



SIMAGES

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E-Learning

With Games & Simulations



**Our Heartfelt
Appreciation to
Thiagi
and His Team
for Providing a
Great Conference**

*Play for Performance
NASAGA 2001
Bloomington.*

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Learning-by-doing in the 21st Century

Agneta Rosenberg

Today there are few who believe that training should be passive and boring. Study after study, verifies the assertion that we retain more knowledge if we enjoy ourselves during a learning-by-doing process. By using a unique scenario-based simulation authoring technology, Intermezzon, an e-Learning company, has found an efficient and fun-filled way to combine interactive learning-by-doing and entertainment for the 21st century.

Tomas Dreifaldt, co-founder and VP of Content and Projects of Intermezzon, writes about Intermezzon's approach that's learning-by-doing and the creation of an engaging and enjoyable e-Learning environment.

For more than a decade, I've been in the business of training thousands of sales professionals in sales skills and behavior. Over the years, my colleagues and I found that there's a limit to what one can achieve by using traditional classroom training. We knew from experience that the rate of knowledge retention increases dramatically through learning-by-doing. After all, that's how small children acquire skills like sitting, crawling, walking and talking. With the development of the Internet we saw a great opportunity to create enjoyable, efficient and truly interactive web-based e-Learning for business professionals by using a unique simulation methodology and technology.

We developed a scenario-based e-Learning sales simulation game with a host of realistic characters based on Jung's personality types. The game allows adult learners to drive the sales process through customer interactions and to learn from mistakes in a controlled virtual environment without the costly and harsh consequences of the real world. The learner can redo any customer meeting until satisfied and practice as frequently as desired to learn a correct and reflex-like behavior in a given situation. We believe that the more realistic the simulation feels, the greater the rate of knowledge retention.



Intermezzon has designed and developed e-Learning to the stage where it's possible to create simulated environments and realistic scenarios as an aid to understanding and mastering entire spectra of complex processes and situations. We customize and build web-based and reusable simulations for the specific needs of each client. Clients can maintain and update their own custom-built simulated training course by using Intermezzon Designer 3.0, our simulation authoring software tool.

To help Compaq's resellers sell a new server solution to small and medium-sized companies, we developed together "The Sales School," a 2-hour customized web-based sales-simulation training course, launched during the summer 2001. The objective was not only to increase reseller knowledge and understanding of Compaq's new server products, but also to enhance Compaq's image and position as a market leader and leading innovator. Says Kjell Ahlzén, Director of Partner Sales at Compaq Sweden: "We wanted to motivate our resellers to close better deals by practicing through an effective and entertaining e-Learning, or should I say edutainment course. We think this is a more effective solution instead of just relying on the annual kick-off events, traditional classroom training, and the often unopened sales pamphlet."

Tribute to R. Garry Shirts On the Occasion of Receiving the Ifill-Raynolds Award

Edward de Bono describes the lateral thinker not as one who digs the hole deeper, but as one who digs many holes. The gamer who best epitomizes this metaphor is R. Garry Shirts. If forced to use one word to describe Garry, it would have to be "creative." All simulation gamers are creative. Garry takes the concept several steps beyond most.

Garry was responsible for the social studies curriculum for eastern San Diego County. Working on the Indian reservations, he had many cross-cultural experiences. He also realized the need for and impact of experiential learning. When he created Simile II, his first concern was to develop games that could be used by students who were trying to make sense of their world. Garry's games have also been designed for adults who want to develop a better understanding of themselves, their culture, the dynamics of power, and how their organizations work.

Garry Shirts has been there from the beginning for many gamers. Active in NASAGA almost from its inception, he contributed to both the field and the association. Garry is always ready to give newcomers a hand-or better yet--an idea. To the seasoned gamers, he's a friend, a colleague, and a great resource.

One of Garry's first games was Starpower. Next he created BaFa BaFa for the U.S. Navy. Originally planned as a behavioral technique to select uniformed members for overseas assignments, BaFa quickly became popular for training sailors and officers for overseas duty. Its appeal spread beyond the Navy and has been conducted throughout the world. As Barbara Steinwachs said in 1987: "Everyone involved in cross-cultural training uses and respects the now classic BaFa BaFa, developed in the mid-1970's." Garry's most recent game is Pumping the Colors, which builds tremendous bonding for organizational teams.

