

WHY IS E-LEARNING CRITICAL TO YOUR BRAND IN 2017?



To stay ahead in a fiercely competitive environment and address the challenges coming from the development of e-commerce, luxury brands are bound to build an outstanding and immersive shopping experience. Professional, passionate and dedicated front line staff are the key to “Retail excellence”. Continuously equip your sales ambassadors with the most up-to-date and specific skills & knowledge is therefore crucial.

Without doubt, providing your sales associates with coaching and classroom training remains the optimal approach to conveying and demonstrating your message and therefore, offering an exceptional retail service.

Yet, passing on such profound knowledge and skills may be challenging, as it remains costly for brands, demanding both flexibility and time. For that reason, brands are turning to more scalable and cost effective solutions.

E-learning can tackle those challenges while appealing to the new digital-savvy generations of brand ambassadors. In the hope of reaching retail excellence and therefore adding significant value to e-commerce, luxury brands are progressively relying upon this training solution.

In fact, the e-learning market is predicted to grow at a **CAGR of 11.41% from 2016 to 2020**¹.



¹ E-learning Industry, 2017

Still, you may wonder how e-learning can truly contribute to empowering your brand ambassadors. ACDL uses its in-depth industry knowledge and consulting experience to share with you the benefits of using e-learning, the several options to choose from, and the ways you can include it in your Learning & Development (L&D) strategy.

HOW CAN E-LEARNING BE A SMART CHOICE TO SUPPORT YOUR L&D STRATEGY?

To save time & money

As it can be accessed anytime and anywhere, e-learning helps to optimize time for both your trainers and brand ambassadors.

Trainers can spend more valuable time in actually training, rather than in travelling. Furthermore, e-learning helps them underpin direct and targeted knowledge faster, to further focus on more complex training topics that need to be delivered in person.

As for sales ambassadors, they can spend less time in classroom meetings, and more on the floor.



In fact, every US dollar invested in e-learning is estimated to result in **US\$30 increase in productivity**². Sales staff are able to resume their work quickly after reviewing each e-module, and they can apply their skills immediately in the field.

Fewer sessions from trainers and ongoing access to e-resources ultimately reduce your training costs.

Overcome the language barrier

Your brand ambassadors learn, understand and retain information best when it is taught to them in their native language.

E-learning can easily offer modules in any language, from Spanish to Malay. This can be

² IBM study, 2013

done at a fraction of the time and cost of multilingual face-to-face training sessions.

Offering such e-modules in their preferred language will make your brand ambassadors completely focus on the material, without them needing to spend time mentally translating and interpreting it. This way, brand ambassadors feel more comfortable and engaged with the content. It ultimately enhances their knowledge retention rate.

You make learning flexible

With e-learning, you offer remarkable flexibility by providing convenient training materials to your brand ambassadors whenever they are available and when they need it, regardless of where they are based.

Plus, e-learning offers smaller bites of information, which helps your sales ambassadors digest it faster.

Lastly, e-learning provides flexible content. In particular, it makes it easy to pass down new information on product knowledge or sales techniques. Henceforth, e-learning helps your brand ambassadors to continuously stay up-to-date with new products and services.

You make learning more entertaining



You Tube videos receive on average **50 billion** views each month.³

The current generation of brand ambassadors, the millennials, is indeed constantly attracted to digital content since it satisfies their needs for entertainment in everything they do.

To ensure an engaging learning experience, it is then becoming crucial to offer training formats that can adapt to their unique lifestyle. E-learning is the ideal platform that “talks” to them: not only does it facilitate story-telling (thanks to

entrancing images, compelling videos, use of scenarios, etc.), but it also involves playful challenges and enhanced interactivity (with quizzes).

Rest assured that sales ambassadors will appreciate you designing training that fits their learning style. This will ultimately make them more engaged with the learning content.

Exhibit 1 – E-learning increases employee’s engagement



Reference: Molly Flechter Company

You enjoy prompt and adaptable control in monitoring learning

With e-learning, you are able to quickly follow the learning journey for each sales ambassador: you can easily navigate through the modules already completed and target what still needs to be reviewed. As well, you can monitor the learning curve of your staff thanks to reports of quiz results - depending on your requirements, the reports can range from simple to thorough results if you possess an LMS. Such results will help you assess their strengths, areas of improvement and efforts carried out. The monitoring can be done anytime and will help you better face their future needs.



To conclude, e-learning changes training from something your brand ambassadors have planned to do, to something they want to do, at a time and place that suits them.

³ Theguardian.com, April 2016, Digital media section

“ We need to bring learning to people instead of people to learning. ”

ELLIOT MASIE
PRODUCER, AUTHOR, LEARNING EXPERT

IN A NUTSHELL ...

Whether you are a training director like Karen, an HR director like John or even a CEO like Paul and you care to support your retail staff, click on the following video to review how e-learning can help you with your training program.

Exhibit 2 – Video summary of e-learning benefits



Reference: ACDL International

HOW CAN YOU IMPLEMENT E-LEARNING INTO YOUR TRAINING CURRICULUM?

