



# **A Whitepaper on Multimedia Training**

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## **The Increasing Importance of Training**

In today's new economy, corporations are increasingly facing new challenges. Escalating competition in a globalized market, shrinking corporate resources, maturing markets, rapid shifts in technology, and the recruitment and retention of talented and skilled people are just a few of these challenges. In addition, corporations are constricted by the need to show short-term results no matter what circumstances exist. The pressure for month-to-month increases can be overwhelming.

In the past, corporations have viewed training as a necessary expense rather than an investment. Emphasis was placed on cutting the expense of training by making it more efficient. Now however in response to these challenges, corporations are beginning to view training as an investment. The knowledge and skills of the corporation's employees are now being held on equal basis with the corporation's monetary assets. Knowledge is now seen as a commodity. As a result of this shift, annual spending on formal training has increased to approximately \$60 billion in the United States alone in 2006.

A company's reliance on technology has increased exponentially over the last 20 years and will continue to do so far into the future. Let's imagine John Smith, a typical company employee who starts his career in 1990 and is issued a company desktop or laptop computer. John did not have prior computer and software experience, and therefore requires training in order to perform job responsibilities. Over the course of the next 18 years, John is exposed to new computer operating systems, software application revisions, Internet-based applications, digital phone systems, mobile phone technology, wireless PDAs, and IP telephony. Would John be able to be productive and advance in his career without receiving training on these systems and applications? The answer is no.

## **Typical Training Delivery Methods**

### *Classroom*

Classroom training is a very costly business venture particularly for technology training courses. It requires a staff of highly paid instructors, fully equipped labs, and full-time staff to coordinate scheduling of students, instructors, and any required equipment.

### *Web-based*

Web-based training typically uses the Internet for delivery of training content and allows students to access course materials anywhere and anytime their schedule permits. The student uses a personal computer at home or at work and is required to have a broadband Internet connection.

### *Digital Media*

Digital storage media such as CD and DVD-ROM supports the use of complex graphics and multimedia (if the selected platform and the equipment of the audience have supportive speeds). This type of training is not dependant on an internet connection.

## Multimedia Training Definition and Benefits

### What is Multimedia Training?

Multimedia training is an instructional system that incorporates both web-based and digital media course delivery and describes any application that uses graphics, text, animation, audio and video. These applications use high-bandwidth media (audio and video) and are delivered via CD, DVD-ROM, web stream, or portable media storage such as USB flash drives. Standard media formats include SWF, FLV, AVI, MPEG, and WMV.

### What are some benefits of multimedia training?

*Take it anytime and anywhere.* By using multimedia training, your employees can receive training virtually anytime and anyplace. For example, instead of gathering an entire sales organization for onsite training, each individual can receive training at different times, which eliminates taking the whole organization 'offline'. Remote employees can take the training at their location eliminating the expenses associated with travel. With flash-based web tutorials, people can view the training class from any internet-connected PC in the world.

Customer training via multimedia course empowers managers to schedule training during light workloads, reduce travel expenses, and allow for unlimited access for refresher and new hire training. For example, if you include one day of on-site training as part of the product sales price, but do not include any follow-up training, you can leave a DVD-ROM behind with the customer for attendees that could not make the class.

*Always available.* Because the training remains available on-site and via the Internet, new employees and customers can be immediately trained instead of waiting for the next available class. In instances where annual training is required, currently trained personnel can review materials as needed or specific sections as a refresher.

*Reduction in learning time.* Multimedia training is 2 to 4 times as efficient as most traditional training sessions. Since the largest cost in providing training to your employees is their time away from the job, the savings can be enormous. In regards to training your customers, it is proven that those who understand how to use the applications and features will do so more often and be less likely to cancel your service.

*Consistency of training.* The same quality content consistently delivered to all employees and customers, across multiple departments or locations.

*Quality of training, retention:* Training your sales organization will cut costs, increase productivity and generate more sales. The nature of interactive multimedia training provides for a highly engaging experience and evidence of learning is accomplished through practice and testing.

## How can AveriStar Consulting help?

AveriStar Consulting specializes in providing unique training services to network based VoIP carriers that utilize the BroadSoft BroadWorks platform. The founders of AveriStar Consulting, Mark and Matt Averi, have worked together at 6 companies *including BroadSoft* over the last 15 years. The Averi's have had great success in the telecommunications field both individually and as a team, and have developed and conducted hundreds of technology training courses.

## The AveriStar Training Solution

### *Stars Multimedia*

Stars Multimedia is a training product suite developed by AveriStar Consulting to better enable owners of the BroadSoft hosted VoIP platform to train both employees and customers on all BroadWorks applications. Stars Multimedia training courses are individually produced and customized using the customer's platform, to include logo artwork and specific feature sets. This unique customization enables our customers to have an "out of the box" solution that is ready for use the day it is received.

