

# Customer Success Stories

TEKsystems Global Services®

## Designing a Customized E-learning Solution for a Worldwide IT Company

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY  
TRAINING AND EDUCATION SERVICES

## Executive Summary

TEKsystems developed a custom e-learning course and business simulation to help a global leader in IT educate their internal sales team on how to sell a new networking software product.

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## Quick Facts

### Client

- **Industry:** Information technology
- **Revenue:** More than \$12 billion
- **Employees:** More than 72,000
- **Geographic Presence:** Headquartered in California; serving customers and businesses around the globe

### Objectives

- Create a custom e-learning program to train the client's sales team on strategies to sell a new networking software suite
- Leverage client subject matter experts to learn about product complexities and translate acquired knowledge into engaging training materials
- Leverage the latest technologies and advances in learning theory to build an in-depth, highly interactive e-learning course

### Challenges

- Integrate real-world sales scenarios into the business simulation to make the course realistic and applicable to learners
- Design and develop custom 3D avatars to add intrigue and entertainment to the business simulation
- Augment regular Articulate Storyline 2 animations by creating high-end, custom animations that reflect an underlying analogy tied throughout the training program

### Results

- Leveraged the ADDIE development model to design, build and deliver an interactive, 80-minute e-learning course
- Integrated intricate ribbon animations throughout the e-learning course to help learners conceptualize various product suite offerings
- Developed an effective business simulation where learners could practice their newly acquired knowledge in real-world sales scenarios

### Technologies Supported

- Adobe After Effects
- Adobe Premiere Pro CC
- Articulate Storyline 2
- Blender

## Client Profile

A worldwide leader in information technology, our client designs, builds and sells networking products, services and solutions to businesses around the world. TEKsystems has partnered with this client since 2000.

## Industry Landscape

An organization's sales team can be considered the lifeblood of any business. These teams are on the front lines of critical business conversations, interfacing with customers, pitching new products and most importantly, acquiring and retaining business. It's important that sales teams remain well-versed in their organization's index of offerings so they can engage in consultative and meaningful sales conversations.

As new products and services are introduced to the market, it's important that internal sales teams understand how to position new offerings and articulate their business value to their customers. Training courses or workshops are an invaluable way to educate sales personnel on product information, differentiators and sales strategies. However, in today's fast-paced business world, lengthy training programs or multiday sales seminars are no longer practical. Individuals' attention spans are shorter and the "time is money"

mentality means that every minute of the day is valuable, particularly for sales personnel driven by commission.

E-learning programs are becoming an increasingly popular and effective training option for many organizations as they leverage innovative educational techniques and engaging and diverse multimedia that promote knowledge retention. Users are provided with a flexible and secure learning environment where they can progress through the materials at their own pace, when and where best suited for them. This unique ability helps foster a personalized learning experience and increases productivity as users can often complete courses incrementally. E-learning courses generally also integrate compelling multimedia and other interactive components, providing a richer, more entertaining and engaging overall learning experience.

From an organizational perspective, e-learning courses can be a cost-effective training option. Since learning is done virtually, organizations don't have to worry about the logistics of hiring an instructor, renting a classroom, printing materials or other associated production tasks. In addition, e-learning programs can be reused or taken multiple times which make it a smart investment for training newly hired sales personnel or offering knowledge refreshers to existing staff.

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## Situation

In order to stay competitive and relevant, businesses must continually diversify their product offerings to meet changes in market and consumer demand. The client, a global leader in IT, was looking to broaden its product offerings by introducing a line of

networking software solutions to their already extensive portfolio of hardware products. The new product suite focused largely on innovating the way in which businesses and individuals collaborate.

Historically, the client's sales teams had exclusively sold hardware products to meet their customers' needs, so selling software would require a shift in messaging and a deeper understanding of the nuances associated with the new product. Selling software would require the client's sales team, comprising mostly of account managers (AMs) and systems engineers (SEs), to rework their sales messaging to be able to articulate the product suite's advanced service offerings. They would also need to learn how to convey how the software could help create business and collaboration efficiencies for geographically dispersed organizations and personnel. Additionally, the sales conversations would now take place with non-IT line of business buyers (i.e., C-level marketing, business and operations executives), so their value proposition would need to be realigned.

To help usher their sales team into the new sales environment, the client wanted

to create a customized training program to teach AMs and SEs about the new product suite and sales techniques for engaging in meaningful conversations with current and prospective customers. By taking the training course, sales personnel would strengthen their product knowledge and build their confidence in their ability to sell the new software.

The client wanted the program to include product education, competitor analysis and sales simulations to prepare AMs for real-world selling scenarios in the field. They also wanted the training course to be engaging and stylistically different from other internal training courses to stimulate interest and effective internalization of the new sales strategy. The client knew that given the highly customized nature of the program they were seeking, they needed a third-party partner with expertise in creating sophisticated and engaging e-learning courses and business simulations.

## Solution

TEKsystems Training and Education Services proposed a customized, interactive training solution consisting of an e-learning course and a business simulation. Leveraging the latest technologies and advances in learning theory, we would build an in-depth e-learning course, incorporating custom animation to meet the client's desired course aesthetic. The animation would drive a high level of interactivity, allowing users to engage with the training rather than just passively watch it. The course would help learners become knowledgeable about key product information, including vision, portfolio, architecture and competitive differentiators.

Leveraging the latest technologies and advances in learning theory, we would build an in-depth e-learning course, incorporating custom animation to meet the client's desired course aesthetic.

