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Medical Science Education On-Demand

Custom Clinical Training in a Day

The Power of Technology-Based Microlearning to Support Rapid, Cost-Effective Course Development

This case study examines how a newly appointed Medical Director at a top 5 Clinical Research Organization (CRO) was able to build and deploy critical training to clinical employees. The use of technology-based microlearning allowed the Medical Director to:

- Overcome the all-too-common problem in Learning & Development of having useful material in disparate places that cannot be leveraged and configured, as desired

- Assemble a fully customized training course in less than a day, which typically would have taken more than 4 months and $35,000

- Deploy foundational and continuous global training to hundreds of staff to support a high-profile clinical study

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Situation & Background

Today's reality is that nearly every CRO is facing an ever-changing landscape filled with unprecedented challenges that impede the ultimate goal of delivering life-saving medications to patients. With extreme increases in the number of clinical trials, complexities, and failures, it's vital that CROs fine-tune processes aimed at driving clinical trial effectiveness. One such process is the need for targeted disease and therapeutic area training that support foundational and continuous learning for staff involved in multiple aspects of clinical studies.

But, how do you do assemble and deploy individualized, high-quality, and engaging disease education to hundreds of global employees across multiple sites in less than two weeks? This is the challenge a newly appointed Medical Director at a prominent, top 5 global CRO was tasked with—providing the education necessary to successfully deliver a high-profile Phase lll clinical trial.

The Medical Director moved swiftly to create a plan of attack with a detailed training outline that focused specifically on PCSK9 (a gene that provides instructions for making a protein that helps regulate the amount of cholesterol in the bloodstream), as well as, more generally, on acute coronary syndrome and hyperlipidemia. After painstakingly sifting through the organization's internal LMS, the Medical Director identified thirty-three full cardiovascular-related courses that could potentially be used to support the eLearning intended to be implemented. However, all of the courses were excessive in length, and none of the material covered PCSK9 or the specific topics that the Medical Director desired. Further, the short timeframe and limited budget eliminated the option of developing traditional custom learning content.

Realizing that the clock was ticking, the Medical Director contacted a few of the CRO's Learning & Development and Clinical Trial Operations stakeholders to seek assistance for a strategy to meet the needs of the situation. It was then that the new-to-role Medical Director was informed that the CRO organization had access to SMi Source™.

Solution & Approach

SMi Source is an innovative, mobile, on-demand, medical education library consisting of over 200+ full courses and 15,000+ microlearning topics covering a vast array of disease and therapeutic areas. The platform provides accurate, reliable, and fully referenced multimedia learning content presented in an engaging YouTube-like format, and is designed to free resources from the time and cost burdens of building, updating, and maintaining custom learning content.
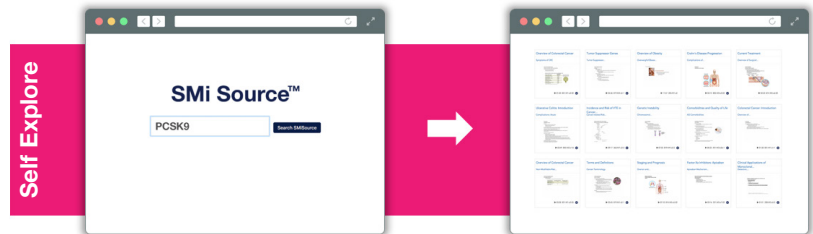
Through SMi Source's Google-like search capability, backed by extensive metadata built for each microlearning segment within the robust platform, the Medical Director was able to locate nearly 1,300 cardiovascular and approximately 10 PCSK9-specific microlearning topics (each about 1-5 minutes in length) that could potentially be used in the training. However, none of the PCSK9 microlearnings matched the unique flow and approach of the Medical Director's outline. On top of that, mentions of PCSK9 content were buried in long, full courses stemming from hyperlipidemia content that was co-mingled with other lipid lowering agents, preventing the Medical Director from using the specific PCSK9 segments without the full courses.

After contacting SMi Source Support, the Medical Director learned that SMi Source provides the functionality to quickly and easily create custom courses by "mixing and matching" existing microlearning topics with one another in the SMi Source platform. Additionally, SMi Source provides the ability to create and insert user-generated content such as learning objectives, graphics, charts, tables, web links, and assessment questions within the custom courses.

Here are the steps the Medical Director took to build the custom course in one day:
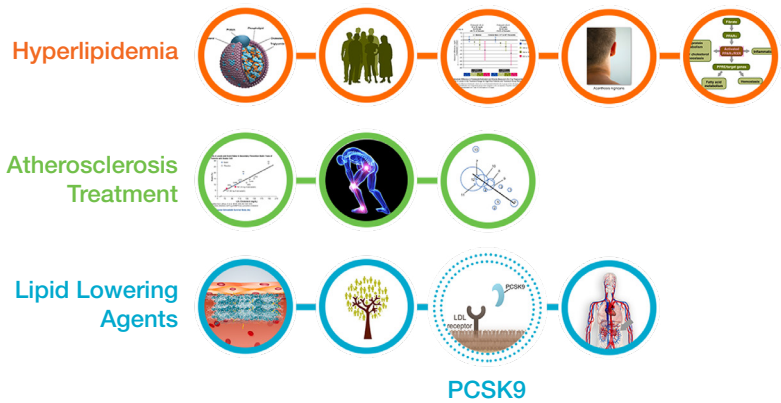
Step 1 – SEARCH

