Cognizant's DE Enable Program Uses Cutting-Edge Learning Design

Cognizant
Best Advance in Custom Content
November 2018

Company Background

Headquarters	Teaneck, New Jersey
Year Founded	1994
Revenue	$14.81 billion (FY 2017)
Employees	260,000
Global Scale (Regions that you operate in or provide services to)	25,000-plus projects in 40-plus countries, 25-plus regional sales offices and 75-plus global delivery/operations centers in over 16 countries across four continents.
Customers/Output, etc. (Key customers and services offered)	950-plus active clients across healthcare, life sciences, insurance, banking, financial services, manufacturing, logistics, retail, travel, hospitality, information, media, entertainment, technology, communications, energy and utilities.
Industry	IT, ITES and consulting
Stock Symbol	NASDAQ: CTSH
Website	www.cognizant.com

Budget and Timeframe

Number of (HR, Learning, Talent) employees involved with the implementation?	15
Number of Operations or Subject Matter Expert employees involved with the implementation?	1
Timeframe to implement	4½ months
Start date of the program	May 217

Overview

Business Conditions

The IT industry is in the midst of a digital transformation — a telling sign of the changing times. Cognizant has been evolving fast to keep pace with this rapid transformation by revamping its business model to achieve increased efficiency and productivity in line with the market demands.

Delivery excellence, in this context, became a critical component in the aim to create a digital organization which was ready for the digital world.

The digital learning team partnered with the Cognizant delivery excellence team to design an innovative custom learning solution around the delivery excellence model in the organization.

Business Need

The organization already had a delivery excellence process in place, however, certain processes were being designed and implemented at the organizational level to align with the digital transformation practices.

The goal was to create awareness around the importance of the delivery excellence model as a whole and to draw attention to the improved processes within this model.

Figure 1: Delivery Excellence

Doing it right the first time and every time!

Source: Cognizant

Learning Content

The content comprised complex calculations, tables and page-long texts and process flows. The challenge for the digital learning team was to take this highly technical content and convert it to a custom-built solution that focused on the practical application of the information.

In short, the challenge was to build an interesting, engaging and innovative solution that engaged learners from the start.

Here are some screenshots of the source content received by the digital learning team.

Figure 2: Source Content

Source: Cognizant 2018

Audience Profile

The target audience for the training program was around 200,000 associates of Cognizant placed across the globe.

The learner group had a mix of experienced associates, as well as new hires. While the experienced associates had prior knowledge of delivery excellence, the new hires did not.

A survey conducted by the digital learning team revealed the following details:

Figure 3: Diverse Audience Profile

	Demographics:
	Varied cultural backgrounds | Varied ethnicities
	Learning Habits: Activity-based learning| Short attention span | Engaging content | Knowledge sharing
	Technical Skills: Varied skillsets | Access to Multiple Devices: Mobiles, tabs, PCs, Laptops
	Reading Ability: Crisp messaging| Engaging visuals

Source: Cognizant

The globally dispersed and diverse target audience certainly imposed a serious challenge. The digital learning team had to ensure that the learning goals, the content and the solution were relatable to all users. They had to come up with a design that would be engaging and resourceful, as well as inspiring.

Learning Objectives

Business Goals

The delivery excellence team wanted to increase awareness on product and service quality across all verticals and domains in Cognizant. The goal was to enhance customer delight and focus on delivery excellence around the quality of products and services in the organization.

Learning Objectives

The overall learning goal was to encourage learners to use Cognizant tools and practices to ensure delivery excellence.

The learning objectives were as follows:

- Define the importance of delivery excellence at work.
- Explain various delivery excellence best practices at work.
- Recognize Cognizant's engineering excellence standards and practices.
- Demonstrate the principles of delivery excellence while executing a task.

Overview of the Learning Program

The result of the training needs analysis led the digital learning team to design the **DE Enable** courses — a custom-built learning solution that was designed to be deployed through multiple channels. Here is an overview of the design:

Figure 4: Overview of the Design
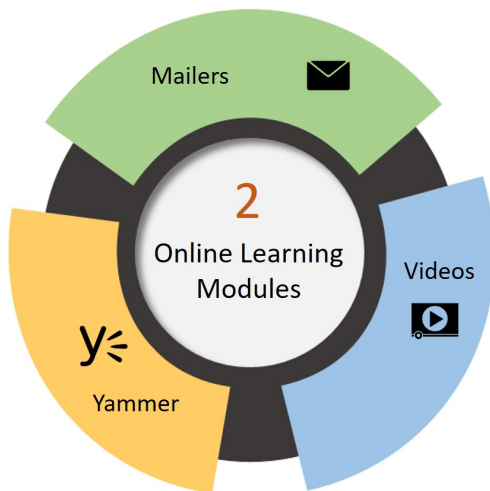
Source: Cognizant

Aligning the Learning Program to the Business Situation

The business situation warranted a learning solution that would make the associates aware of the new delivery excellence process in the organization.

