SOLUTIONS

Learn Right

A Vendor-Provided
Case Study

Two providers
partner for
effective
localization.

How can one manager train thousands of employees in multinational locations—and communicate across cultural boundaries? It's a challenge for people charged with managing the quality, compliance, and language issues of a regulated industry in a global marketplace.

Reaching every employee worldwide with traditional training techniques just isn't feasible anymore; it's too expensive and hard to measure results. That's why so many organizations are looking to companies such as Learnwright for effective e-learning solutions to maintain compliance in tightly regulated industries. After a formal search, Learnwright chose Welocalize Inc. as its partner for translation and localization needs. Learnwright creates multimedia, Web-based instructional courseware that is used to help pharmaceutical and other regulated industries provide effective and consistent company-wide training, even across international boundaries.

Learnwright's predominant focus has always been developing innovative models of instruction, such as instructional design approaches and assessment strategies, specially adapted for FDA regulated industries. Its courseware helps companies maintain compliance to Good Manufacturing Practices, which require that manufacturers, processors, and packagers of drugs and medical devices take proactive steps to ensure that their products are safe, pure, and effective. To achieve and maintain the required level of job competence required for FDA compliance, employee training becomes an integral part of everyday life on the job.

Learnwright recently delivered a project for a large chemical and biotech company in Switzerland. The contract called for creating a new line of courseware designed to train personnel who are required to follow new Good Manufacturing Practices guidelines known in the industry as ICH Q7A, uniformly applied and enforced by regulatory agencies in the United States, Japan, and the European Union. The courseware also needed to be delivered in two languages—English and German.

Learnwright knew that multilanguage requirements for its courseware would increase, so it sought a localization vendor that could provide more than language translation. The vendor had to have seasoned experience in the localization and translation of courseware, and had to be technology savvy, with an understanding of the dynamic product development environment.

The planning

Learnwright invited five top localization companies to participate in the request-for-quote process. Some of the criteria were 1) strong process management, 2) good industry reputation, 3) cost competitiveness, and 4) a relationship focus. Technology expertise continued to be important because Learnwright uses many internally developed tools that the localization vendor would have to use quickly to successfully deliver on the project. Learnwright chose Welocalize.

Welocalize, no stranger to the demands and requirements of servicing e-learning and medical content companies, had an established practice in both industries. Says Frank Taylor, president and CEO of Learnwright, "Welocalize was sensitive to our needs even before we hired it as our official vendor."

The project

Learnwright had many concerns about delivering courseware to a German-

speaking audience, such as new design constraints; suddenly, "white space" took on another meaning. Whether producing a multimedia application or technical manual, limitations of white space are a reality. A text box in English accommodating 50 characters may require 100 characters in German, and it wasn't just a matter of effectively communicating in the white space that existed but wanting the courseware to be truly international. For Learnwright, that meant the courseware shouldn't look to a German-speaking audience as if it had been re-created from an English version.

The localization project included many interactive elements, such as audio, text, graphics, and animation. Welocalize leveraged many of its internal resources—from in-house recording studios to complete capabilities in localization testing. Learnwright's courseware often contains a large volume of files with many file types, typical in complex multimedia programs. This project was no exception. Effective file management was critical to success to achieve a seamless execution of the courseware.

"Basically, you have to disassemble many of the technology components to perform the localization work," explains Jennifer Lui, engineer for Welocalize. This project involved such technologies as ASP, Macromedia Flash, and Director; and Oracle and SQL databases. Once localization was completed, Lui reassembled all of the components of the courseware, then sent it to the Welocalize native-language testing team in Portland, Oregon. Welocalize also has testing operations in Saarbrücken, Germany, and Washington, D.C.

Says Taylor, "Translation of our courseware is complex and a considerable challenge, and our schedule was unforgiving. Welocalize was extremely responsive and flexible to our constant demands."