

# case study

## CUSTOMER

Brigitte HANGGI is Training Manager at SANOFI-AVENTIS SA (Switzerland).

She is in charge of the training of about sixty medical sales representatives and also uses distance learning tools, supported by an MOS Chorus platform hosted by MOS.

## BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

The pharmaceutical sector is undergoing profound changes. Like many other major laboratories, SANOFI-AVENTIS is facing more and more competition. Regulations governing health and pharmaceutical sectors are becoming stricter.

The training system implemented at SANOFI-AVENTIS must meet these challenges, i.e. improving training course productivity and closely assessing the knowledge acquired by medical sales representatives who are constantly in contact with doctors.

## CHALLENGE

### Training/Skills issue

The main purpose of the eLearning system set up by Brigitte HANGGI is to provide these travelling salespersons with continuous training and ensure they have really assimilated the knowledge required in this ever-changing environment.

"Medical sales representatives receive medical and scientific training that should make them reliable contacts for the doctors who prescribe our medication."

## SOLUTIONS

### Developing courses...

SANOFI-AVENTIS Switzerland made great use of the content generator integrated into MOS which is a real LCMS(1).

<sup>1</sup> LCMS: Learning and Content Management System

Brigitte HANGGI designed the instructions of a large number of modules which were then created with this generator by an in-house team made up of marketing and medical specialists or by the publisher's teams.

For example, the medical and scientific content is related to pathologies that fall into the scope of the drug in question and enables medical sales representatives to learn how to use studies often published in the health sector.

"We can use modules developed in other SANOFI-AVENTIS entities but we often develop them ourselves because we are sometimes allowed to offer new therapies for patients in Switzerland sooner than in France or Germany. Having said that, we are willing to exchange our courses with Group entities in France or Austria in particular."

This pooling system is very useful because there are now quite a large number of courses with modules covering numerous fields: diabetes, cardiology, oncology, leading drugs like Plavix or Lantus. including courses on the Swiss health system, etc.

The availability of these modules proves very useful, i.e. when a new medical sales representative joins the company and the training course has already taken place.

### ... to Blended Learning

If eLearning can shorten the training of medical sales representatives and make it more efficient, Brigitte HANGGI does not see it as isolated from "classroom training":

"Medical sales representatives use the modules as refresher courses before the classroom training. In fact, they do tests before the face-to-face training

sessions and as the teacher has the results of these tests before the classes, he/she can deal with the trainees weak points in the classroom, studying and clarifying them more closely.

This means that training sessions can be better adapted to suit the level of the group and the starting level of training courses can be raised. Learners can also access content online after their training course and do all the revision they want, firmly integrating the newly acquired knowledge." Hard copies of training courses are also very important as medical sales representatives can refer to them when doctors ask them very specific questions.

"In a nutshell, our blended learning approach involves the following sequence: "online self-testing, face-to-face training, online assessment, online training".



**MOS Chorus - a powerful and user-friendly hosted platform**

SANOFI-AVENTIS (Switzerland) SA broadcasts eLearning content (created by the generator integrated in MOS Chorus)... via MOS Chorus.

Having a hosted solution presents a real advantage: "As the publisher hosts the platform, we don't have to deal with technical support but this does not prevent us from administering the platform inside the company, with a workload representing less than 2 hours a week.

This involves configuring the way lessons are allocated to learners, deciding on the timeframes during which eLearning modules can be accessed, etc.

As MOS Chorus is really easy to use, we were given a short training course to learn how to

manage it. If on rare occasions we need to implement more complex features, we call upon MOS to help us."

As SANOFI-AVENTIS does not offer its learners any tutorials, the MOS Chorus platform has been configured to send automatic reminders to employees who are behind in their training courses.

**The fundamental question of Assessment**

"More and more regulations are impacting SANOFI-AVENTIS (Switzerland) SA and employees' knowledge has to be constantly assessed, especially medical sales representatives' knowledge. Therefore, we have to make sure that our employees are aware of the latest legislative changes or other parameters, especially employees in direct contact with our customers." As the tests are used as teaching tools within a blended learning strategy, they are well accepted.

The employees do not consider these online training courses as intrusive. To the contrary, they really appreciate them, especially when a new product is launched. "In fact, medical sales representatives who don't have online courses want to follow the courses created for this purpose!"

One basic principle is observed: individual results remain confidential and only general statistics are published; however, managers have the right to see the results so they can help their employees overcome difficulties.

**GOOD PRACTICES**

To ensure that the system works well, managers' awareness must be developed. "By giving managers access to the individual data on the learners' training courses, we have made sure that managers are involved in the training of the medical sales representatives they supervise.

"Some managers now refer to this information during the monthly interviews they have with their employees.

Answers to knowledge tests are indicated on the hard copies of training courses. "Medical sales representatives can use them during online tests to find the right answers. This is a good way of

teaching them how to use this media and prepare them to use it during discussions with doctors if necessary."

## EXPANSION AND OUTLOOK

Brigitte HANGGI points out that "mobile learning" is a promising innovation: "There has been enormous progress over the past 2 years; well-sized mobile screens, more powerful and better quality networks allow users to play training content online which is particularly suited to the needs of our medical sales representatives".

However, attempts to set up synchronous, distance courses have proved disappointing, often due to organisational problems.

"Our audience is not yet ready to follow virtual classes as they are not compatible with the timetable of travelling representatives".