

# PulseLearning - Outsourcing Case Study

## REDUCED TIME-TO-MARKET, IMPROVED PRODUCTIVITY – AN OUTSOURCING SUCCESS STORY

*“The opportunity and challenge of partnering with CA and helping them to meet their business and learning goals has been immense. It has required us to be creative, proactive, flexible, and to adapt more than we ever had to with any other client. It has also been hugely rewarding; just as it has proven a success for CA, it has brought home to us the market requirements for world-class outsourcing and how best this can be achieved through real partnership.”*

- Jim Breen, Chief Executive Officer, PulseLearning

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As part of a broad change in the corporate learning strategy, CA ([www.ca.com](http://www.ca.com)) outsourced learning content development services to PulseLearning ([www.pulselearning.com](http://www.pulselearning.com)). The main objectives behind this move were to reduce overheads, increase productivity, reduce time to market, and enable CA management to focus on longer-term business strategy. To date, the following successes have been achieved:

- ▶ 52% increase in productivity
- ▶ 50% reduction of development time, with attendant savings on cost and resources
- ▶ 50% reduction of time-to-market
- ▶ 50% reduction of subject matter expert (SME) involvement in the development cycle
- ▶ All training solutions are available within 0-4 weeks of software product release

### BACKGROUND

CA (formerly Computer Associates) is the world's fifth-largest software company, according to Fortune 5000. CA's solutions portfolio addresses challenges in a number of business areas, including identity, enterprise, security, and storage management. CA offers professional training across the full range of their software solutions. They also develop extensive, in-house training for sales readiness and technology deployment purposes. Historically, these training solutions were delivered through instructor-led training (ILT). CA wanted to move towards blended learning solutions, which place more emphasis on self-paced (SPT) and web-based learning (WBT).



CA took the decision to outsource to PulseLearning the program management, project management, and content development of ILT and online SPT courses. This move was driven by a need to reduce resource and infrastructure overheads and to exercise greater business control through the strategic planning opportunities that outsourcing would present. Outsourcing would also enable CA to more effectively plan and execute the migration from ILT delivery to more technology driven, blended forms of learning.

In managing the outsourcing relationship, CA also hoped to reduce the time requirements on SMEs consumed in training development. This, CA believed, would reduce the overall time spent in training development cycles while improving the industry relevance and quality of the training material.

The specific business objectives that CA hoped to achieve through outsourcing were to:

- ▶ Reduce time to market
- ▶ Lessen the dependence on SMEs
- ▶ Improve development process efficiency
- ▶ Increase resource scalability
- ▶ Enable CA to migrate to eLearning delivery platforms
- ▶ Enable greater focus on core business requirements



PulseLearning is a Learning Process Improvement organization and one of the fastest-growing eLearning companies in the world since its foundation in 1999. In fact, Deloitte has ranked PulseLearning as one of the world's fastest-growing IT companies.

PulseLearning was selected by CA to develop ILT and online SPT because they demonstrated a keen understanding of how outsourcer performance relates to clients' business processes and goals. PulseLearning's stated goal is to accelerate clients' educational mandates through measurable solutions.

Specifically, PulseLearning defined its commitment to CA as follows:

- ▶ Support CA in their focus on core business requirements.
- ▶ Enable CA to improve profitability through cost reductions and faster time to market.
- ▶ Accelerate CA's ability to make substantive improvements in learning technologies and processes.
- ▶ Provide scalability for CA to achieve its change agenda.
- ▶ Respond proactively to CA's business opportunities and challenges.

## **THE CHALLENGE**

### **REDUCE TIME TO MARKET AND DEPENDENCE ON SMEs**

In addition to reducing costs, CA needed to release training solutions to the market as close as possible to software product releases. Failure to do this would have a negative impact on the sales of training solutions and, in the long term, affect customer satisfaction with CA products and services.

Before engaging PulseLearning to develop their training solutions, CA had a 14-16 week development cycle. This consumed time, money, and resources and was at odds with the business goals that the company was pursuing. Outsourcing brought with it a reduction in overheads, but no guarantee of reduced cycles or improved time to market, unless PulseLearning could assist in finding a way to reduce the time to market.

## **THE SOLUTION**

Tasked with devising, implementing, and managing development processes that reduced time to market, PulseLearning created two new development processes. The selection of which process to employ was based on the availability of SMEs and the development cycle of the application software.

### **RAPID DEVELOPMENT PROCESS 1**

Rapid, on-site development:

- ▶ A dedicated on-site team works through the full development cycle iteratively and co-operatively.
- ▶ All technical, instructional, and quality issues are resolved, and solutions are implemented on the spot.
- ▶ The quality cycle is initiated as soon as a learning task is scripted, eliminating downtime and reducing development intervals.
- ▶ The input and approval of the SME is sought immediately upon completion of scripting and quality approval.

### **RAPID DEVELOPMENT PROCESS 2**

Remote, facilitated development:

- ▶ PulseLearning designs user-friendly scripting templates and provides these to the SMEs.
- ▶ SMEs are given foundational orientation in template use and instructional design.
- ▶ No knowledge transfer is required between the SME and development team.
- ▶ Quality issues are fixed directly and submitted to the SME for review and approval.
- ▶ SME availability does not affect development.

## THE RESULT

The following results were achieved and enabled CA to attain its business goals as they related to time to market, SME dependence, and development costs:

- ▶ 50% reduction of development time, with attendant savings on cost and resources
- ▶ 50% reduction of time-to-market
- ▶ 50% reduction of SME involvement in the development cycle
- ▶ All training available within 0-4 weeks of software product release

## THE BROADER BENEFITS OF OUTSOURCING

The benefits of Learning Process Outsourcing that are most highly regarded in the learning industry include the greater opportunity for planning and implementing new strategies and initiatives. These then combine with the higher levels of operational reliability that they afford. It is against these expectations that CA judge their relationship with PulseLearning.

According to Mike Yakiemchuk, VP, Education, CA Technology Services: *“Before outsourcing training development to PulseLearning, CA developed 270 days of training with a staff of 50 people in-house. Today, with PulseLearning’s assistance, CA has developed 411 days of training for the same cost. That represents a 52% increase in productivity that can be attributed directly to the success of the outsourcing arrangement.”*

*“Working with PulseLearning forced CA to become more efficient, to focus on SMEs, and get them involved in projects earlier. CA also benefits financially from the outsourcing relationship with PulseLearning by moving away from a significant fixed cost with in-house resources to an on-demand pricing structure, which means we only pay for resources as and when we need them.”*

In respect of the broader benefits of outsourcing, there have been two further economies for CA in outsourcing ILT and online SPT development to PulseLearning. Facilitating CA’s movement away from a complete dependence on instructor-led delivery of material has created savings on instructor travel costs and time through the shorter duration of classes. SPT is also proving more efficient and makes the training more productive across the varying education levels of students.

In general, the high-level, strategic objectives that drove the outsourcing arrangement have resulted in greater productivity, lower overheads, and greater process efficiency. Moreover, the working relationship that has developed between CA and PulseLearning has been mutually beneficial and has nurtured a spirit of co-operation. PulseLearning are seen less as a separate organization with whom CA must grapple and more of an extension of CA’s operations that is self-sufficient and runs according to its own models of efficiency. These in turn reflect PulseLearning’s commitment to enhance CA’s business achievements through continued improvements and a realization that the success of the partnership depends on adding value to CA’s range of operations.

PulseLearning representatives are available to discuss this model and the range of Learning Process Improvement services the company offers.

For more information, please contact the following representatives:

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