

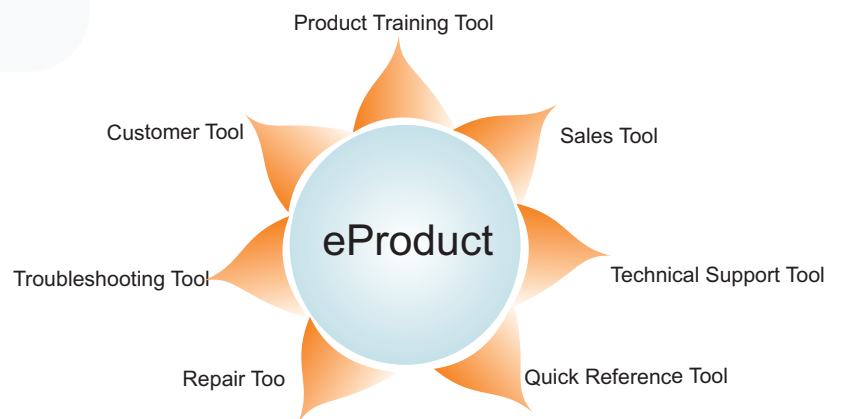
White Paper



eProduct Learning Solutions

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STAM offers to create a virtual online simulation for your products or processes. We call this 'eProduct'. Once ready, your internal staff, channel partners and end users can interact with this eProduct to learn how to sell, install, program/setup or operate the product. This eProduct can have many different applications and uses within your organization different departments can use the same development in different ways, adding more value to your money.



eProduct vs eProcess Learning Solutions

Although the major focus of this white paper is on eProduct, we would like to briefly mention here that eProcess is another interesting application of the STAM Learning Solution. This section explains the difference between the eProduct and the eProcess. The eProduct creates a virtual simulation of a product, while the eProcess creates a simulation for a procedure or process within any department, division, company or enterprise

Objective

- ✍ Show different development strategies
- ✍ Define what we mean by eProduct Learning Solutions
- ✍ Show different applications of eProduct Learning Solutions

eProduct

Assume you are launching a new product and you now need to train your sales people, technical people, your channel partners and also your end users. The new product launch is world wide. To provide training to all the stakeholders can seem tedious, slow and expensive.

A current product has been upgraded and many new features have been added. Once again, a training schedule has to be setup to train the stakeholders on the concept and new features of the product.

The product is out dated, but the product is used by many customers. To support this product you would still need to conduct training classes.

In all these scenarios mentioned above, we can create a detailed simulation for the product.

eProcess

eProcess is creating a virtual simulation of a new software application, procedure or document being introduced within your company.

You have a new software application. You want to deploy this within your organization, and need to train your staff members nation wide/world wide. The traditional style would be to setup a class room training. A more cost effective way is to create Web Based Training for this application.

Your country warehouse has upgraded its procedure from a manual system to a computerized system. Your staff needs to be trained on how to use the computerized system including scanning devices. Here again it would be much more effective to develop a Web Based Training course

A new document has been introduced within the company. You need to train people to fill the document A new document has been introduced within the company. You need to train people to fill the document and use it effectively.

The development strategies in creating a virtual simulation for a eProduct or a eProcess are similar.

Traditionally, product training is done in classrooms. This has several limitations. To overcome this, there is a growing trend towards creating product specific Web Based Training courses or eLearning. Having no standard development methodology for creating online courses, a badly designed eLearning course can cause a great deal of confusion among users. If handled carelessly, it maligns a powerful tool like eLearning and causing it ill repute.



Online PowerPoint Presentation

Many organizations have a power point presentation which they use in the classroom. They rework on this and in some cases add some audio files to it and make it available online. This becomes the web based training course for the product. It is definitely a cost effective solution, but it fails to impart the required knowledge. It is also not able to hold the attention of the students



Course Notes

Another way is to make the course material available on the internet by adding a few graphics to it. It is named interactive, as the forward button needs to be clicked to go to the next page



Talking Head Presentation

The classroom session is video recorded in parts or in full; this is then streamed and made available online for product training. Sometimes the talking head is also synchronized with a power point presentation. A talking head can be good in short bursts, but listening to a person over long periods can be counter productive and loses its effectiveness. From the point of view of product training, a talking head cannot give a 'hands on feel' to the end users.