The learning program was made crisp, engaging, and collaborative. Various functionalities were introduced to ensure that the program met its objectives.

Figure 5: Key Business Needs and Learning Program Features

Key Business Needs	Features of the Learning Program
The learning program should be impactful to the millennial learners with very short attention span.	Information was provided in short bites to ensure better retention.
Senior executives should be able to take up the course outside the office environment (i.e., for during business travel).	Multi-device compatibility was maintained to encourage learning on the go.
The program should address the varying pace at which learners take in the information.	Videos were introduced for self-paced learning.
The program should enable learners to assimilate information and apply that information to their everyday work.	Information was backed with case studies and scenarios to provide business context.
The learning program should provide a platform where associates could learn from real-life challenges and experiences.	Social media was integrated to ensure informal knowledge sharing and discussions.

Source: Cognizant

Program Content and Activities Supporting the Learning Objectives

The DE Enable courses comprised two custom-designed online courses with engaging game elements, which were supported by various other self-paced and offline activities.
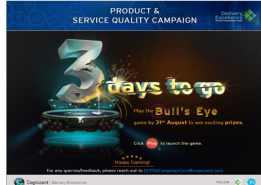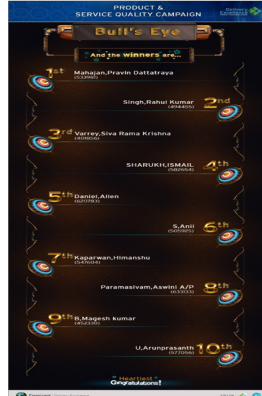
Designed on the awareness, information and engagement strategy, here's the content and the activities of the learning program mapped to the learning objectives.

Awareness

To begin with, a series of mailers were designed to create awareness on the upcoming learning modules. Throughout the program, awareness was built in multiple phases and different types of mailers were leveraged to that end.

Figure 6: Building Awareness

Source: Cognizant

Information

Information was provided in short and engaging video nuggets that blended learning with storytelling. The video stories provided information that the learners needed to apply in the upcoming learning modules.

Figure 7: Sharing Information

Source: Cognizant

Engagement

The learners were engaged in the program through self-paced online modules that integrated various game elements. Social media tools were leveraged to further involve the learners into the practice of delivery excellence at work.

Figure 8: Engaging Learners.
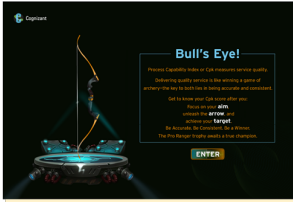
Source: Cognizant

Screenshots

Awareness

Mailers tied the program together. They were not only designed to draw the learners' attention but were also used to make important announcements.

