NATO
Allied Command Transformation
2018 Microlearning Implementation Proposal-Client Report

Link: Microlearning + NATO Overview Video

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Problem Statement

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization Allied Command Transformation (NATO ACT) was established on June 19, 2003, and headquartered in Norfolk, Virginia. Together with a large group of partner nations, it supports an alliance of 29 nations. NATO ACT's mission is to help maintain the peace, security, and provincial honor of Alliance members by taking the lead in revolutionizing military structures, forces, capabilities, and doctrines. Of great importance to NATO ACT is a digitalized learning training program that is both innovative and can address the issues of the rapidly changing conditions of the world along with the speed and improvement of the delivery method of training whether it is e-learning or mobile learning. Therefore, NATO ACT is seeking proposals of a microlearning implementation strategy for their employee training program that guarantees that NATO designers understand microlearning and it's value as well as having a design plan and the requirements to develop it.

Overview

NATO ACT has required that an overview of microlearning be a part of the training program. The overview will be over the definition of microlearning, benefits of microlearning, applicable examples of microlearning, and the connection of microlearning to traditional training and e-learning courses, the timeframe of training, workplace performance, and mobile learning formats and strategies. These required items that are to be part of our proposal are discussed below.

Definition of Microlearning

Microlearning is defined as short, focused training that is easily accessible. The learning focuses on meeting a specific learning outcome and delivered in a rich media format, such as a video. Microlearning is becoming more ubiquitous through the use of always-connected mobile devices. Each short (less than 5-minute) module provides the learner with engaging, content-rich information. Microlearning is interesting and approachable for learners in the age of social media. Microlearning involves the division of larger tasks into smaller, more focused learning activities that result in many benefits to both the individual learner as well as NATO ACT.
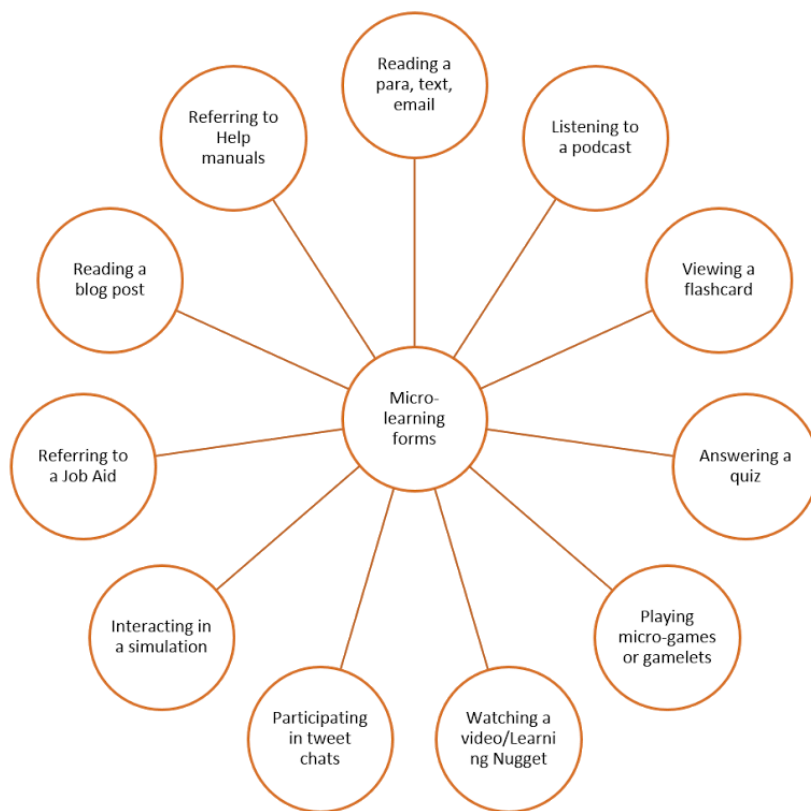
Benefits of Microlearning

Microlearning provides many benefits over traditional courses.

- Existing training can be evaluated and modified for delivery in a microlearning format.

- The cost to produce microlearning is typically lower than comparable training.

- Microlearning is easily accessible to anyone with a connected mobile device.

- Microlearning is faster to develop, update, and implement.

- Microlearning gives the learner an exact objective, an explanation, and any other resources for the specific task.

- Gamification elements can be included to increase learner motivation.

- The learner can quickly learn the material and immediately apply it to their role.

