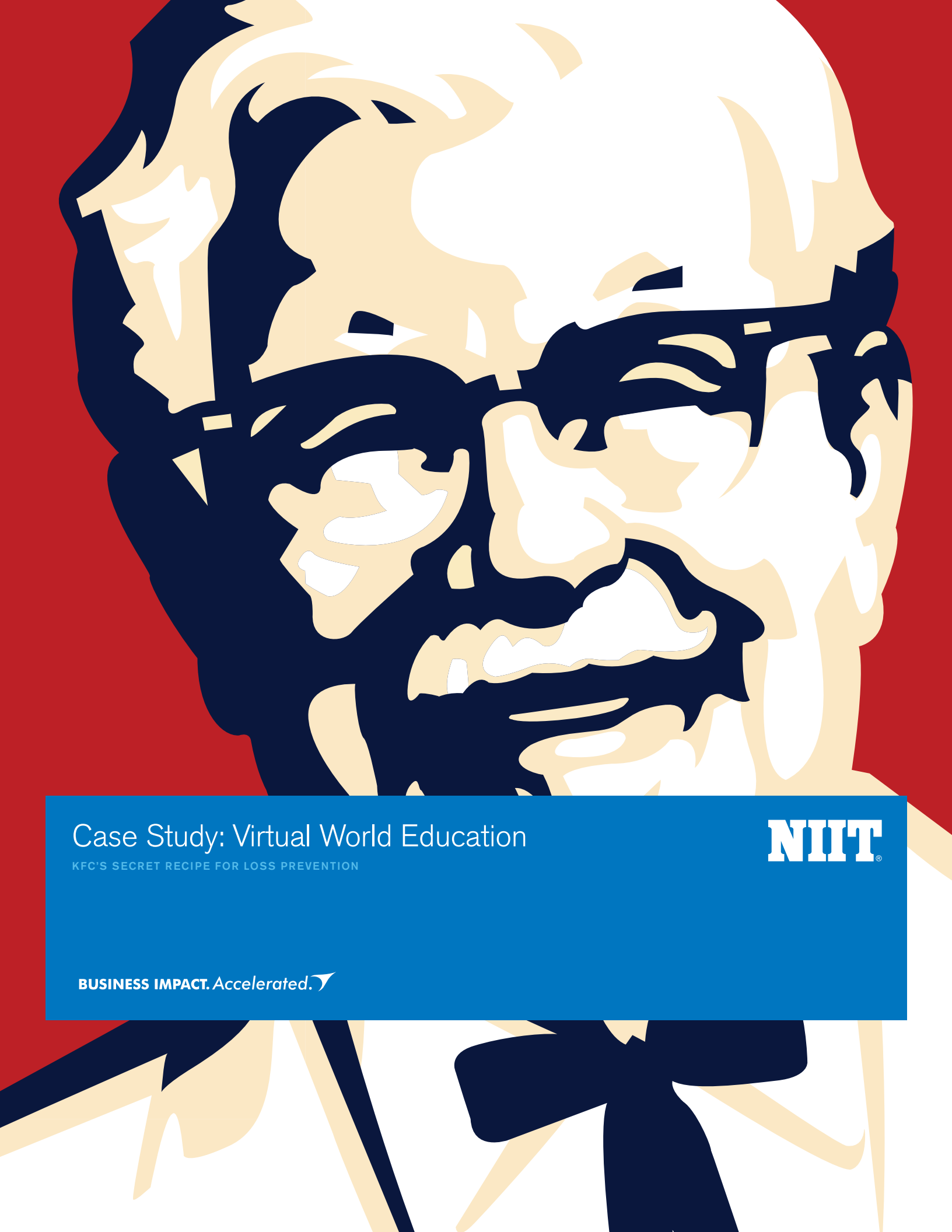




Case Study: Virtual World Education

KFC'S SECRET RECIPE FOR LOSS PREVENTION

NIIT[®]

BUSINESS IMPACT. Accelerated. 

KFC, a division of YUM! Brands, Inc. sought a training solution to address loss prevention in its US locations.

The company wanted to grow leaders within the company by training its team members fully, and then offer additional training to those who demonstrated leadership potential. Not only that, but the resulting training needed to engage Gen Y employees using form factors that meshed with this group's communications preferences. The training also needed to positively impact behaviors through the use of real-world, scenario-based curriculum design. NIIT Cognitive Arts determined the mistakes that would most impact results and designed a scripted series of interventions with believable characters and engaging virtual world scenarios that would drive home the right real world behaviors.



Business Challenge

In 2008, KFC was launching an initiative called “Growing Leaders @ KFC.” The concept of the initiative was to train Team Members fully, and then offer support and additional training to those who demonstrate leadership potential. To meet this initiative, KFC wanted both Team Member Training and Shift Supervisor Training. Team Member training had the goal of getting learners up to speed quickly on the key skills needed to execute their daily responsibilities; because average employee retention in this role is roughly six months, speed is critical to success. The Shift Supervisor Curriculum would then move learners from a Team Member mentality to a leadership mentality.