Figure 9: Mailer Screenshots
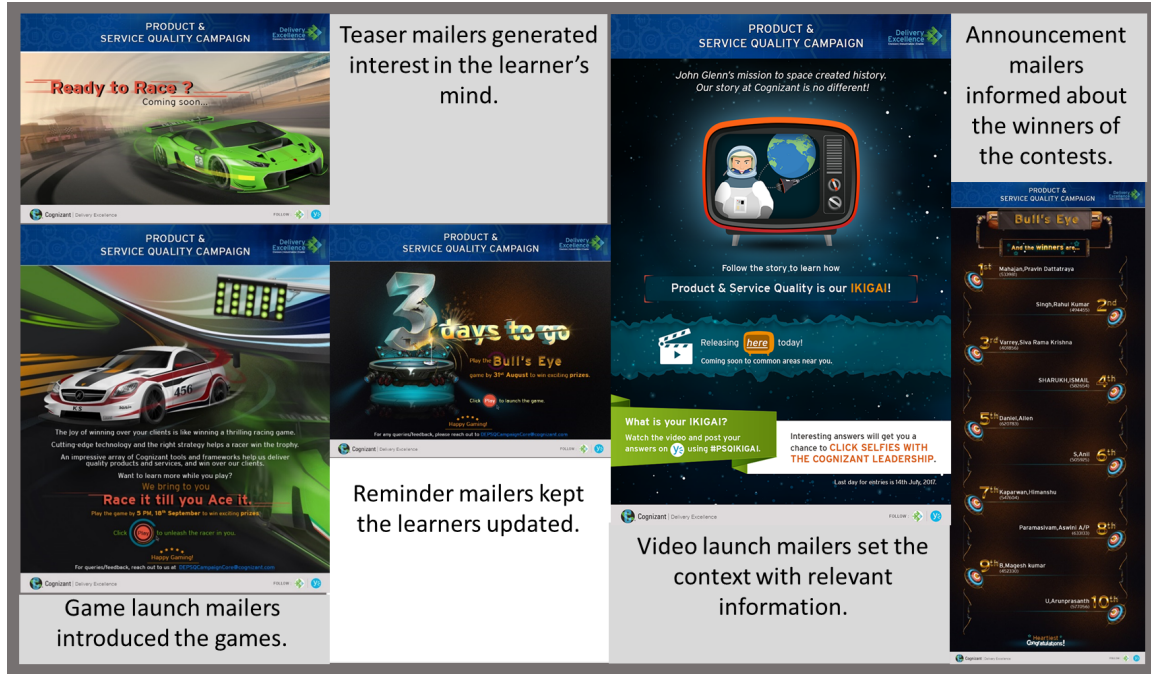
Source: Cognizant

Information

Inspiring stories were used as the main tool to capture the learner's attention.

Figure 10: Video 1 Screenshots

Source: Cognizant

Figure 11: Video 2 Screenshots
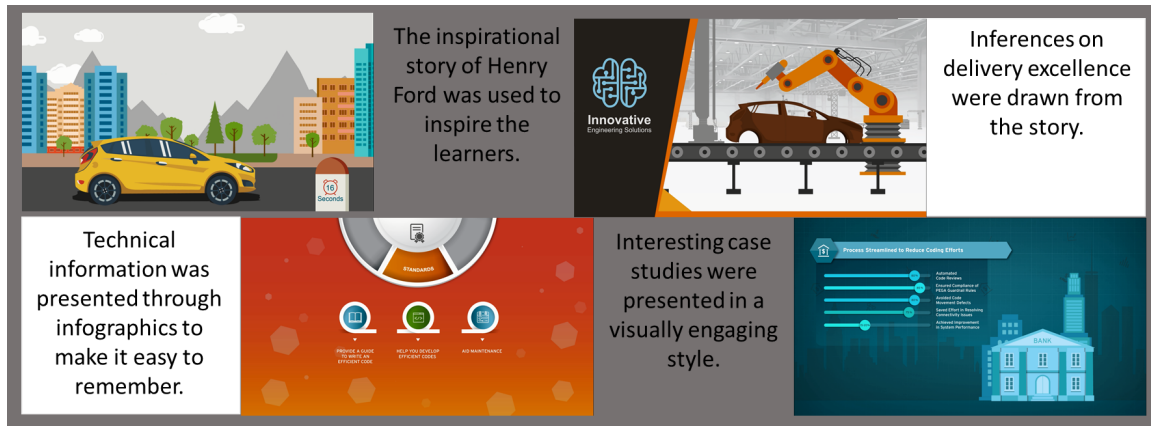
Source: Cognizant

Engagement

The online modules offered the learners opportunities to apply their understanding of delivery excellence. A blend of smart visuals, intriguing gameplay and nuggets of information made these modules short and effective.