Have you heard of Inventory of Hunches? Garry worked with the team that developed Inventory of Hunches, along with its author, Hall Sprague. It is helpful to return to the inventory from time to time to refresh our enthusiasm for gaming and to remember why it is that we are doing this. Garry begins modestly by saying: "Following are some guesses about the educational value of simulations. None of them is proved but they are more than just idle hunches, since they were formulated by instructors and students with extensive experience in their use. These may help you to decide how you will use the techniques and what the outcomes might be."



He goes on to list ten hunches that include: 1) maybe simulation games are motivators, 2) maybe a simulation experience leads to more relevant inquiry, 3) maybe simulations give participants a more integrated view of the ways of people, 4) maybe participants learn decision-making, resource allocation, communication, and other skills, 5) maybe simulations affect attitudes, 6) maybe simulations provide participants with explicit, experiential, gut-level reference about ideas, 7) maybe simulations act as an information retrieval device since people know more than they think they know, 8) maybe participants learn form and content of the model which lies behind the simulation, 9) maybe the main importance is the affect on the social setting in which the learning takes place, and 10) maybe simulations lead to personal growth.

The twinkle in Garry's eye belies his tough spirit that has carried him through good times and bad. We hope that from here on his times are all good. He has earned his place in the notable ranks of the Ifill-Raynolds winners.

Written by Sandy Fowler

Read by Charles Petranek at
NASAGA Awards Banquet
Bloomington, IN
October 26, 2001

Upcoming Events

- ◆ N.A.S.A.G.A. Annual Conference - San Diego, CA - November 6-9, 2002

**BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS, SKILLS, AND MEMORIES
AT THE
2001 PLAY FOR PERFORMANCE
NASAGA ANNUAL CONFERENCE**



About NASAGA

The North American Simulation and Gaming Association (NASAGA) is a growing network of professionals working on the design, implementation, and evaluation of games and simulations to improve learning results in all types of organizations. We believe in the value of learning gained through experience and feel that games and simulations, appropriately designed and conducted are an extremely useful (and underused) tool for creating this rich learning.

NASAGA Executive Board 2002

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Cool Stuff



A Little Fun for Virtual Classrooms

Sonia Ribaux

I just recently designed my first virtual classroom course. The course consisted of two, one-hour virtual classrooms*. I was concerned about being able to maintain the participants' attention for a whole hour. Here are some things I came up with to add a little fun to the virtual classroom.

Play While You Wait

Participants were asked to log in 10 minutes before the beginning of the class so that we could deal with any technical problems and get started on time. This precaution seems necessary but it means that those who are on time, and don't have technical problems, have to sit and wait in front of their computer for 10 minutes. Not a great way to start a class. I created some simple entertainment for the participants to look at while they were waiting by using guessing games. The first one was a Famous Quotations game. A series of famous quotations are presented to the participants and they try to guess who said this. The answer appears a few seconds later. I tried to choose quirky quotations from people that the audience would recognize. I had about 35 quotations and they were timed to last almost 10 minutes.

Welcome to the New Risk Rating System Virtual Classroom.
Have fun guessing the answers while we wait for everyone to log on.

Who said this?

"Clothes make the man. Naked people have little or no influence on society."

Mark Twain, American writer

The second guessing game was a Missing Vowels games. The instructions are to find movie titles, old and new, with only the consonants. For example, with the cue THGDFTHR, players guess The Godfather. I had approximately 35 of these.

Welcome to the New Risk Rating System Virtual Classroom.

Have fun guessing the answers while we wait for everyone to log on.

Missing Vowels

Can you guess the names of these movies, old and new, minus the vowels?

THGDFTHR

The Godfather

These guessing games are simple, and mostly for entertainment but they provide a more attractive and dynamic environment while the participants wait. Other games that could be used are trivia questions, unusual words, scrambled words, lateral thinking puzzles, riddles and brainteasers.

Stretch it

The client for which I designed this course has fabulous training facilities. One of the services that they offer is to have a fitness instructor come to your class to do a quick, stretch break. I decided to do a virtual stretch break. The facilitators led the participants through a series of quick stretches that can be done at the computer. The stretches were shown on screen and took less than one minute to do. I'm not sure how many people actually stretched, but again, doing this kind of quick activity helps to get the participants' attention and to re-focus them back to the virtual classroom.

