CASE STUDY

Virtual University Project – Excellence Award Winner, 2001

O2

> „*Our experience with developing the Virtual University has shown that, alongside management support and a qualified specialist team, the ability to acquire and process know-how from external (especially international) sources and to cooperate with partners who provide top-level professional support and are flexible and creative enough to meet the demands of a client like ČESKÝ TELECOM are crucial for success. Our long-term cooperation with Kontis, s.r.o. is evidence of such a partnership.*"
>
> David Balarin, manažer pro rozvoj e-learningu

Customer Profile

O2 Czech Republic (formerly Český Telecom) is a leading telecommunications company operating in the Czech Republic, building on the legacy and expertise of Český Telecom, the largest provider of telecommunication services in Central Europe. The company employs thousands of people and has long invested in both staff development and the modernization of learning processes. Following an acquisition and rebranding in 2006, O2 Czech Republic continues to drive digital learning, further developing and expanding the LMS iTutor platform for effective corporate education management.

About This Case Study

This case study describes the implementation of e-learning and the LMS iTutor system in Český Telecom, at the time the largest telecom provider in the Czech Republic. After merging with Eurotel and rebranding in 2006, the company continued to develop digital education under the new name O2 Czech Republic. Thus, the LMS iTutor solution became a key tool for employee learning throughout both the Český Telecom era and the subsequent years as O2.

Phases of E-learning Implementation at ČESKÝ TELECOM

Project Brief (2000)

ČESKÝ TELECOM decided to implement e-learning as part of the e-RLZ project, whose purpose was to optimize and automate educational activities with the goal of

KONTIS
e LEARNING

focusing the potential of HRD specialists on high value-added activities and reducing the financial and time costs of services provided by this department.

The main selection criteria for a suitable LMS included: the possibility of maximum automation of the educational creation and delivery process, LMS meeting the company's IT standards, integrability with SAP R/3, price within the approved budget, and a guarantee of professional support in the Czech Republic.

Based on the assessment of these criteria and the pilot run, the selected solution was the Ingenium LMS from Click2learn, represented in the Czech Republic by Kontis, s.r.o.

LMS implementation (2001)

During the implementation phase, language localization of Ingenium LMS was carried out together with Kontis, its integration into Portal 2000 (an intranet entry point for staff applications with a direct link to SAP R/3), and its connection to the relevant modules of SAP R/3 and other applications supporting HR-related activities. At the same time, the Toolbook II Instructor program was purchased for course production, Crystal Report for creating reports, and X.Help for developing software application simulations.

The total implementation phase lasted six months. The newly installed system was named Virtual University for internal use at ČESKÝ TELECOM.

Management Academy (2001–2003)

The first educational programs delivered via the Virtual University were Management Academy courses (a total of 6 online courses supplied by external providers on topics such as strategic management, marketing, the role of the manager, and others).

The reason for this choice, besides the immediate need, was primarily a clearly defined, medium-sized group (350 managers) for whom it was attractive to participate in testing this modern learning method, and whose support made possible the wider rollout of e-learning within the company.

Both goals (testing and gaining support) were met. The online Management Academy courses provided ČESKÝ TELECOM with valuable experience that could be leveraged in further e-learning development.

Development of online course methodology (2002)

In mid-2002, e-learning at ČESKÝ TELECOM faced the task of fully integrating into the company's learning processes and developing an online course methodology that would enable their efficient internal development and also improve management of external providers.

To achieve these goals, it was necessary to significantly renew the team responsible for e-learning implementation, shifting focus from technical to pedagogical issues. Extensive know-how about e-learning, mainly from American resources, was acquired, and cooperation with partners in the Czech market was established. The entire process culminated in the creation of a comprehensive didactic material on online course production and the development of didactic, graphic, and technical standards for the creation and delivery of these courses. These documents are living materials that undergo regular and sometimes fundamental updates based on experience from their application and from monitoring world news and trends in e-learning.

E-learning as a standard part of employee education (2002–2003)

Simultaneously with the development of methodology, an editorial plan for the Virtual University was created, emphasizing the development and delivery of online courses aimed at large groups of employees (often 1,000 or more), mainly focused on delivering new knowledge (facts) and its subsequent verification.

These were primarily courses in the area of so-called normative qualifications (e.g. Driver training, Occupational Safety, Environmental Protection), onboarding courses, courses on new products and services of ČESKÝ TELECOM (e.g. number portability and operator selection, ADSL), introductory courses for some internal software applications, and courses in quality management.

From mid-2002 to the end of 2003, ČESKÝ TELECOM, through the Virtual University, delivered training equivalent to more than 22,000 classroom student-days. The average cost savings of online learning compared to traditional classroom training was at least 30%.

LMS development and course portfolio expansion (2003–2004)

Key activities started in 2003 included the gradual improvement of Ingenium LMS with new features increasing the flexibility of online course delivery and allowing more extensive interactivity between the student and the system, among students, and between students and instructors.

The editorial plan of the Virtual University, in addition to expanding the course portfolio in the already mentioned areas, further grew to include courses in IT literacy,

online support, English language instruction, and an updated and extended version of the Management Academy.

In many cases, this involved "blended" approaches combining online and classroom training to achieve maximum educational impact while maintaining cost efficiency. The Virtual University also supported the ongoing transformation of ČESKÝ TELECOM as a tool for spreading "best practices".

Customer statement

"Our experience with the development of the Virtual University has shown that, apart from company management support and a qualified team of specialists, the critical factors for the success of such a project are the ability to acquire and process know-how from external, especially foreign sources, and to cooperate with partners who can provide top professional support and are flexible and creative enough to address the needs of a demanding customer such as ČESKÝ TELECOM. Our long-term cooperation with Kontis, s.r.o. is proof of such a partnership."
David Balarin, E-learning Development Manager

In summary

…from mid-2002 to the end of 2003, ČESKÝ TELECOM, through the Virtual University, delivered training corresponding to more than 22,000 classroom student-days; the average cost savings for online training compared to the traditional classroom format was at least 30%…