Bull's Eye: The Archery Game

Figure 12: Game-Based Module 1 Screenshots
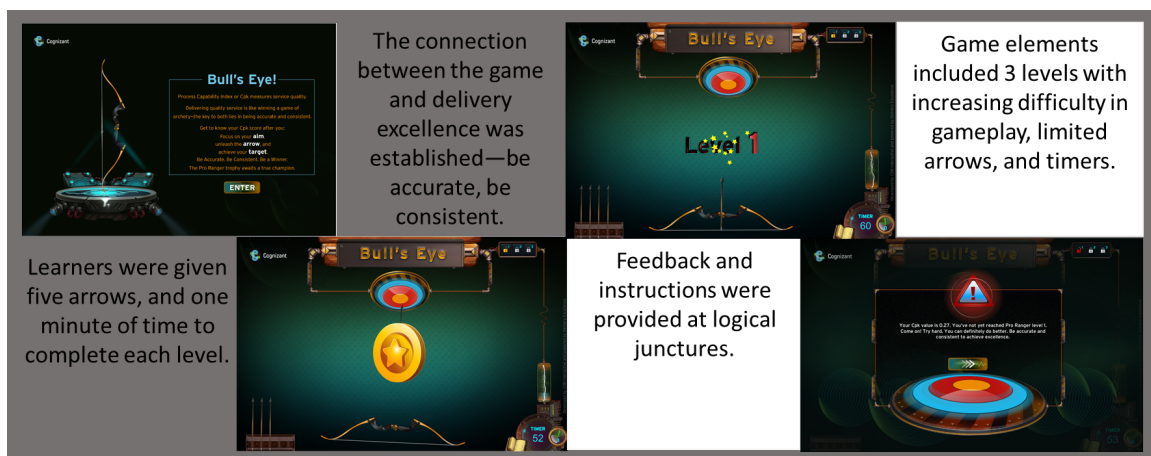
Source: Cognizant

Race it till you Ace it: The Car Racing Game

Figure 13: Game-Based Module 2 Screenshots
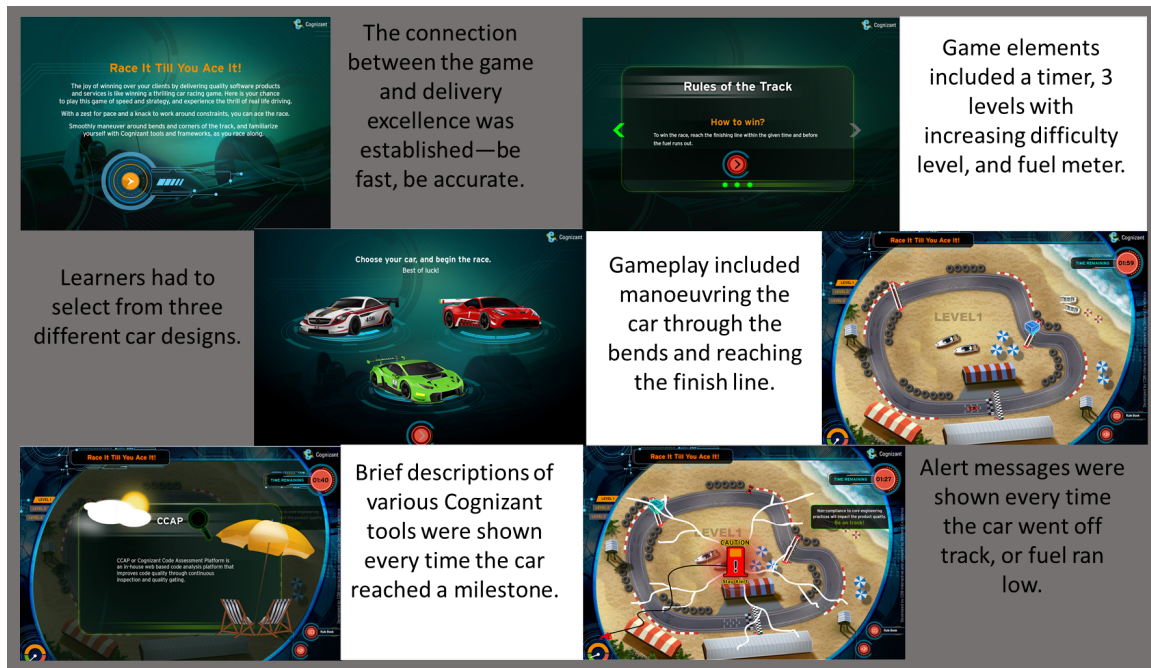
Source: Cognizant

Yammer Activities
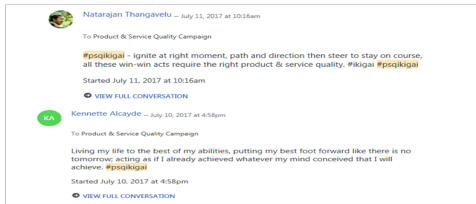
Various activities on Yammer encouraged learners to share their experiences and ideas. Discussion threads, quizzes and online contests helped associates explore the powerful tenets of collaborative learning.

