

Arcada University of Applied Sciences, Finland

Overview:

- Arcada conducted an extensive testing project, determining that itslearning was the most intuitive platform.
- Departments that never used the old platform now have the highest usership due to the user-friendliness of the itslearning UX.
- Students achieve their learning goals by utilising materials created directly in itslearning, with instructors giving feedback in the same place.

Customer:

Arcada University of Applied Sciences, Helsinki, Finland

2011

Year Implemented itslearning



University Profile:



3

Departments



1st

Ranked top applied sciences university in Finland



1/3

Students log in to itslearning every day



100%

User adoption



800

Courses created in itslearning in first year

Platform Usage Skyrockets After itslearning Replaces Old Platform at Arcada University

Most Institutions Ask of an LMS: Can we afford it and do other schools use it?

But Filip Levälähti, E-learning Coordinator at Arcada University of Applied Sciences in Helsinki, Finland, says Arcada had another consideration: Will our educators use it? To find the answer, extensive user tests of leading platforms were performed with itslearning coming out the clear winner.

“It had to be very clear and easy to use. It had to be intuitive,” Levälähti explains. “We realised that if the platform was hard for educators to use, then they wouldn’t

do anything with it, and therefore the students wouldn’t do anything with it. User-friendliness was our number one priority.”

Extensive LMS Testing

A group of lecturers and students from Arcada tested four major learning platforms, including itslearning. Levälähti gave them simple tasks such as uploading files and creating a course. Eye-tracking technology was used to analyse how much they searched around the screen. The less eye movement, the more user-friendly the platform was. “We could see that itslearning was much easier to use than the

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Filip Levälähti, E-learning Coordinator

other platforms. With itslearning it took much less time to do the tasks than with the other learning platforms. That showed how intuitive it was,” says Levälähti.

The user adoption figures since Arcada implemented itslearning have been astonishing. In one year, 800 courses were created in itslearning. Today, around 1,000 Arcada users log on every day, representing a third of the student population, and all three university departments actively use the platform. In 2012, Arcada achieved almost 100 percent user adoption, meaning almost all users were active on the platform.

“Not many lecturers wanted to use our old platform. Not many students either. But they want to use itslearning. It’s easier for them and far less complicated than our old platform. And we didn’t need to give too much support to lecturers when they were creating courses. Now we see that almost all lecturers are using itslearning in some way,” says Levälähti.

Increasing Educator and Student Usage

The big test of itslearning came when staff at Arcada’s health and welfare department started using the platform in 2011, because they were the department that used the previous platform least. It was too cumbersome, they complained. But they quickly became the department using itslearning the most. “It was harder to get these lecturers involved, but today it is quite easy because they are also helping each other,” says Levälähti.

According to Levälähti, students also find the platform much easier to use than the university’s previous platform. In his first-year ICT course, Levälähti added resources for his students to use on itslearning, such as video tutorials

and tests. “It was easier for them to find the materials they needed on itslearning. I think the students were happier with it. They could check their skills with tests to gauge how much they knew, and how much they needed to know. They wanted to use it.”

An Ideal Tool for Assessment

“Sports psychology instructor Riitta Vienola believes students have the right to choose the way they learn. In her classroom, after assigning her students a task, they form into groups and set learning goals. They create their own learning materials and lecture to each other, with Vienola constantly checking their progress and providing guidance. “itslearning gives me many ways to control and check how the learning is going. I don’t need to remember things, it’s all on itslearning. It makes it easy,” she says.

Vienola also uses itslearning for giving feedback. Her students often upload ongoing projects onto itslearning, and can directly interact in the same place. “In this way, they get constant feedback on what they are learning in relation to the learning goal. The best thing about itslearning is there is one place to put everything. It helps me to give my students the freedom to learn when it’s convenient for them,” says Vienola.

Levälahti says this kind of lecturer engagement with the platform shows that the extensive testing project in the decision-making phase was worth the investment. “With itslearning, I can focus more on creating good courses and the pedagogy, instead of the technical aspects. If we hadn’t chosen itslearning, I’m sure I would be working a lot more in order to support and train lecturers.”

