achieved with a traditional classroom method. Previously, learners were grouped with mixed speaking abilities and only from their local region, so only the most confident speakers participated in class. The learners who are too shy or had less English-speaking ability progressed very poorly.

In addition to the regular groups, two groups were specially created based on their assessment (including speaking) with adapted learning paths for beginners.

- Level 0-3 (equals CEFR A1-A2 onward) 22 sessions at 30 minutes per week with a bilingual coach.

GlobalEnglish Dashboard

GlobalEnglish Dashboard provides complete control over the organization's entire GlobalEnglish program and gives administrators instant access to the information needed to track progress, achieve business goals and optimize future activity. Real-time information provides a live snapshot of every learner's activity, their progress toward individual goals and their comparative performance against colleagues or pre-assigned benchmarks. Dashboard encourages learning leader to fine-tune individual programs in response to performance tracking data, personal preferences and evolving business objectives.

Figure 11: Instant Access to All Key Metrics
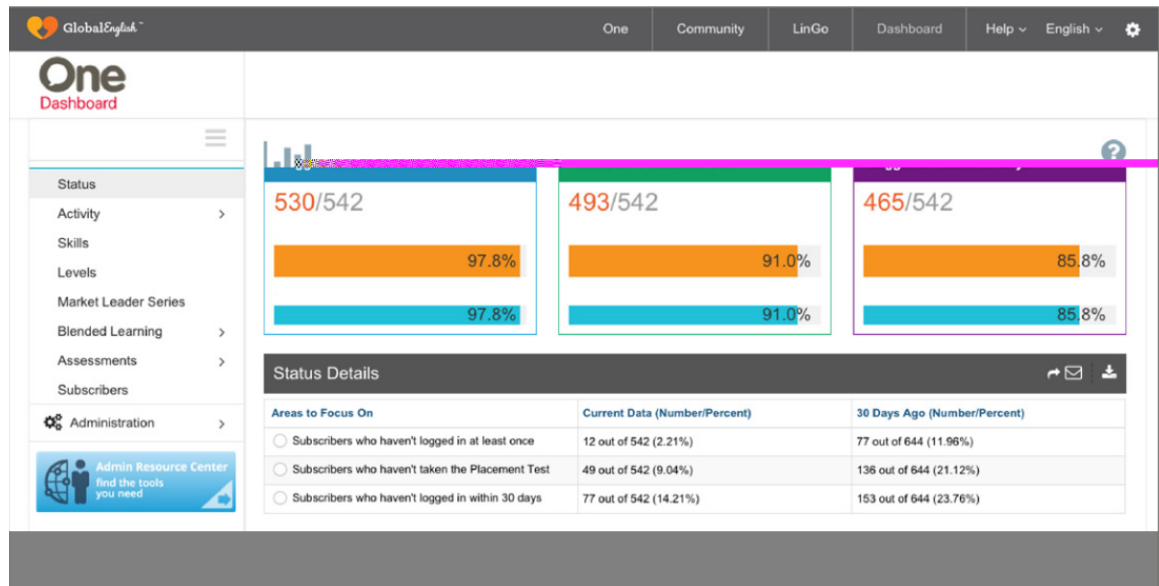
Instant access to all key metrics

Source: Akamai Technologies

GlobalEnglish Support Portal

Online support is available around the clock. The site provides learners and administrators help and contains live and recorded orientation sessions in each of the supported languages, quick product tours, frequently asked questions and an option to contact the support team. There also is a suite of administrator training materials to enable program owners to get the best out of Dashboard for reporting and administration, including sample communication templates and a sample marketing plan.

Delivery of the Program

The GlobalEnglish customer success management (CSM) team is critical in the delivery of the program at customer sites and in managing obstacles along the way. The CSM role provides templates, guidelines and training tools and materials to enable the customer to manage their learners, administrators, groups and reports. The CSM team also assists the customer with the implementation and ongoing management of the program. Assigned customer program owners will have access to a single contact point per region.