Depending on your training goals and budget, e-learning offers multiple scalable solutions - from quick & easy to more comprehensive:



MOOCs/COOCs - short for “Massive/Corporate Open Online Courses”

Do you need standard online modules accessible to any of your brand ambassadors, where they can interact with each other, at low cost? The MOOCs/COOCs could be just what you are looking for.

While MOOCs are web learning platforms intended for any learner, COOCs are MOOCs for businesses.

Similar to other e-learning types, MOOCs/COOCs include some learning objectives to be achieved and quizzes to assess the knowledge acquired.

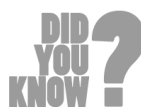
However, contrary to other e-learning formats, MOOCs/COOCs are “massive”, i.e. they allow access to any of your sales staff. It typically requires users to subscribe to the course online.

They are “open” to everyone as it does not require knowledge prerequisites such as a level of performance.

Finally and foremost, MOOCs/COOCs allow social collaboration between your sales team and online trainers (e.g. via online chats or forums).

Mobile learning modules - or rapid video learning

Do you require a quick and accessible, tailor-made learning - without necessarily possessing an LMS? M-learning could be just right for you.



Here’s a fact: about 200 million people in China use their phones to access mobile learning content on a monthly basis⁴. In Asia Pacific specifically, millennials - the new generation of brand ambassadors - spend almost one day a week on their mobile devices⁵. As the use of mobile devices is integrated into the lifestyle of sales ambassadors, m-learning becomes a central tool to engage them.

⁴ January 2015, the China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC) report

⁵ Connected life study - Mobile millennials in Asia Pacific, 2015

Exhibit 3 – Mobile users outnumber desktop ones



Reference: 2016 Google Report

M-Learning deals with just-in-time information required for brand ambassadors to complete specific skills, as it offers high flexibility: first, its modules offer multi-device support (smart phones, tablets, laptops). Second, they provide small formats (2-3 minutes). Third, they can be used on multi-platforms - either within your LMS, through other digital channels (such as Youtube, Wechat, ...) or within your classroom training.

CASE STUDY

Need: A leading group wanted to provide a series of situational trainings for their sales staff to quickly apply on the floor. They did not possess a LMS.

Solution: ACDL studio designed multiple micro-training videos on 8 topics in 5 languages and published them on Wechat, Whatsapp and Vimeo accounts - created for the occasion. Each module offered tailored tips to respond to customers' objections.

Result: ACDL helped address specific needs and provide straightforward solutions that brand associates can easily review anytime and immediately apply on the floor.

Laptop - based learning modules

Do you wish to provide tailor-made complex training that requires time and a stable learning environment? Laptop-based learning could fit your needs.

Laptop-based learning helps you deliver content in a detailed manner, as modules are typically composed of a 10-15 minutes animated movie

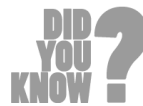
and a quiz. Plus, the laptop screen format allows you to navigate through many options.

Exhibit 4 – Laptop based e-learning



Reference: ACDL International

You can then include those types of modules into your LMS for detailed performance monitoring.



If you do not have an LMS yet, ACDL can provide you with unique and secure access to their online Learning Management System, available on computer or as a mobile application.

CASE STUDY

Need: One of ACDL's clients desired a follow-up of their full-day training, so their sales associates can refresh their knowledge repeatedly.

Solution: ACDL converted the full-day training into several small modules (animated movies with follow up quizzes for each topic) that the sales staff could consult on their LMS.

Result: All brand ambassadors can now have access to this detailed and complex training whenever they want to. It is a convenient way to refresh their skills, digest the knowledge and it also helps managers track their performance instantly.

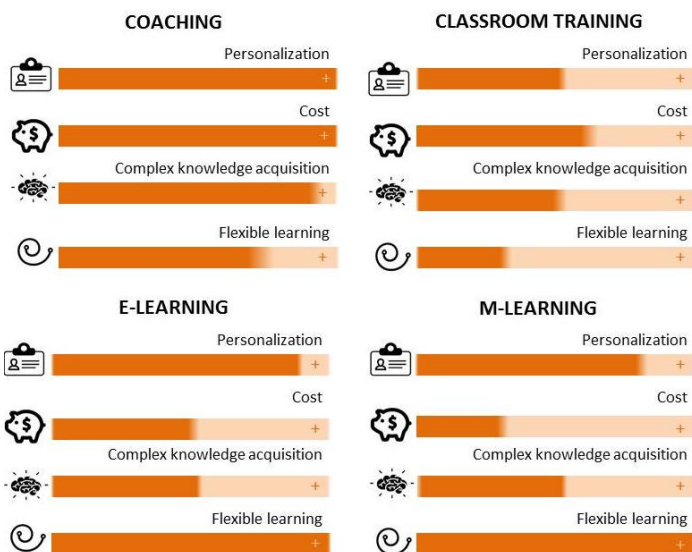
Fundamentally, the key to retail excellence is to appreciate how your brand ambassadors learn, identify what works best for them and create a blended learning experience where they can interact.