- Microlearning incorporates spaced repetition so that anything employees have mastered previously will be repeated periodically to ensure mastery of the content.

Applicable Examples

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Microlearning is seen in many forms today. Figure 1 is a diagram of the many forms microlearning can take:

Figure 1: Forms of Micro-learning. Adapted from "Micro-Learning as a Workplace Strategy," by S. Chattopadhyay, 2015, April 15, *ID and Other Reflections on Emergent Organization Designs, Future of Work, and the Impact of the Digital Era.* Retrieved December 9th, 2018, from http://www.elearninglearning.com/instructional-design/micro-learning/?open-article-id=3457578&article-title=micro-learning-as-a-workplace-learning-strategy&blog-domain=blogspot.com&blog-title=id-reflections.

Applicable examples can be seen in the sales industry where sales teams must be quickly trained on the products they sell. The training is broken down into 2-5 minute training sessions, typically a video to watch that has the learner acquire a new skill to use immediately in their

work. Wal-Mart used a platform called Axonify who utilized microlearning in their training by having employees log in whenever they wanted and would spend 3-5 minutes playing a game that involves answering safety questions. They would receive instant feedback, and the system remembers their responses, this showed the workers where they need improvement and also reinforced the knowledge they already had. Other businesses using this same training program involving microlearning are Bloomingdales and At Home. InterContinental HotelsGroup and Magellan Health are a few more businesses who utilize microlearning in their training program, but not with the same platform as those mentioned above. However, all of these businesses had positive results utilizing microlearning in their training programs such as a reduction in training accidents, more training participation from their employees, and high test scores on knowledgeable content to name a few (Morrison, 2017).

Connections to Microlearning

Microlearning's relationship to traditional learning is that the same learning is taking place, but in microlearning, it is put into smaller chunks given in short amounts of time. Microlearning also includes types of traditional learning such as videos, audio, and regular text. E-learning courses have a similar relationship to microlearning as they will teach the same content, but in longer segments than microlearning. E-Learning and microlearning both access information online using tablets, smartphones, and computers, however, microlearning can be viewed more easily on smaller devices since it has shorter chunks of information.

Microlearning's relationship to training time is exceptional. Microlearning allows the trainee to be flexible in that they can access their training anytime and anywhere which means

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they can get on more often using mobile devices that are readily accessible to the trainee and can complete their training time more rapidly than with other instructional strategies. Microlearning puts content into short chunks of information which helps to keep the learner's attention longer. By keeping the learner's attention longer, the trainee is retaining more and therefore learning more quickly. Lastly, microlearning makes developing programs a lot quicker and in turn, saves companies in the long run on training time because they do not have to add in that extra time it would have taken to develop a training program using other instructional strategies.

The relationship microlearning has to workplace performance is just as positive. Employees like the idea of being able to learn things quickly and at their convenience, apply what they have learned immediately, and how to solve problems right then and there at the workplace. Microlearning makes all of that possible. Today's learners have shortened attention spans. Microlearning's short bits of information in short segments meet those needs as well. In the applicable examples, we saw just a few of the effects of utilizing microlearning in training programs such as the diminished number of training accidents, increased employee participation, and more. Microlearning helps meet the needs of today's learners.

Microlearning's relationship with mobile learning and delivery formats is that it can be used in all types of mobile learning devices whether it is through computers, tablets, or smartphones. It is seen in all types of rich delivery formats due to the small amounts of information it presents to the learner. The best thing is that learners can choose their preferred formats.

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Now that you've read about what microlearning is, what it's benefits are, how it is utilized in other places, and it's connections, we are excited to present to you the proposal of our microlearning training program designed specifically to meet NATO ACT's needs. We hope you will be just as pleased as we were in creating this proposal for you.

Analyzing Current Training

Learner Analysis

According to the Association for Educational Communications & Technology (Schuch, 2018) problem statement, there are already over 30,000 users online on their current LMS system. The training is offered to all NATO and partner nations through the NATO networks meaning all employees are familiar with an online training program. The current training program works to the advantage of both NATO ACT and ourselves as it is our company's intention to continue using our online platform called the TalentLMS system so that training can be accessed anytime and anywhere for all employees. We are also assuming that with the learners' current background with online learning, and based on what we have discussed regarding microlearning, that employees should be able to transfer with very little difficulty to a microlearning training program regardless of age, gender, or position. Having said this, we will still have face-to-face training on how to use the microlearning program to guarantee a smooth transition for current and new employees. The training is described in more detail later in the proposal.

