

The Challenge:

Find a new distance learning platform that could facilitate rapid expansion of distance learning courses.

Blackboard® ProSites™ Provides Advanced Management Services with the Optimal Distance Learning Environment

Companies are always looking for ways to increase productivity and efficiency and reduce overhead. Canton, Massachusetts based Advanced Management Services (AMS) helps clients work toward these goals by offering consulting, training and assessments in professional development, business analysis, business development and project management. The company provides several different training delivery formats, such as on-site, live online through AMS Virtual ClassroomSM, self-paced online through AMS On-Demand.eduSM, podcasts and blended versions that combine aspects of all four formats.

AMS works with clients in the U.S., Europe and Asia. In addition to businesses of all sizes, ranging from mid-sized to Fortune 500 and Global 2000 companies, AMS also works with state and federal agencies.

AMS Needed More Efficient Course Development

AMS puts a great deal of effort into creating course content that goes beyond simply repeating what can be found in textbooks. Course instructors and developers frequently include multimedia elements along with additional material, much like what a live presentation might introduce in the classroom. This multi-dimensional approach keeps learners engaged and also addresses different learning styles within each lesson.

Even though AMS has a catalog of 300 different training courses, it had only seven available for distance learning. CEO and founder Phil Ventresca explained this was due to its former distance learning platform, which was hard to customize and unable to easily convert existing programs to distance learning formats. Most importantly, AMS lacked the ability to directly control its own intellectual property.

"Blackboard offered us an intuitive platform which many learners had experience with, and it provided an administrative interface that members of our instructional design staff found easy to use with a little training," said Ventresca. "We needed a platform that was more efficient and straightforward so that we could create quality content more quickly and provide an experience that allows learners to learn, not worry about how to maneuver through the course," he added.



Course Development is Now on the Fast Track

When AMS began researching a new system for development and delivery of distance learning, it had several key priorities:

- A turnkey solution
- Streamlined course development
- A proven track record
- Full tech support
- Ease of use for end users

In addition to meeting all these criteria, the Blackboard® system has enabled instructional designers to use templates that can be uploaded to quickly create learning modules. This has streamlined course development and greatly reduced the time required of subject matter experts.

End users' experience has been improved not only by the intuitive interface, but by added features that enhance learning. A pre-test determines learning areas in which an individual needs extra help and automatically customizes the lesson to stress those areas. AMS also uses the Blackboard® Electric Blackboard® function to post the "problem" areas as a reminder that the learner can refer to as he or she progresses through the lesson. This is part of the company's philosophy of providing "real learning," rather than simply a means to receive a certificate for completing a required course.

AMS Dramatically Increases Number of Potential Distance Learning Courses

The ease and speed with which AMS can develop online content using Blackboard ProSites™ has increased the number of courses available for distance learning from seven to 125, a jump of nearly 1800%.

Ventresca said, "It all comes down to providing a less expensive way to publish our intellectual property—and now we can, thanks to the ease of using Blackboard technology, the available tech support and the flexibility it gives us to be creative in our instructional course design. Blackboard ProSites will significantly enhance our ability to service our global client base."

To learn more about Blackboard ProSites, visit www.BlackboardProSites.com or call (888) 719-6123.

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