To conclude, e-learning is the right complementary training that helps minimize budgets and address different learning needs. While e-learning brings all your brand ambassadors up to the same level of understanding before they partake in further learning, classroom trainings and coaching sessions are best when it comes to transforming your brand ambassadors' knowledge into skills. Blending digital with classroom learning ultimately allows your staff to get more out of the experience and provide you with a cost effective, scalable learning strategy.



Today, an optimal learning strategy blends the following key requirements: a need for personalization, flexibility and basic to complex knowledge transfer – all this within cost/time constraints. Below are the multiple training approaches that address such requirements: coaching, classroom training, e- & m-learning.

Exhibit 5 – learning approaches: their specific strenghts⁶



⁶ the darker the orange is, the more the requirement is fulfilled.

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE OF E-LEARNING HOLD FOR LUXURY RETAIL IN 2017 AND BEYOND?

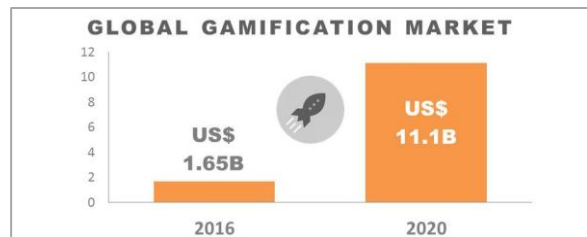
E-learning is evolving. As new models and technologies are emerging, we will soon give new and wider definition to what e-learning refers to.



The growing use of Gamification

Gamification in e-learning is the use of game mechanics to engage your brand ambassadors in their learning process.

Exhibit 6 – Global gamification market 2016 – 2020



Reference: MarketsandMarkets, 2015

This technique will bring an even greater sense of challenge and competition to learning: by leveraging gaming themes, it adds interaction, strategy building and immediate feedback to the learning process. These elements could increase not just engagement but also knowledge retention from your brand ambassador.

Still in its infancy in the luxury environment, the use of Gamification in training is already well used in other industries. For example, a leader in the beverage industry has been implementing a game-based strategy to equip their staff with core knowledge and skills. The training is an online board game with questions on categories ranging from product knowledge, brand awareness to sales skills. Players earn points each time they answer correctly and can check their learning portal that shows other players' scores and theirs in real-time. Another case in point is the POS game e-module that a leader in the food industry offers to its staff. The simulation aims at

testing them on how well they use the till system. The module uses game mechanics such as the use of a narrative, a realistic restaurant setting and customer characters. To engage the learners even more, the module uses features such as lifelines, scores, bonuses, count-down, and challenges.

Through such game-based learning, you can encourage collaboration and competition among your staff, which consequently increases their engagement with the content.

Augmented Reality (AR) in retail learning

This tool promises to deliver the best aspects of both real world classroom trainings and digital trainings into a single platform.

“**AR has strong potential to provide both powerful contextual, on-site learning experiences and serendipitous exploration and discovery of the connected nature of information in the real world.**”

Reference: Johnson, L., et al. (2010). Simple augmented reality. The 2010 Horizon Report, pp. 21-24

It could help train your brand ambassador more effectively, with avatars representing both trainers and brand ambassadors, and with collaborative whiteboard technologies, as well as group/private messaging chat.

Even though Google Glasses are still onerous for brands to invest in, less costly versions such as Google Cardboards or Oculus Rift can be used to develop augmented reality training today.

It would enable brand ambassadors to ask/answer questions to their trainers and socialize in a very streamlined manner. All of this done with the cost efficiency of distance learning.

With these training trends shaping the future of luxury retail, we are increasingly giving brand

ambassadors the opportunity to truly interact with the content and make learning seamless.

“**Tell me and I forget.
Teach me and I remember.
Involve me and I learn.**”

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN
SCIENTIST, INVENTOR, WRITER

About ACDL

Transferring knowledge in a short amount of time to a large number of your staff is possible with ACDL's solutions. Our HR consulting firm is dedicated to the premium and luxury retail sector and supports you in building online learning and development programs to enhance your staff's skills and knowledge.

Explore [our website](#) or [Contact us](#) for a customized assessment of your needs and discuss together how e-learning can help boost your employees' skills and therefore increase sales for your retail business.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Augmented Reality: emerging technology that superimposes digitally generated information (images, sounds) over what you see and hear in reality.

Blended learning: program that combines the best of e-learning and face-to-face training for the purpose of enhancing learning.

E-learning: transfer of skills and knowledge through electronic applications and processes. Those include web-based learning, computer-based learning, virtual classrooms and digital collaborations. The content can be delivered via the internet/intranet/extranet, audio, video or CD.

LMS (short for "Learning & Management System"): powerful software tool capable of administering e-learning courses and quizzes, which then helps to easily monitor learners' detailed performance.

MOOCs/COOCs (short for Mass Open Online Courses - COOCs are MOOCs for the corporate world): open Web-based distance learning modules designed for the participation of large numbers of geographically dispersed people.