

eLearning Mission Critical: Storyboarding

Whether you develop eLearning in house or outsource to a vendor, a critical part of eLearning development is the storyboard - a visual display of collaborative information to be conveyed to a specific audience. Think about a storyboard being to eLearning development what a blueprint is to the construction of a building.

Many of us know about missed deadlines and cost overruns when it comes to eLearning development or the dreaded comment from the client in the review meeting of *"that is not what I thought we agreed on"*.

Well structured storyboards can help deliver effective learning experiences on-time, within budget and with less stress.

Well structured storyboards help to achieve an early agreement between instructional designers, developers, SMEs and stakeholders on the course structure, tasks to be performed, and on what form the final course will take.

Early in the storyboarding phase is when the cost of experimentation and revision is lowest. The topics include:

- Objectives and vision for the course
- Learning theory
- Graphics and other media elements (animations, audio)
- Content organization
- User interface
- Interactive/hands on simulation
- LMS issues



If these topics are ironed out early:

- The course can be developed in a much more efficient and timely manner.
- Time can be saved by avoiding time consuming revisions.
- You have an opportunity to solve or clarify issues that will impact the course by bringing issues to the forefront early.
- It is the easiest way to get consensus on the details of the course before a large amount of development time is invested.

A storyboard can be created using various tools such as Microsoft Word or PowerPoint, and online collaborative tools.

No matter what tool you use, storyboard pages should be completed for each screen that the end user will see in the completed learning object. It should be clear to any reader where one screen ends and the next screen begins, and the reader should be able to grasp exactly what will happen on that screen.

Add specific programming or other instructions / information to be communicated to the development team that may not be obvious from the storyboard itself. Develop a standard that will allow developers to differentiate between the different elements on the storyboard.

Your well structured storyboard will pay off and help you gain the consensus you need for successful and efficient development!