One Way Simulation

In One Way Simulation, an animation of the functions of the required product is created, packaged and put up online. The student watches the mouse hand clicking, and dragging things as part of nonstop animation. This is definitely a step forward but it is only one way. The student is only watching and is not involved, thereby minimizing its effectiveness. In most cases, the animation moves too quickly for the student to comprehend the movements.. This can cause lack of interest in the training course



Two Way Simulations

Two Way Simulation is the most effective way to develop product specific Web Based Training. It should be interactive, where the student is involved with the simulation of the product or concept, by moving/dragging objects or clicking on product buttons/parts to get a 'Hands On' learning experience. Developing interactive content with simulations is the key to a successful Web Based Training course.



STAM development strategy uses the concept of Simulation with Interactivity extensively.

STAM Interactive has the experience of executing over 300 projects for world renowned customers.

- All the different components of a camera system are on the screen. The learner uses the drag and drop method to these and builds a complete CCTV system. The drag and drop method is effectively supported by easy to follow instructions and explanations.
- The front panel of the product is shown at the bottom of the screen. The user clicks the buttons of the product as per the instructions in the course, and learns how to use and program the product. If this is done effectively, placing such a course on the web allows the company to train their internal staff, dealers and end users not only in the USA, but anywhere in the world.

Why we have coined 'eProducts'

We have seen that the terminology 'eLearning' can be confusing as it is an expansive term used for cover indifferent development strategies, both effective and In effective. To distinguish our product from the run of the mill products available, we call our style 'eProduct Learning Solutions' because we focus on using the superior 2 way simulation method which exploits the interactivity mode to the fullest. You can review some samples which highlight this aspect

Applications of eProduct Learning Solutions

Online Training is a major application for eProduct development process. However once this development is complete, it has many interesting applications within an organization. In this section we will explain this idea in detail.

eProduct Training

The product manual/s is usually the starting point. Based on this, we create the project scope. Once approved, we create the interactive simulations on all aspects of the product. The typical structure of the online training course covers the following modules.

Key Features

All the key features of the product are listed and when anyone of it is clicked on, we try and create a virtual simulation for the feature.

Introduction

In this section, we introduce the product and all its accessories. We also make the student click on different connectors/buttons/parts of the product and get voice/text explanation. This is an effective way to introduce a product.



Installation

All aspects of product installation are covered here. It usually covers mounting, connections, installing accessories and configuration and so on.



Setup/Programming

An interactive simulation of the setup/programming is covered here. It could be hardware based or software based. As in the actual product, the student clicks the buttons on the screen to navigate between all the menus and learns how to program the unit without having the real product on hand. Time and again, it has proved to be a very powerful training tool



Operation

In this section we instruct the students how to operate or use all the key functions of the product. Step by step instructions allow the students to click the buttons on the screen and learn how to use the product. If developed properly, it can be put to use in many different ways.



Applications

All key product applications are covered here



Troubleshooting

If troubleshooting process has steps, we create a simulation of these steps, allowing students to learn how to resolve a problem without having the product in front of them.



Customer Training Tool

Most product training programs are directed towards internal staff and channel partners. The customer base is often so large that it is not possible to train them and they have to rely on the user manuals. Not any more - the end users can also take the same online product training course,



Sales Tool

Your sales staff can load the product simulations on their hard disk in their laptop. When making a sales call, they can give an effective demonstration of the product.

Example 1 – The product is bulky and heavy. Instead of carrying the product everywhere, the sales person carries the simulation and shows all the key features like ease of operation and setup.



Quick Reference Tool

Since the online training course is available 24/7, it can be used as a quick reference tool to clarify any doubts or continuously enhance product knowledge.



Repair and Servicing

If troubleshooting needs repairing the product down to the printed circuits boards, this can be done by creating interactive simulation of the process, allowing technicians to be trained worldwide.

Technical Support Tool

As mentioned earlier, once the product training tool is ready, parts of this tool can be used very effectively by the tech support department.

Example 1 – A field technician calls tech support for help. The solution lies in changing a parameter in the product Setup menu. The Tech support takes the technician to the online simulation of the Setup section and shows how to change the parameter. All this is done without using the actual product.

Example 2 – The field technician is not able to install an accessory in the product. The Tech support takes him to

Conclusion

There are many ways eLearning training courses can be developed, but most of them have limitations. A powerful tool like online training can lose its effectiveness if handled insensitively. The strategy followed by STAM is unique and extremely effective because we use interactive simulations or 2 way simulations, which is the only effective tool in developing product specific Web Based Training courses. STAM calls this 'eProduct Learning Solutions'. We have the experience of designing over 300 of such outstanding courses.





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