Figure 14: Yammer Campaign Screenshots
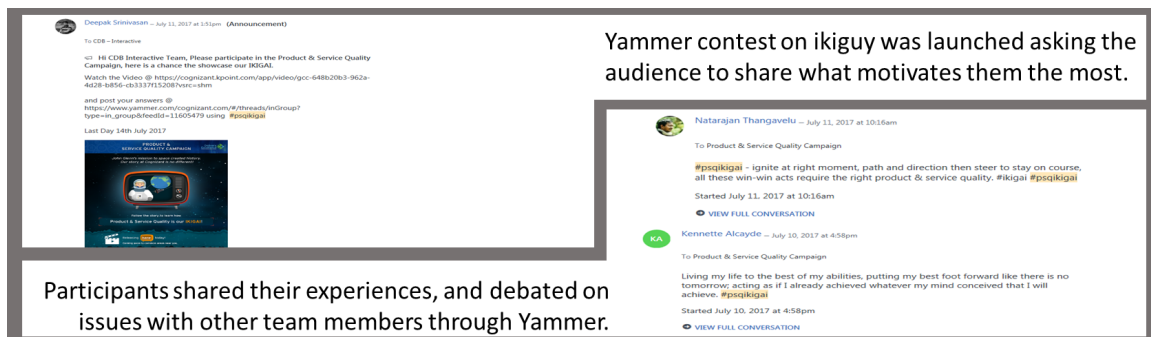
Source: Cognizant

Overall

Summary of Key Findings

The threefold approach of awareness, information and engagement had the desired effect on the learners. The teaser and launch mailers created a buzz, driving in a lot of traffic to the interventions.

Figure 15: Audience Participation.
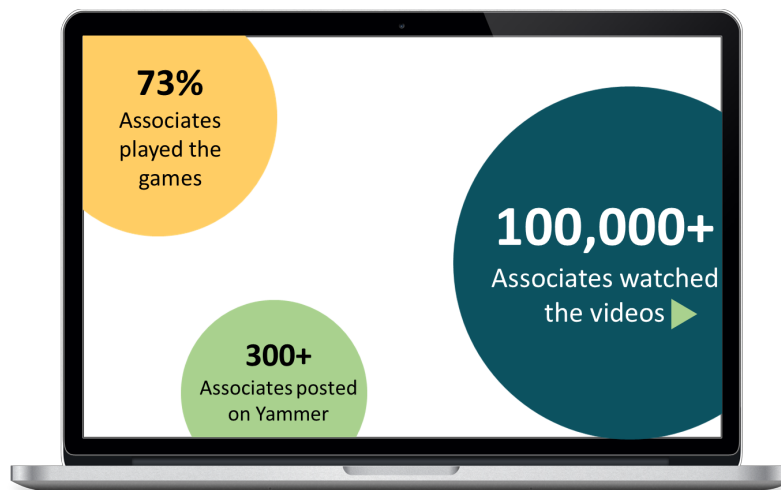
Source: Cognizant

The varied learning interventions ensured the learners were engaged throughout.

- A shift from the typical learning interventions brought in a fresh angle to learning. This was appreciated by the learners based on the feedback received.

- The online modules leveraged game elements to engage learners and encouraged them to apply their knowledge.

- As the learners went through the videos and challenged themselves with the games, they were subtly made aware of the importance of excellence at work.

Lessons Learned

Here are the key lessons learned while developing the DE Enable program.

- Awareness tools such as mailers and animated videos can be customized to make them suitable for learning.

- Moving away from conventional training modules and assessments can create an informal, yet powerful medium of learning.

- Adding a layer of story to the content can help the learners assimilate the knowledge better, thus, enriching their learning experience.

- Customized learning modules with game elements can offer great opportunities to apply the acquired knowledge.

- Leveraging collaborative platforms like Yammer contests and conversation threads can make learning more effective.

Future Outlook

The success of the DE Enable program has set the benchmark for the digital learning team. There are plans to enhance the learning experience further, some of which include:

- Number of learning modules to be increased from two to six to cover other aspects of delivery excellence.

- Two more Yammer contests to be organized inviting the learners to share solutions to common workplace challenges.

- A series of micro videos to be released to cover various delivery excellence best practices in a nutshell.

Conclusion

Imparting training requires a more holistic approach than what can be achieved through conventional training. With thoughtful design and a robust development process, it is possible to engage learners to bring about changes in their outlook.

About Brandon Hall Group

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