However, reaching the largely Gen Y workforce posed a conundrum: how to engage this group in ways that would resonate with them? Traditional paper based training had not been effective in driving adhesion to corporate brand standards. In addition, with a high level of attrition among front line, customer-facing shift supervisors, the company needed a learning solution that would not only help employees recognize and effectively address signs of theft, but could also be deployed quickly.

“WE HAD A BOLD GOAL IN DOING THIS, AND DESCRIBED IT WITH AN EMOTIONAL WORD PICTURE – WE WANTED THE TRAINING TO BE FUN, AND SOMETHING THAT EMPLOYEES TRULY WANTED AROUND.”

Program Goals

Due to their resistance to the existing paper-based content, employees had started using more informal “tribal knowledge training,” commented Karen Grissom, Director of KFC Training Development. “That’s where I teach you how I learned to do things, with all the shortcuts. The problem is by doing that, employees move away from the standards, and staying within the standards of the brand is very important.” Therefore, a key goal of the training was to drive a consistent set of behaviors that would in turn impact business results.

The demographics of the employees to be trained were also pivotal to the solution design. Many of KFC’s employees are members of Generation Y, adept at social networking, mobile applications, and gaming. In order to engage learners, which is critical to changing behaviors, the training would need to draw learners in by creating a virtual world. “We had a bold goal in doing this, and described it with an emotional word picture – we wanted the training to be fun, and something that employees truly wanted to be around. We wanted every team member to look forward to their next training as much as they look forward to their next paycheck,” Grissom added.

The Solution

OBSERVING REAL LIFE BEHAVIORS FOR CHANGE

After determining the specific design considerations posed by KFC's requirements, the NIIT Cognitive Arts team set out to fully understand which critical behaviors differentiate shift supervisors who are adept at dealing with theft from those who are not. This enabled the team to prioritize the behaviors that would truly impact KFC's business results, as well as providing fodder for the virtual world scenarios. The NIIT Cognitive Arts team applied its Critical Mistakes Analysis.

THE CRITICAL MISTAKES ANALYSIS

The Critical Mistakes Analysis process is a ground-breaking, learn-by-doing approach based on the principles of natural learning and Pareto Analysis. The process involves the following four steps:

1

A list of critical mistakes typically made by the target learners is identified through field observation and interviews with client experts. In the case of KFC, NIIT designers interviewed KFC restaurant staff at locations across the US, spent days observing in restaurants, and conducted numerous workshops with key project stakeholders. Although all mistakes are potentially a target for training, not all mistakes are worth fixing.

2

Therefore, the next step is to analyze mistakes according to value drivers such as frequency, cost of occurrence, and potential for training. A value for training is derived from this analysis.

3

Once each mistake has been assigned a value for training, the list of mistakes that account for most of the potential impact are listed as targeted mistakes or teaching points for training. Interventions and scenarios for training are built around these targeted mistakes.

4

Learning scenarios are then created based on teaching points by creating a simulation of real-world situations in which learners are faced with choices and decision points. The advantage of this approach, when combined with meaningful media and user appropriate interface, creates user engagement, increases learning retention, and delivers real world business impact.



GOALS OF THE CRITICAL MISTAKES ANALYSIS

Among the goals of CMA are to understand not just what mistakes are being made, but what rationale drove the behavior, what was the consequence, what is correct, and why. This helps to prioritize the training design around the behaviors that will truly drive business results.

MISTAKE	RATIONALE	CONSEQUENCE	CORRECT ACTION	WHY THIS BETTER
Counts the register by self	Wants to quickly handle it; Thinks the CSTM should be doing other tasks to help out	There may be disagreement on numbers if the Team Member does not agree with SS's counting, creating problems in accountability and sowing discord	Always count register in presence of CSTM	Both members agree on the exact amount that has been counted
Hiding/falsifying CSTM overages or shortages by entering or deleting orders or by adding cash	Doesn't want CSTM to get in trouble	Encourages theft and fails to address training or accountability issues	Always report discrepancies in register responsibility	TM struggling with register procedure can be retained; TMs who are stealing can be caught
Leaving money unattended	Gets caught up doing another task. Thinks it's not a big problem to leave money in their office for a few minutes	Encourages theft and leads to losses	Always drop register pulls in the safe immediately	Makes sure that all money pulled from register is fully accounted for

For more information about NIIT's Critical Mistakes Analysis, see:

<http://niit.com/LearningSolutions/LearningSolutionForEnterprises/Pages/PerformanceEnhancementofPivotalJobRoles.aspx>

Tune in to NIIT Radio and hear Karen Grissom describe KFC's Virtual World Education;

http://img.en25.com/Web/NIIT/NIIT_KFC_Learning2009.mp3

MIXING TOGETHER REAL LIFE WITH THE VIRTUAL WORLD

Once the Critical Mistakes Analysis was complete, the next phase in instructional design began. The NIIT team crafted an engaging, lively narrative around the situations and characters that would help alter behaviors in the most essential areas for change. The team looked for ways to engage learners in active decision making, and crafted custom computer interactions to enable making the right decisions. “We wanted the training to be engaging, even dramatic, and ring true while still driving business results,” added Lieske Renz, Director of KFC’s Training Design and HR Readiness.

