



Keeping Canada's Marketers at the Top of their Game

D2L's Brightspace is flexible, scalable LMS helps the Canadian Marketing Association expand its education program and deliver learning directly into the hands of busy professionals

Overview

Busy professionals today increasingly demand more flexibility when it comes to their learning. They want easy, intuitive training that allows them to maintain and upgrade their skills, attain important professional certifications and remain abreast of the latest techniques and trends. They also want to access that training from any location and at any time of the day.

As Canada's #1 marketing association, the Canadian Marketing Association (CMA) represents Canada's leading business sectors and all marketing disciplines, channels and technologies. CMA's 425+ corporate members include Canada's leading organizations from the CBC and Canadian Tire to Google, TD Bank Group and Manulife. The organization is Canada's largest marketing association educator, with 6,000+ attendees joining CMA's events and educational programming annually.

CMA's online courses offer practicing marketers an interactive learning environment with case studies, video instruction and integrated discussion boards. Courses are rigorous, including multiple assignments, participation, and final assessments. Upon successful completion, students are awarded their certificate which counts towards the Certified Marketing Specialist™ Designation.

AT A GLANCE

Client: Canadian Marketing Association

Students: 425+ Corporations

Industry: Professional Association

CHALLENGE

- Limited flexibility with current LMS cut-off opportunities for program expansion and new learning paths (self-paced learning)
- Non-intuitive: "not a slick interface"

CAPABILITIES

- Intuitive interface
- Enterprise scalability
- Sandbox capability
- Mobile-friendly
- Mobile app

RESULT

- Dramatic improvement in learner Net Promoter Score
- Highest-ever satisfaction rating received in pilot semester
- Immediate and positive feedback from instructors on intuitive nature of the system

Challenge

The CMA, like many professional associations, is experiencing rising demand from its members for online “anywhere, anytime” learning options, with registration steadily increasing every semester. The organization had a previous investment in a learning platform, but as the educational program grew, the organization needed a platform that was stable, scalable and mobile-friendly. Refreshing the overall look and feel of the system was also an important consideration. “As a professional organization, our learners want content where and when they need it—it is a natural response to what’s happening today in terms of mobile technology,” says Gabriele Janes, VP, Learning for the CMA. “Our learners are busy people with families and full-time jobs. They want to access learning when they have the time, and in a mobile format familiar to them. And as a marketing organization ourselves, we wanted to present to them a clean, fully branded look and feel, and a system that was easy to navigate. We needed the technology to fade into the background, so the learning experience became all about the content.”

Solution

Recognizing that the organization needed a new learning platform was the first step. The team then assembled a long list of potential vendors and conducted 30-minute interviews with each candidate. A request for information (RFI) was provided to each vendor, with responses weighted to align to CMA’s list of feature and service requirements. “When we got to D2L’s submission, we found it to be solid and professionally done. Answers were very thorough putting D2L’s response head and shoulders over the others,” says Dr. Melanie Wilson, CMA Learning Strategist. A request for proposal (RFP) was provided to a smaller short list of vendors with D2L’s Brightspace platform emerging as the clear winner.

The Brightspace platform addresses the CMA’s three top learning management priorities, specifically:

- 1. Clean and intuitive look and feel**
- 2. Scalability with flexibility to customize**
- 3. Mobile support**

The Brightspace user experience is a welcome improvement since it is a user-friendly platform for staff—they can jump in and update anything at any time—and for CMA’s learners.

“The Brightspace user experience really cinched our final decision for D2L,” says Wilson. “CMA plans to take advantage of Brightspace’s scalability, flexibility, and mobile support as its education programs continue to expand in the future.”

“We saw a dramatic increase in our student net promoter score in the pilot semester. Student satisfaction is the highest it has ever been.”

*Dr. Melanie Wilson, CMA Learning Strategist,
Canadian Marketing Association*

Results

Right out of the gate, CMA instructors gave the Brightspace platform high marks for intuitiveness and performance. “The grading process and management of student progress was a lot easier. D2L made sure we received very thorough training, which flowed to our instructors and course facilitators,” says Kate Wamsteeker, Manager, Certificate Courses for the CMA. Students were equally impressed with the user experience provided by Brightspace. “We saw a dramatic increase in our student net promoter score in the pilot semester,” says Wilson. “Student satisfaction is the highest it has ever been.”

At the end of the day, the CMA’s raison d’être is to provide relevant and useful information to its members, so they can remain at the top of their professional game and current with marketing best practices. Says Janes, “Brightspace allows us to get relevant education to Canadian marketers in a holistic, highly engaging way. It’s really exciting to see students successfully graduate and rewarding to know they have the skills they need to competently work in Canada’s marketing profession.”