Figure 12: Deployment Done in Phases and Managed by the GlobalEnglish CSM

Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3	Cohort 4
April 2016 – October 2016	November 2016 – May 2017	August 2017 - January 2018	March 2018 – September 2018
VG 63 learners	VG 75 learners	VG 46 learners	VG 48 learners
		Coach 28 learners	Coach 19 learners

Source: Akamai Technologies

The initial phase involved identifying managers for Coach and other sales/marketing/technical staff for the Virtual Group programs. GlobalEnglish worked closely with the program administrators in each of the APAC region countries.

1. There was clear buy-in from the senior management and C-Suite. Messages were communicated to business unit heads, HR managers of the business, managers and employees via email.

2. Assessments were administered to all learners to place them in a suitable learning group for the GlobalEnglish Virtual Group and Coach programs. Both programs are based on level development, scheduling commitments and desired learning goals. The below graphic shows initial results of the learners and their progress over the program. Most of the learners started at a beginner level and developed to an advanced level by the end of their program.

Figure 13: Program Data
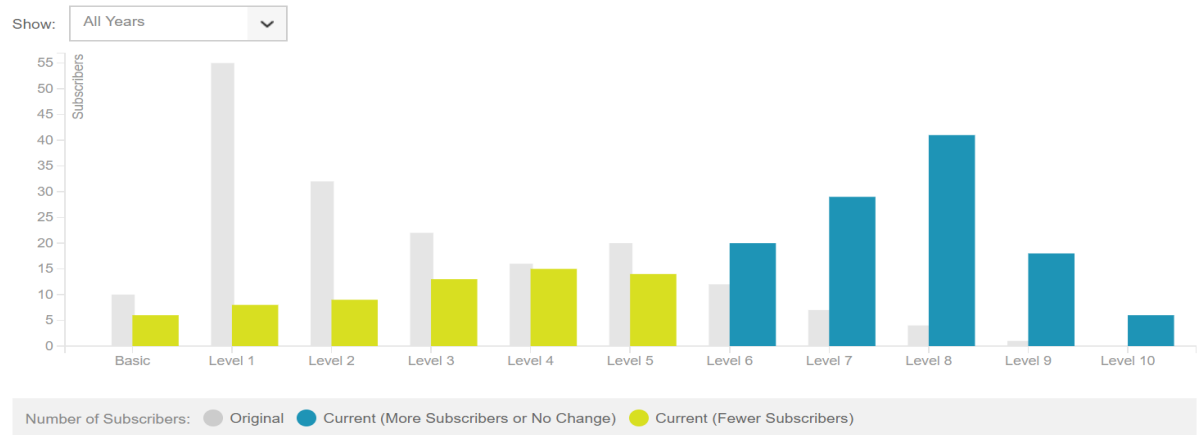
Source: Akamai Technologies

- Administrator trainings were scheduled. Support resources in the form of quick resource guides (QRGs), orientation sessions and manager briefing sessions were conducted during the program roll-out. The QRGs provided the narrative and reasoning for the program, quick tips on usage, etc. The orientation sessions were conducted across different locations for employees to familiarize themselves with the program, set clear usage guidelines and goals.

- Quarterly and annual program reviews were scheduled between GlobalEnglish and Akamai L&D. User satisfaction and impact surveys were discussed.

- Some specific challenges the program faced were:

- Employee push-back feeling they had been identified to be trained in the "English language." They felt targeted and inadequate.

- Objections also included "lack of time." Many adult learners have this initial reaction. Juggling work and personal responsibilities is challenging.

- Expectations from some of the managers were too high — they assumed that employees will start speaking in "native English" accents

- The intervention of the CSM team was instrumental in the program's achievements:

- Ensuring the smoothest possible experience for the users:

  o Coordination in groups with colleagues showing the same level of proficiency.

- o Sessions scheduled based on their preferences.

- o Clear communication about program launch and operation.

- o Direct access to support.

- Proactive support to the program owner in Akamai:

  - o Constant communication to ensure the best possible coverage of special requests (requests for changes, exceptions, etc.).