### *Purpose*

Stars Multimedia training courses are designed to be a comprehensive tool that allows BroadWorks owners to train employees, end-users, and wholesale customers. **The courses are not simple product demonstrations**, but are complete tools that explain and detail the use and function of the application and its features. One example of using Stars Multimedia is for platform owners that sell direct to the SMB space. The provider may provide one initial on-site training class to the customer covering basic features and functionality, but maybe not all of the customer's employees could be present for the training. Utilizing Stars Multimedia, the provider can leave behind a DVD-ROM, or provide the customer access to their on-line training website, greatly reducing employee travel expenses and support costs.

### *Structure and Content*

Each multimedia course has its own table of contents and is extremely easy to navigate. For example, the Standard Web Portal course will contain a table of contents for *Incoming Calls, Outgoing Calls, Call Control, Client Applications, Outgoing Calling Plan, and Messaging*. If the student needs to quickly understand the features associated with Messaging, they can simply click on the Messaging link in the table of contents and be immediately taken to that section. This also makes our multimedia courses ideal for refresher training.

*Available Courses*

- Web Portal Standard Feature Set
- Web Portal and Call Manager Premium Feature Set
- Assistant Toolbar – Residential and Enterprise
- Communicator Soft Client
- Receptionist Application
- Call Center – Agent and Supervisor
- Group Provisioning – Auto Attendant, Hunt Group, Trunking, Unified Messaging
- Pre-Sales Demonstration – Giving the Perfect Demo
- IP Phones and Analog Telephone Adapters

*Stars Multimedia and Your Bottom Line*

AveriStar firmly believes that Stars Multimedia will dramatically improve your customers' experience with BroadWorks applications and features, leading your company to lower support costs and higher customer retention.

Return on investment models can vary drastically from company to company, so we will let you design and review the model that best fits your company. We have, however, provided some information to assist you in defining your ROI model and hope it helps.\*

*\*Please see pages 6 and 7*



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## **Training and Return on Investment (ROI)**

### **Training goals**

A company may provide training to their workers, managers and customers. The ultimate reason for training them should be to improve the profits and repeat business of the company. It is preferred that this improvement is measurable, so that an effective ROI can be determined.

#### *Reasons to train employees*

The reason to train employees and managers is so they will learn to do their jobs better or perhaps learn new skills or technologies that can be applied to the company's goals. Training sales and sales engineering personnel is especially important in the technology sector, where product demonstrations are commonplace and often required.

#### *Reasons to train customers*

The reason to train customers is so they will understand how to use the company's products and services effectively and prevent customer churn. Providing your customers the tools for productivity and success is only half of the sales equation. The other half is ensuring they understand how to use them in their daily responsibilities. Low churn rates not only depend on price, service and support, but also on making your products 'sticky' to your customers. Research has proven that applications and features that users understand and enjoy will be used more often over a longer period of time.

### **Investment in training**

In order to train employees and customers, a company must pay for the development of training material and the time spent by the trainers, both onsite and virtual. This is either absorbed through an in-house training department, paid to outside training consultants, or a combination of the two. Costs will typically include paying for time off from work, paying trainers, and travel and lodging expenses.

#### *Time spent by employees*

Employees and managers must often take time off from work to attend training classes. Not only is the company paying wages for no work done, but it may also lose opportunities for more sales or productivity during the absence of the personnel. For off-site training, the company may also have to pay for travel and lodging. The burdened hourly rate, estimated loss of productivity, and training expenses must be calculated.

### *Classes for customers*

Classes must also be set up to train both new and existing customers. Training personnel, equipment, and location expenses must be paid by the company, although in some situations the customers may pay for their own training.

### *Keep track of costs*

Obviously, if a company wants to determine their ROI for training, they must account for all the money spent, especially the hidden expenses.

## **Measuring the ROI**

The greatest factor in measuring the return-on-investment for training is the definition of what the training is to achieve. Measuring the amount of money generated by a group before and after the training, and then comparing that improvement with the cost of the training is the way to measure the ROI.

### *Having specific goals*

If the goal is to improve the productivity of an employee in a certain process, a metric must be determined that leads to a company bottom line number. Before and after training measurements must be made to determine the effectiveness of the training sessions. Then the costs involved in training the personnel can be compared with the real improvement of profits to determine its ROI. For example, sales training has a specific goal of generating revenue for specific products and services. Statistics can be made that will verify the effectiveness of such training.

### *ROI in training customers*

A good way to tell the effectiveness of training customers is the reduction in support and service calls. The cost of maintaining a support call center staff can be compared with the cost of training the customers.

Some companies use service calls as a method for generating revenue. This is an extremely short-sighted way of making money. A quality product that the customer knows how to use will generate repeat business. If the customer must make service calls that customer may buy from a competitor the next time around.

### *Summary*

The reason to train should be to improve the company's bottom line. The investment in training consists of the cost of the training and the time spent by the personnel away from their jobs. By measuring the effect on the company profits before and after training, and then comparing with the costs of the training, a company can determine their return-on-investment.