



The Computerworld Honors Program

Honoring those who use Information Technology to benefit society

Final Copy of Case Study

Status:

Laureate

Year:

2013

Organization Name:

LINGOs (Learning in NGOs)

Organization URL:

<http://lingos.org>

Project Name:

SCORM Dispatch: enabling LINGOs members to make independent LMS decisions and access LINGOs catalog

Please select the category in which you are submitting your entry:

Philanthropy

Please provide an overview of the nominated project. Describe the problem it was intended to solve, the technology or approach used, how it was innovative and any technical or other challenges that had to be overcome for successful implementation and adoption. (In 300 words or less.)

LINGOs is a consortium of over 75 international relief, development, conservation, health and social justice organizations that came together to share learning resources and experiences. LINGOs secured the donation of a library of world-class eLearning courses from several private sector vendors that are available to member staff throughout the world to improve their skills in general management, IT, project management and other topics. LINGOs makes these courses available and protects the intellectual property of its donating partners by operating a Learning Management System (LMS) for its members. However, several member agencies either had their own LMS integrated into a larger

Human Resource Information System or needed features not present in the LINGOs LMS. To integrate each new LMS into the LINGOs LMS would have been time-consuming and costly, requiring ongoing support unaffordable by both LINGOs and its members. Partnering with Rustici Software (www.SCORM.com), LINGOs and Rustici created SCORM Dispatch, a seamless interface between the LINGOs LMS and the member's SCORM-compliant LMS that enables eLearning content from the LINGOs LMS to be uploaded into the Cloud where SCORM Dispatch transparently allows the learners using the member LMS to access the LINGOs content (Appendix 1). This enabled LINGOs to continue to provide a rich library of eLearning content to all members without requiring the implementation of duplicate LMSs and greatly improving the ease of access for staff in the developing world. Seamless integration is an "often claimed, rarely achieved" feature but SCORM Dispatch did precisely that. Enabling integration with an unlimited number of LMS products through the imperfect SCORM standard while using state-of-the-art cloud architecture was a serious technical challenge overcome by the deep understanding of Rustici programmers and the clear user requirements of LINGOs' members.

When was this project implemented or last updated? (Please specify month and year.) Has it incorporated new technologies and/or other innovations since its initial deployment? (In 300 words or less.)

The need for this project was identified in late 2009. User requirements were gathered and the project was begun in 2010 with a Beta version available during May of that year and four LINGOs members serving as beta users. Full product launch occurred in late July 2010. Because most users of SCORM Dispatch are located in the developing world with limited IT resources for troubleshooting and support, it was imperative that the tool operate perfectly for the field staff of member agencies. LINGOs developed protocols used by members to assure compatibility with their SCORM-compliant LMS and suggested rollout procedures. Rustici Software continues to update SCORM Cloud regularly to add enhancements to the interface and address any bugs that might have been found. The company also adds new features periodically, such as support for the new Tin Can API standard.

Is implementation of the project complete? If no, please describe the project's phases and which phase the project is now in. (In 300 words or less.)

The implementation of the project is complete at this time. However, new standards are being created for eLearning cross-platform compatibility (Tin Can – <http://tincanapi.com/>) that have been incorporated into SCORM Dispatch; however, most LMSs do not yet feature functionality to use this API.

Please provide at least one example of how the technology project has benefited a specific individual or organization. Feel free to include personal quotes from individuals who have directly benefited from the work. (In 300 words or less.)

Catholic Relief Services (CRS), a large international agency, sought to integrate performance, learning and career resources in an enterprise talent management system LMS. "We could not have implemented a new LMS without maintaining access to the LINGOs course library," said CRS Learning Manager Gretchen Regehr. "SCORM Dispatch enabled CRS to implement a system that meets our staff development needs, ensuring our staffing pipeline is maintained for key positions, providing key information for emergency staffing when CRS needs to quickly access skill sets, languages and availability to respond to disasters," said Regehr. The hallmark of Population Services International (a global health organization dedicated to improving the health of people in the developing world) is a commitment to the principle that health services and products are most effective when accompanied by robust communications and distribution efforts that help ensure wide acceptance and proper use. Steven Honeyman, PSI's Director of Learning and Performance, and winner of CLO Magazine's 2011 Global Learning Gold Award, notes, "PSI's custom-developed LMS (appendix 2) includes a strong social networking community, knowledge sharing platform and evaluation approach. Our program simply would not have the needed depth and breadth of content without SCORM Dispatch enabling us to access the LINGOs catalog." (See CLO Gold Award article: <http://clomedia.com/articles/view/2011-global-learning-division-2/>) The Nature Conservancy uses SCORM Dispatch to deploy select content from the LINGOs library to its verified developing world conservation partners as part of its open Conservation Training portal, <https://www.conservationtraining.org>, a learning community offering conservation-based training materials from The Nature Conservancy and its partner organizations. "Through SCORM Dispatch, we can provide professional development training opportunities that enable practitioners to be more successful in their individual programs and make a greater impact to global conservation efforts," says Todd Slater.

Would this project be considered an innovation, a best practice or other notable advancement that could be adopted by or tailored for other organizations and uses? If yes, please describe that here. (In 300 words or less.)

This project would be considered all three: an innovation, a best practice and a notable advancement. It is clearly an innovation because no such product had existed before the creation of SCORM Dispatch. It is a best practice because it enables humanitarian relief and development organizations to learn from each other and share best-practice learning architectures without forcing them to adopt



one proprietary solution. And it is a notable achievement because the SCORM Dispatch tool has been "productized" and is now available to anyone wanting to deliver eLearning content via the cloud to other applications.

If there are any other details that the judges should know about this project, please note them here. (In 300 words or less.)

Making professional and technical skills development content available to field-based staff in the developing world is a big deal! The better those people do their jobs, the more people will have enough to eat, the more people will have access to health and education services and the more people will live in safe and secure environments. SCORM Dispatch is a key component in making that happen for some of the leading humanitarian relief and development organizations in the world. It should be noted that Rustici Software contributed their professional time at cost to this project as part of their corporate social responsibility commitment. In fact, they did not even cover their direct costs, not to mention the opportunity costs even more important to a small organization. Everyone associated with this effort saw the opportunity to be instrumental in "helping those doing good...do it better" and was proud to be a part of the effort.