  - o Consultative work in terms of internal communication and program monitoring process.

- Focus on impact — delivering visibility on KPIs that matter most for Akamai as a business:

  - o Quarterly business reviews.

  - o Annual business review including user satisfaction and impact survey.

- The customized English learning program delivered:

- Professional development for staff and aligning learning goals to corporate goals and positioned it as an opportunity, not remedial work.

- An open learning environment including spaces (virtual or physical) that can be flexible for individual and group work, gave learners a voice and provided more interactive learning.

- Adult learning styles including the ability to move swiftly at their own pace, facilitated greater team work and allowed flexible learning and flexible scheduling/time-tabling.

Measurable Benefits

- The key of the Akamai project is the fact that it uses the GlobalEnglish solution to its full extent, meaning the organization is getting true business value from the deployment, which allows them to not only improve employees' proficiency but also encourages team work and communication.

- Stronger development and retention of talent pipeline for future global leaders and managers due to accurate assessment of English abilities and targeted solutions to improve their Business English.

- Akamai's sales/marketing team can on-board faster through on-the-job tools and applications that provide Akamai-specific content, terms and practical application in a global business context.

- Akamai's support teams can provide higher quality of service to customers based on a clearer understanding of customers' needs and how to effectively communicate solutions to team members and global customers.

- Effective collaboration and idea sharing to ensure that the best global ideas are clearly articulated and understood to leverage diversity of thought across Akamai.

- Improved employee engagement and motivation based on GlobalEnglish's new gamification features and targeted learning paths on One without requiring additional time and resources from Akamai.

- Tracking and measurement of the level of Business English progress through multiple on-demand reporting and testing capabilities.

Some of the major efficiencies and optimization benefits include:

- Productivity gains for Akamai's employees through on-the-job performance support tools and One applications.

- Simplified and centralized administration with optimized global systems, reporting capabilities and client service.

- Cost containment by consolidating providers and streamlining delivery, reporting and global management.

Figure 14: Six-Month Utilization of the Base Platform One by Both Learner Groups

Utilization Review
[Coach / VG: 6 months]

GlobalEnglish One

LEARNING & PROGRESS:

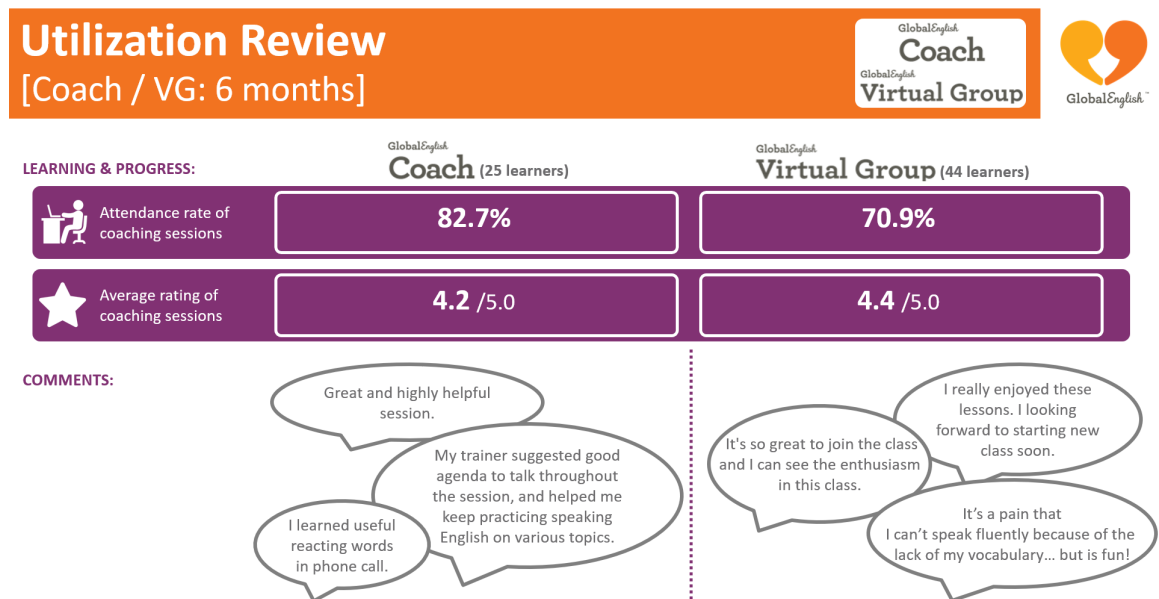|	GlobalEnglish **Coach** (25 learners)		GlobalEnglish **Virtual Group** (44 learners)	
Spent on One and coaching sessions	**16:26** hours per learner	**2:47** hours per learner per month	**18:15** hours per learner	**3:02** hours per learner per month
Completed activities	**24.3** activities per learner	**4.4** activities per learner per month	**16.1** activities per learner	**2.7** activities per learner per month