To meet the client's request of making the training course aesthetically different from their other internal courses, we suggested introducing an underlying visual motif that would tie throughout the course to help users conceptualize the nuances of the product suite. We felt a ribbon theme closely aligned with the software suite's offerings, as there were several different products within the suite that could be integrated in different ways to meet the unique needs of the customers—much like tying a bow. These animations would be custom-designed by a graphic designer and accompany standard animations produced in Articulate Storyline 2, a popular course development program.

The proposed business simulation would accompany the e-learning course and allow learners to practice critical selling techniques in a simulated, online environment that mimicked common selling scenarios. To differentiate the business simulation from the client's other training programs, we would incorporate custom 3D characters, or avatars, to stimulate engagement and interest. Users would be taken through several typical interactions with customers and given the opportunity to ask scoping questions and respond to typical customer objections. An embedded scoring system would also provide learners with feedback as they progressed through the simulation. At the end of the simulation, the learner would be asked to put together a proposal to present to the customer based on the information they gathered during the selling process.

Our development team would comprise of a number of highly skilled learning development professionals who would collaborate with the client throughout the development process. An instructional

designer would interface with subject matter experts (SMEs) to gather product information, draft and design scenarios for the business simulation, write scripts and build out the e-learning course in Storyline. A graphic designer would complete the high-end ribbon animations for the training course and design and develop 3D avatars for the business simulation. We would also provide a project manager to oversee scheduling, document risks and keep the project on track, as well as a quality assurance specialist to review everything from an editorial perspective, ensuring that spelling, punctuation and overall functionality were correct within the course.

We would use the popular instructional design model, [ADDIE](#) (analyze, design, develop, implement and evaluate), to design and build the training materials, seeking input and approval from client stakeholders throughout the development process. Working in iterative phases, we would share course and simulation prototypes with the client to solicit their feedback and incorporate revisions in real time. Prior to moving forward with the full-scale development of each program component, we would seek approval on design, functionality, accuracy of the content and overall aesthetic of the course and simulation. This process would help keep stakeholders aware of progress and ensure that the end deliverables met their desired program goals and expectations.

The client considered two other vendors to develop the product training program but TEKsystems was ultimately selected based on our IT and business training expertise as well as extensive past [experience creating custom training solutions](#). The client was also impressed by the visual ribbon theme

and animations we suggested as well as the proposed integration of 3D avatars into the business simulation. They saw this as a unique differentiator that set us apart from the competition. Additionally, a referral from

two of the client's stakeholders who had previously worked with TEKsystems at their prior employers also helped to solidify the partnership.

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## Results

Over the course of six months, TEKsystems developed a customized e-learning solution for the client to educate their internal sales team on how to market and sell a new networking product suite. The 80-minute program consisted of two components: an e-learning course and an interactive business simulation.

The client's sales personnel would first complete the e-learning course to learn specifics about the product suite, including its architecture, competitive differentiators, advanced service offerings and ways to strategically sell the new software. We designed the e-learning course to drive user engagement and internalization of product information, embedding various types of interactive quiz questions throughout the course. Per the client's request, we also designed and developed custom ribbon animations to augment standard Storyline-developed visuals, which users could click on to reveal additional product information.

The second training component was the highly interactive business simulation which provided learners an opportunity to practice selling the product suite in simulated environment. The simulation required a high level of skill to develop from both an instructional and graphics perspective. It was critical that we worked with the client's SMEs to understand the product suite and challenges involved in selling the software so that we could design realistic scenarios

reflective of the real-world challenges the sales team might encounter in the field. This would help establish validity to the sales message and training course as a whole.

Since completing the training program, client stakeholders have recognized additional opportunities to leverage business simulations in training courses for their other lines of business and products. TEKsystems is currently being considered for several future opportunities to build e-learning courses that incorporate business simulations and video-enhanced materials.

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## Key Success Factors

### Communication

This engagement was successful due to the very high level of communication and collaboration between TEKsystems' development team and client stakeholders. The ADDIE model allowed us to seek continual feedback on the course components as they were being developed, helping to ensure the program achieved the client's goals and desired program aesthetic. Additionally, during the initial scoping process, we were able to present a very clear vision of our approach that aligned to the client's expectations. The development team was then able to execute upon that approach by successfully working with client SMEs to develop a realistic and engaging e-learning experience.

### Expertise in e-learning course development

TEKsystems has a dedicated Training and Education Services practice that has a seasoned history of providing flexible and effective e-learning solutions. For this engagement, our instructional designer took ample time to understand the new software suite's nuances and work with client SMEs to design and build a compelling training course, validating the content and course components throughout the development process.

### Innovative ideas

TEKsystems thought outside of the box when conceptualizing a unique and new way to stimulate course engagement and user interest. Providing customized graphics, animations and 3D avatars greatly enhanced interactivity, created a linear storyline and added intrigue and entertainment for learners. The client has recognized the value of these visual differentiators and is considering TEKsystems for additional opportunities to enhance and update their existing internal training courses for other lines of business.

## About TEKsystems®

People are at the heart of every successful business initiative. At TEKsystems, we understand people. Every year we deploy over 80,000 IT professionals at 6,000 client sites across North America, Europe and Asia. Our deep insights into IT human capital management enable us to help our clients achieve their business goals—while optimizing their IT workforce strategies. We provide IT staffing solutions, IT talent management expertise and IT services to help our clients plan, build and run their critical business initiatives. Through our range of quality-focused delivery models, we meet our clients where they are, and take them where they want to go, the way they want to get there.

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