

NlightN Multimedia -

A Real World View



eCommunication: making it work

Part 6 – Relevance

Any eCommunication needs to be relevant to the target audience. And, most importantly, the target audience needs to see that it's relevant. Whenever we're asked for our valuable time and attention, we wonder (sometimes consciously, sometimes not) what's in it for me? Why should we invest our time in this?

For eLearning, the product must be seen as relevant either to their job or, in the case of education, their syllabus. Indeed, your initial job might well be to convince the target audience of this either at the start of the programme itself or in a covering letter or communication. Elearning really works when the target audience believes that, by completing the programme, they will personally benefit. This benefit might be improved career prospects, safer working, doing their jobs more easily or in understanding a new system.



Kevin Partner writes a regular bi-monthly column for **PCPro** (www.pcpro.co.uk), the UK's leading IT magazine and is an expert in eCommunication in all its forms. He's worked in the field since 1989, has seen fads and technologies come and go but the fundamentals of good practice remain the same.

eLearning is best when the user can configure the learning to their own needs. This might be simply by allowing them to pick from a list of short courses. It might equally be less obviously delivered within the structure of the tool in the presentation methods. Everyone has a different mix of learning styles and, whilst this is not the place to go into a topic of so much depth, broadly speaking you should include materials that appeal to visual learning (graphics and text), auditory learning (voiceover and music) and kinaesthetic learning (drag and drop).

You can see from this that the vast majority of eLearning only delivers to visual learners and that the reason for the power of video is that it covers both visual and auditory learning. Interactivity is the key to kinaesthetic learning. Bear in mind that everyone uses a combination of these three methods but each person tends to prefer a different mix.

For **eMarketing**, you have only a few seconds to demonstrate to your potential client that you deserve their continued attention. In those first few seconds, your job is to sell the rest of the eMarketing product so that it has a chance to sell your product or business. Packaging plays a key role in this. You must give your target audience a compelling reason to open it up!

If your eMarketing or eLearning is entirely online then you need to think of a way of getting people to the site. In the case of eMarketing, this might be through online advertising (eg Google Adwords) whereas with eLearning it might be more traditional forms of communication. Again, you must get across the benefits of investing their time.