ON-THE-JOB SUPPORT TOOLS:

Utilization of non-course contents*	**119** actions by **6** learners (Usage rate: 24%)	**172** actions by **6** learners (Usage rate: 14%)

*Email templates, Vocabulary Center, Cultural notes, Translation help, etc.

Source: Akamai Technologies

Figure 15: Utilization of Each Group's Learning Path during the Same Six-Month Period

Utilization Review
[Coach / VG: 6 months]

GlobalEnglish Coach
GlobalEnglish Virtual Group

LEARNING & PROGRESS:

	GlobalEnglish **Coach** (25 learners)	GlobalEnglish **Virtual Group** (44 learners)
Attendance rate of coaching sessions	**82.7%**	**70.9%**
Average rating of coaching sessions	**4.2** /5.0	**4.4** /5.0

COMMENTS:

Great and highly helpful session.

My trainer suggested good agenda to talk throughout the session, and helped me keep practicing speaking English on various topics.

I learned useful reacting words in phone call.

I really enjoyed these lessons. I looking forward to starting new class soon.

It's so great to join the class and I can see the enthusiasm in this class.

It's a pain that I can't speak fluently because of the lack of my vocabulary... but is fun!
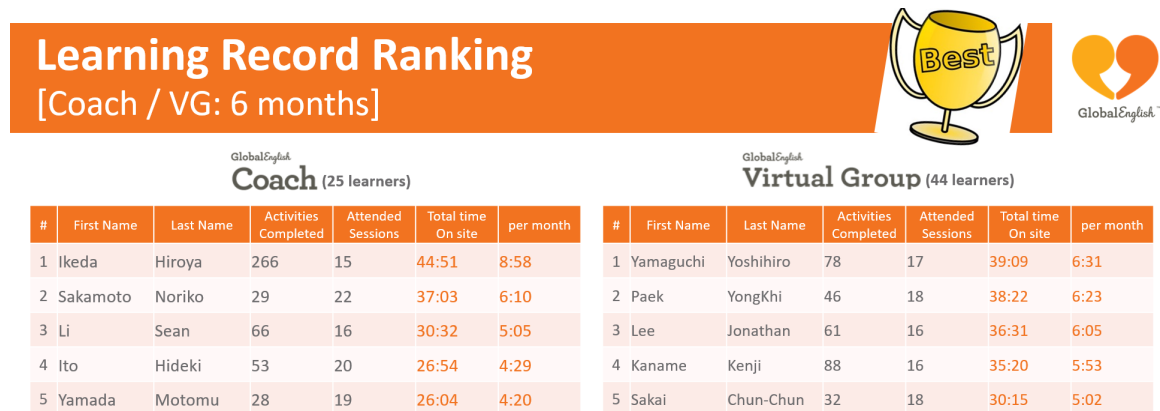
Source: Akamai Technologies

- "The trainer made good atmosphere and we can communicate each other for first time self-introduce. And trainer's pronunciation were very clearly, so I can hear what she said with no stress." — **Takashi Sasaki**, Japan, May 8, 2016