Task Analysis

Before discussing the employee training, the primary tasks to complete are reviewing and analyzing with NATO ACT's program manager that the current content objectives of their online courses are updated, need to be changed, or added to and then transferred into the microlearning format. The formal and informal online assessment pieces are designed and inputted into the TalentLMS platform. The subtasks to be completed are the scheduling/finalized planning of the face-to-face training session to go over the new microlearning platform by our company. This includes video conferencing software and other technology used being set up, lunch menus, seating accommodations, etc.

Implementation

Timeline/Sequence

By using the Successive Approximation Model (SAM) approach, the microlearning training can begin faster, with the added benefit of consistent feedback on the design and implementation process. Not unlike the granular nature of microlearning, the SAM approach will allow learners access to training modules quickly. Training units will be rolled out in a logical manner which will result in an immediate impact on NATO's e-Learning program.

Table 1

Timeline and Estimated Sequence of Events

Project Phase	Estimated Timeframe
Analyze Current Training	4 weeks
Design Initial Microlearning Content	4 weeks
Implement Initial Microlearning Content	4 weeks
Evaluate Initial Microlearning	2 weeks

Content	
Design Final Microlearning Content	3 weeks
Implement Final Microlearning Content	4 weeks
Final Evaluation	3 weeks
Total Project Time	**24 weeks**

Staffing

Appropriate staffing resources are necessary to ensure effective implementation of microlearning training. The following staff roles are required: a Project Manager, two Instructional Designers, a Digital Media Specialist, and a Graphic Designer. Each staff member will work on this project for twenty hours per week during the timeframe.

Project Manager - The Project Manager will work closely with NATO ACT and the Instructional Designers throughout the implementation process. The cost of the project manager will be $45/hour.

Instructional Designers - The Instructional Designers will be responsible for working with the NATO's e-Learning Program Manager to create engaging, effective microlearning units. The cost of the Instructional Designers will be $40/hour per designer.

Digital Media Specialist - The Digital Media Specialist will be responsible for working with the Graphic Designer to create and edit rich media content, primarily video-based. The digital media specialist will be $20/hour.

Graphic Designer - The Graphic Designer will work alongside the Digital Media

Specialist to create appropriate graphics and media that will be the backbone of the

microlearning content. The graphic designer will cost $20/hour.

Table 2

Total Cost for Project

Slytherin Staff Member	Cost per Staff Member
Project Manager	$21,600
Instructional Designer	$19,200
Instructional Designer	$19,200
Graphic Design	$9,600
Digital Media Specialist	$9,600
TalentLMS Startup	$4,600
Total Cost for Project	**$83,800**

Evaluation

An important component of the implementation of microlearning is the effective

evaluation of the training to ensure it meets the needs of NATO ACT. Informal evaluation will

take place throughout the training development, but the formal evaluation will be based on the

Kirkpatrick Model. The widely used Kirkpatrick Model focuses on four levels of evaluation,

described as follows:

1) **Learner Reaction**: Participants in the microlearning will be asked to rate their

experience through an online survey, as well as through discussions with supervisors.

Supervisors will be provided with necessary questions and forms to help guide the discussion towards honest and useful feedback.

2) **Learner Knowledge**: Participants will be frequently assessed throughout the process, but will also be asked to self-assess their level of understanding of new content presented in the microlearning format.

3) **Job Improvement**: Supervisors will observe and monitor learners to evaluate positive changes in employee behavior. Additionally, learners will be asked to self-assess their growth and development of skills acquired throughout the training process.

4) **Final Results**: The final phase of the evaluation process revolves around the overall positive impact and implementation of the microlearning approach. Final evaluation includes an analysis of cost, improved user performance following microlearning implementation, and positive impact on NATO training when compared with previous training formats.

Sustainability

In order for this project to have long-term success, our team recommends that NATO establishes a supervisor to take over the management of this training. This role will manage content and users on the LMS and provide a continuous evaluation by collecting feedback from the learners in order to make adjustments as necessary.

Both the LMS and the video conferencing software offer customer support for the NATO employee to maintain the new training.   Talent LMS can help the sustainability of the microlearning initiative due to its comprehensive reporting capabilities. The LMS offers a wide range of report types that can be automatically delivered to any stakeholder as an update on

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learner performance. This, combined with the evaluation plans through the SAM model

described above, will create a sustainable training environment to keep learners on top of their

tasks.

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