The team created 20 prescriptive e-learning modules, 10 targeted at shift supervisors and 10 for team members. Each module contains a series of scenario-based decisions, with coaching and feedback throughout, and a capstone scenario to help move learners to the unguided “go do” in the real world. A great deal of time was spent on designing store backgrounds that would be authentic to the learners’ experience. The team also developed characters that would be similar to those learners encounter in stores every day, who represent what the restaurants look like, and that people could relate to.



Sample virtual store environment



Sample learning scenario

Extensive character development (including back stories) rounded out the characters, and actors to portray them were selected through a rigorous vetting process. In keeping with YUM! Brands and KFC's brand identity, the training scenarios also include humor. Characters are shown making mistakes in order to heighten the sense of reality for learners and to maintain the honesty and authenticity of the situations they encountered.

 Cody: Team member "Cody" is 18, wild and crazy, frequently makes mistakes and thinks he knows everything. He tries to find shortcuts and may suddenly "get it" toward the end of courses. This character has so resonated with KFC employees that now, when someone makes a mistake in a store, you might hear someone say, "oh, you pulled a Cody."	 Toni: Manager Toni is a manager and a high performer. She models good skills during both training curricula and takes learners aside frequently to coach them on mistakes.	 Molly: Team member Molly is an average team member who does fairly well at the Drive Thru but can do other tasks as well. She is not particularly high in motivation but does a decent job; says she works because her "parents make" her. She takes breaks sometimes to text message her friends.	 Justo: Manager Justo is energetic and hard-working. He tends to be excellent at performing all the tasks, especially with customer service, but can make some mistakes by trying to push people to work too quickly. He sometimes comes on too strong and may be quick to step in and do something for someone instead of coaching them on how to do it themselves.
---	---	--	--

The courses ask learners to play the role of a detective by tracking down signs of theft in their virtual store. This is engaging because it's similar to the gaming, virtual environment in which Gen Y employees are so comfortable. Learners make decisions similar to those they would make in the store they work in, in order to help their fictional manager create a profitable restaurant. To do so, they "interview" fictional team members by selecting their images from a screen; they immerse themselves in real life documents; and conduct virtual conversations with virtual subordinates and managers in order to complete their mission. At the end of the online portion of the course, learners download a guide that describes the mentoring session with their manager. During the mentoring session, the manager shares case studies of thefts that have occurred in the restaurant. The combination of "edgy" real life scenarios and active participation keep learners interested and involved. At the end of the training, learners are able to:

- Recognize suspicious transaction types
- Identify common employee behaviors associate with theft
- Flag common signs of theft on waste reports
- Take appropriate steps to investigate theft
- Escalate theft issues at the correct time, to the correct person



Results

Due to NIIT's scale, experience, and use of proven methodology such as Critical Mistakes Analysis, the team was able to design training experiences that directly addressed the most costly mistakes, and quickly provided KFC's learners with a rich level of experience that would otherwise take years to accumulate. An initial test of the training by an employee focus group provided excellent qualitative feedback, which was immediately echoed by the shift supervisors when the course was rolled out across the different regions in the US. Learners' adoption of the desired skills was also very rapid. KFC subsequently placed a large number of repeat orders based on these results, and additional efforts to create similar training were soon begun by YUM!'s Pizza Hut and Long John Silver companies.

"THROUGH CREATING THIS TRAINING, WE KNOW THAT NOT ALL MISTAKES ARE CREATED EQUAL, AND NOW WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT WE ARE ADDRESSING THE KEY MISTAKES IN A WAY THAT FEELS REAL, ENGAGING AND FUN FOR EMPLOYEES. WE PLAN TO EXTEND THIS APPROACH TO ADDITIONAL COURSES AND OTHER PARTS OF THE YUM ORGANIZATION."

-Lieske Renz, Director, KFC Training Design and HR Readiness

About NIIT

NIIT's Enterprise Learning Solutions Business delivers innovative strategies that help clients accelerate business impact. The company's clients count on its Managed Training Services specifically in the areas of custom content development, learning administration, learning delivery, learning technology, and advisory services to improve time of performance for employees, customers and partners. NIIT uses cutting-edge instructional design and its proprietary Critical Mistake Analysis method to deliver award-winning solutions, technology and services. Together with its organization, Cognitive Arts, NIIT's Global Talent Development programs help clients achieve real-world skills to better compete in today's market. Established in 1981, NIIT is known globally as the number one choice for strategic learning solutions. The company proudly partners with the world's leading education, technology, publishing and Fortune 500 companies. NIIT has earned more than 50 awards including 13 Brandon Hall awards.

For more information, please visit www.niit.com, www.facebook.com/niitels or contact Kimberley Kelly, Director of Marketing, NIIT (USA), Inc., Kimberley.Kelly@niit.com.