- "Well-prepared Teacher!" — **Astin Choi**, South Korea, April 12, 2017

- "There was an explanation about how the sessions will be and the discussion about the KPI. It was a very nice session." — **Jun Sorimachi**, Japan, May 12, 2016

- "The GlobalEnglish program provides excellent lecturers and qualified instructors. After completing this course, I was more confident in speaking English in conference calls with employees in the global area. I recommend this course to others who are looking for an instructor who can provide interesting and informative lessons." — **Brandon Kang**, South Korea, April 6, 2018

Figure 16: Active Platform Usage was Recorded in Both Groups

Learning Record Ranking
[Coach / VG: 6 months]

Coach (25 learners)

#	First Name	Last Name	Activities Completed	Attended Sessions	Total time On site	per month
1	Ikeda	Hiroya	266	15	44:51	8:58
2	Sakamoto	Noriko	29	22	37:03	6:10
3	Li	Sean	66	16	30:32	5:05
4	Ito	Hideki	53	20	26:54	4:29
5	Yamada	Motomu	28	19	26:04	4:20

Virtual Group (44 learners)

#	First Name	Last Name	Activities Completed	Attended Sessions	Total time On site	per month
1	Yamaguchi	Yoshihiro	78	17	39:09	6:31
2	Paek	YongKhi	46	18	38:22	6:23
3	Lee	Jonathan	61	16	36:31	6:05
4	Kaname	Kenji	88	16	35:20	5:53
5	Sakai	Chun-Chun	32	18	30:15	5:02

Source: Akamai Technologies

Overall

According to a Bersin article in January 2018, "In many companies, learning is starting to break down the walls of the classroom and become integrated into the work that employees do every day. In 2018, however, this integration will take a leap forward — propelled by new technology and a fresh perspective on the importance of combining work and learning.

New Technology Helps People Learn as They Work. Many higher-performing companies have made great strides in helping employees access learning content outside of traditional learning management systems — and learning technology vendors are helping to do this more effectively. From these types of platforms, employees can find information needed now, define learning paths for future development and leverage each other for learning opportunities that occur on the job.

Using GlobalEnglish-Leveraged New Technology and Helped Akamai:

- Streamline their learning vendor model and build a robust/scalable model.
- Increase the collaboration of the L&D managers, efficacy of the budget and visibility of the programs regionally.
- Respond to field requests for its sales/marketing/technical staff to have higher English proficiency necessary to work in an international environment.
- Institute a customized learning solution based on assessment results, individual's time constraints and individual proficiencies.
- Created a unique learning environment that mixed low-context and high-context cultures from different countries in the region.

"The English program has been very successful. Ito-san is noticeably more comfortable communicating in English. This has been my experience and shared by the US-based Product Managers, he works with.

"The business impact is the ability to work directly with the product managers for large deals in Japan such as Rakuten and Fast Retailing, also working with other teams in APJ such as assisting on the Samsung deal in Korea." — **Jason Hatch**, Singapore-based senior product line director, referring to one of his reports, Mr. Hideki Ito, senior product manager based in Tokyo

Through user feedback, it was discovered that learners find the individual attention in the Coach program exceeding their expectations, especially if they are coming from a group environment like Virtual Group. Learners are moved into the Coach program when they are promoted to manager or at their three-year work anniversary to aid retention.

"As a global company, removing communication barriers allow for us to create a more inclusive work culture. We are also very focused on the professional and personal growth of our employees, providing language education delivers on both. Since the deployment

of this English-learning program, there is better internal teamwork and customer resolution with fewer misunderstandings between staff. There is also increased employee satisfaction with learning opportunities." — **Graeme Beardsell**, managing director, Asia Pacific and Japan

Looking to the future, Akamai is considering using GlobalEnglish tools during the onboarding process. This is being explored to understand requirements and what an implementation would look like.

In summary, having Japanese, Korean, Chinese, Taiwanese and Hong Kongese working for an American company, being in the same classes and learning Business English communication skills together go beyond the geopolitical boundaries and demonstrate the power of language to overcome cultural barriers.

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