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Learning-by-doing in the 21st Century

-continued from page 2

More than 80 percent of the reseller executives said when completing the course that they would actively recommend it to a colleague and 50% more learners took the course than originally hoped for. Despite the overall downturn in the computer industry this fall, Compaq's market share in the small server segment has increased. This positive result has obviously several reasons -- one of which might be the e-simulation "Sales School" course.

As we work with our clients including large corporations, traditional training companies and other e-Learning companies, we believe that our Designer tool lends us the freedom to focus on the content and pedagogy of scenario-based e-Learning simulations rather than limiting ourselves to a jargon-packed computer programming discussion.

Having fun is an essential aspect in all forms of learning. Your self-motivation to learn and your ability to retain the new information, increase substantially when you enjoy what you're doing.

Tomas Dreifaldt is a co-founder and VP of Content and Customization at Intermezzon. He has a strong interest in learning methodology and a belief in that having fun while learning is essential and increases self-motivation and your ability to retain new information.

For more information, contact Agneta Rosenberg at agneta.r@intermezzon.com or 773-528-1247 or visit www.intermezzon.com

NASAGA 2002

**San Diego
NOVEMBER 6-9, 2002**

CATCH THE WAVE



eGame Design Tips

1. Pay as much attention to designing your questions and answers as you do to your games.
2. Use games for learning, not for testing.
3. Use simulations for performance applications.
4. Give users a choice.
5. If budget is no object, use as many learning modalities as possible. (text, graphics, audio, video, animation)
6. If budget is constrained, put your resources into interactive frame games and narrative simulations.
7. Boring content with interesting games is more effective than interesting content with boring games.
8. When in doubt, check with the SME.
9. Define decision-making authority for content, process, and form, then trust your decision makers.
10. Invest now and save later or save now and invest later.

eGame Design Tips from the NASAGA 2001 Workshop, **eLearning Traps, Pitfalls, and Swindles...and how to use eGames and eSims to avoid them.**

by Andrew Kimball, QB International, San Rafael, CA
415-457-1919—www.qube.com



Virtual Coffee Break Game

A Little Fun for Virtual Classrooms

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The Virtual Coffee Break Game

I wanted to add some fun to the virtual classroom by incorporating a game but there wasn't much time. I created a simple game to play about midway through which served to review the content covered so far. The Virtual Coffee Break Game has two teams:

The Decafs and the Espressos. The teams are instantly formed by telling the participants that the team players of the Decafs are those participants who have first names beginning with a letter from A to M. The other players form the Espresso team. Review questions are flashed on the screen and the players respond with the Chat button. The set-up of this game is quick and the facilitator can show as few or as many questions as she wishes. The change of pace gives the participants a quick boost (much like a coffee break) and helps to keep them focused.

Conclusion

The client and the participants were happy but the facilitators were hesitant about incorporating these play elements in the course. If you have used games successfully in virtual classrooms, I'd love to hear about it. Just write. ribaux@sympatico.ca

- *By virtual classroom I mean that the participants are online and on the phone, at the same time, while a facilitator delivers content.*

*Sonia Ribaux
(514) 369-3752
ribaux@sympatico.ca*

Have questions about your membership, need to renew, or need more information?

Call **888.432.GAME**
(in the U.S.) or **317-387-1424**,
Email to **info@nasaga.org**,
or write:
NASAGA
P.O. Box 78636
Indianapolis, IN 46278

SIMAGES 2002

*OUR FUTURE ISSUES NEED YOUR
CONTRIBUTIONS ON GAMES AND SIMULATIONS*

**PLEASE E-MAIL YOUR IDEAS, ARTICLES,
AND TIPS TO:**

rhollands@radford.edu

ATTENTION

**ANYONE INTERESTED IN
eLEARNING**

The NASAGA Board of Director's e-learning committee is looking for your ideas for free, quarterly e-workshops.

Is there a topic that you would like to see covered? Please let us know!

Email
dave.matte@telus.com or
joshua@industriallogic.com

Thanks for sharing!