

Professional Service Industries, Inc.

Engineering firm creates mission-critical simulation training for dispersed workforce using Adobe Captivate® and Adobe Photoshop® software

Professional Service Industries, Inc.

www.psiusa.com



Industry

Engineering, Consulting, and Testing

Challenges

- Provide hands-on training on new mission-critical system
- Reach 2,500 employees in 125 offices
- Maintain low training expenses
- Engage learners and maximize retention
- Keep pace with evolving software product

Solution

- eLearning

PSI is taking advantage of Adobe Captivate and Adobe Photoshop to produce rich, interactive simulations of its mission-critical operations software, PSIQEST.

Results

- Helped maximize return on investment in PSIQEST
- Successfully reached dispersed employee base
- Cut travel costs by hundreds of thousands of dollars annually
- Received positive feedback from employees on effectiveness of training
- Revamped training in four days to reflect major changes to PSIQEST

Systems At A Glance

- Adobe Acrobat® 9 Pro
- Adobe Captivate 4
- Adobe Photoshop Extended

When training is an investment, not an expense

When companies revamp a mission-critical system, successful employee training on the new solution becomes imperative to maximize return on investment. At Professional Service Industries, Inc. (PSI), an industry-leading engineering, consulting, and testing firm, a major overhaul of the company's core operational system called for training a dispersed workforce of 2,500 employees in 125 offices across the United States. To bring employees up to speed on the new solution, the company turned to Adobe Captivate and Adobe Photoshop software to develop interactive training and simulations delivered virtually online.

“With Adobe Captivate, we've achieved efficiency and effectiveness for both learners and training developers,” says Dave Lukasik, Ph.D., chief learning officer for PSI. “The best measure of our return on investment from using Adobe solutions is that transitioning employees to our new operating system is going very well and we've saved hundreds of thousands in travel costs.”

From legacy to leading-edge

To set up proposals and projects, create and track work orders, report testing results, track time, and bill customers, PSI personnel now use custom software that integrates the company's ERP system, with a feature rich laboratory information management system for construction materials and geotechnical testing. The integrated system is called PSIQEST, and leverages quality, efficiency, standardization, and technology as the foundation for the company's continued growth.

Moving the company from the legacy field operating system to PSIQEST required that employees use PSIQEST productively, the moment it went live. “The day we start using PSIQEST in each office, everyone has to be competent in use of the new software—without exception,” says Lukasik.

In the past, Lukasik relied primarily on either synchronous online training or prerecorded lectures and demos, but he knew this approach would not suffice for PSIQEST. “When it comes to software, people have to learn by doing,” he says.

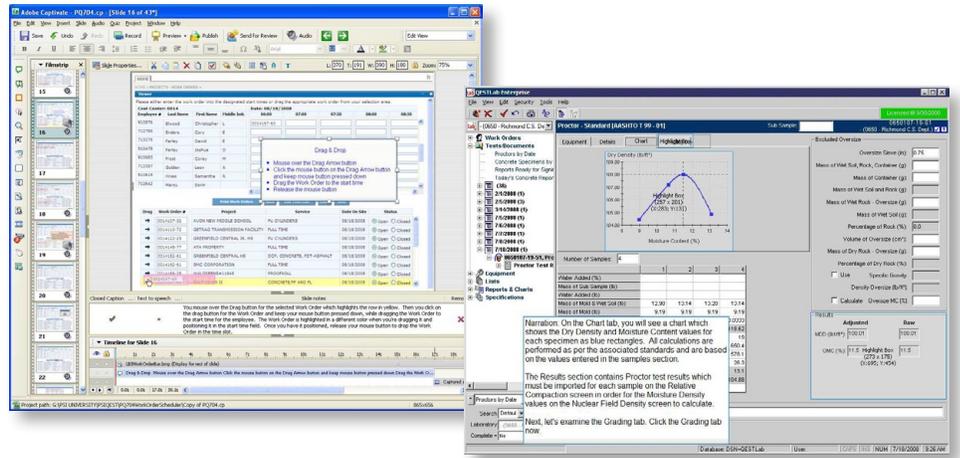
A new way to author rich eLearning experiences

Lukasik evaluated alternatives for authoring solutions that would enable him to quickly develop interactive, rich media training that could be delivered asynchronously at employees' convenience. The courses would need to be developed without programming knowledge, by a very small staff of two—Lukasik and one other coworker—coordinating their efforts with Relate, an outside firm specializing in the creation of eLearning and rich-media content.

“We chose Adobe Captivate because of its exceptional ease of use and ability to support rich media and interactivity,” says Lukasik. “We learned how to use Adobe Captivate very quickly. And, we have been able to make our courses interactive to keep learners engaged.”

Using Adobe Captivate, a total of ten hours of interactive content comprising over 50 courses were created, all while the PSIQEST software was evolving. Screen shots of PSIQEST were captured using

PSI chose Adobe Captivate and Adobe Photoshop software to develop interactive training and simulations delivered virtually online. Adobe Captivate helped the company achieve efficiency and effectiveness for both learners and training developers. The simulations allow employees to acclimate to PSIQEST at their own pace, and they learn by doing—which provides for a good knowledge transfer from the simulations in Adobe Captivate to the live production environment.



“Adobe Captivate is exceptionally easy to use, while also enabling us to create rich and engaging training. It has become central to our corporate training efforts.”

Dave Lukasik, Ph.D.,
Chief learning officer,
Professional Service Industries, Inc.

Adobe Captivate, and often exported to Adobe Photoshop for retouching or, in some cases, building functionality that was still absent in the beta version of PSIQEST. Images were re-imported into Adobe Captivate to add audio, animations, and interactivity.

“Keeping courses consistent with PSIQEST as it evolved through beta was one of the most challenging aspects of the course development process,” says Lukasik. “With little lead time between completion and release of PSIQEST to production, the ability to efficiently export, modify, and reimport images was significant to our success.” For example, a late change to the PSIQEST navigation required modification of hundreds of images. According to Lukasik, “It worked like magic due to the integration between Adobe Captivate and Photoshop. In four days, we were ready to go again.”

Learning by doing

Each course features voiceover narration that explains features and functionality of the software as the learner completes a series of interactive simulations. The training modules range from 15 to 30 minutes each so that employees can go through a lesson when they have a few minutes of free time. In addition, the modules were designed to allow learners to be enrolled only in training applicable to the employees’ specific job, which keeps the training relevant.

In addition to the online training, PSI provides employees with an online help manual produced in Adobe Acrobat Pro software. “Acrobat is great for our reference materials, because it provides interactive links and full search so employees can quickly find what they need,” says Lukasik.

Within a few short months, PSI delivered over 10,000 Adobe Captivate simulations through its Learning Management System, with positive reactions. Says Lukasik, “The simulations created in Adobe Captivate allow employees to acclimate to PSIQEST at their own pace, from their own computer just-in-time prior to go live. Best of all, employees are learning by doing so there is very good knowledge transfer from the simulations in Adobe Captivate to the live production environment.”

For More Information

www.adobe.com/products/captivate/

An invaluable asset for corporate training

The cost savings from training everyone in advance using the Adobe Captivate simulations are impressive. “If we had to put trainers on the road to reach 2,500 people in 125 locations, it would not be economically feasible,” says Lukasik. “We’ve done studies in the past related to our use of eLearning and determined that we save \$500,000 to \$750,000 a year in travel expenses alone.”

Moving forward, PSI plans to expand the use of Adobe Captivate to transform legacy paper-based training manuals and tests into interactive experiences.

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Adobe Systems Incorporated
345 Park Avenue
San Jose, CA 95110-2704
USA
www.adobe.com

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