The Medical Director used the search function within SMi Source to look for content that was already available within the "cardiovascular," "hyperlipidemia," "atherosclerosis," "lipid lowering," and "PCSK9" search criteria. Several courses of approximately 60-minutes in length were found, but the Medical Director really wanted very specific sub topics within each course.
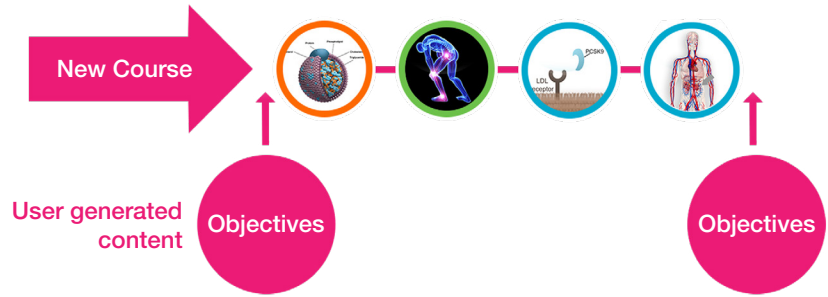
Step 2 – BUILD

The Medical Director began to build a custom course by assembling existing microlearning topics in SMi Source that matched the training outline. As a topic was found that best addressed corresponding areas of the outline, the Medical Director simply added that topic to the newly created custom course in the SMi platform. This involved several hours of content review, but the Medical Director quickly had most of the aspects of the desired course created without the time, cost, and effort of involving an instructional designer, medical writer, professional narrator, graphic artist, or animator.

Hyperlipidemia

Atherosclerosis Treatment

Lipid Lowering Agents

PCSK9

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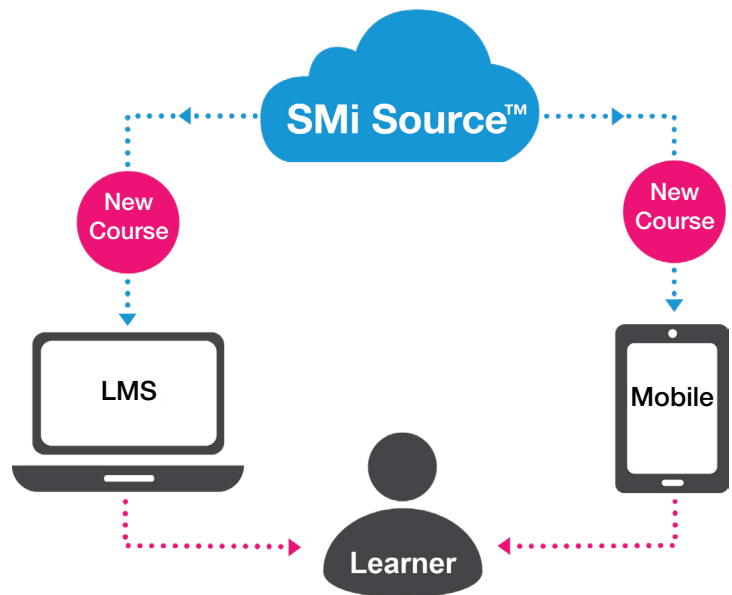www.sciencemedia.com | info@sciencemedia.com | (866) 935-4845

Step 3 – CUSTOMIZE

To tailor the content, the Medical Director then changed the microlearning topic names, reordered the topics to match the training outline, and added notes to assist in the learners' understanding of the key takeaways from the content. Additionally, the Medical Director inserted a custom course introduction, learning objectives, and a course summary using the user-friendly functionality within SMi Source.

New Course

User generated content

Objectives

Objectives

Step 4 – DEPLOY

Finally, after the course was fully created, the Medical Director utilized the Share functionality within SMi Source, which allowed the Medical Director to email a link of the newly created course to the CRO's Learning & Development team, who then published the course immediately in the CRO's LMS for global employee accessibility.

SMi Source™

New Course

New Course

LMS

Mobile

Learner

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Results

Through the use of SMi Source, this Medical Director was able to quickly deliver custom, global training. Highlights include:

- Successful delivery of custom, needs-based training tailored to over 500 employees across the CRO's global workforce
- Produced training without any additional costs (beyond the license fee), without which, the Medical Director would have spent days building a PPT or the training would have been outsourced (@ $35k) and the deadline would have been missed
- Approximately, 120x reduction in the time-to-deployment by leveraging off-the-shelf content compared to custom developed content (1 day vs. 4 months), which allowed the Medical Director to meet her training goal
- Global consistency in driving foundational and continuous learning content and curricula
- Over 750 course views within the first 2 months of deployment
- Over 950 microlearning topic views, on average, monthly by learners across the global organization
- Access to trusted, on-demand, "bite-sized" microlearning anytime, anywhere, on any device using today's technology
- Reporting and analytics on critical learning analytics/metrics to support strategic organizational and training decisions
- Exceptional course feedback reported by the Medical Director and the CRO's Learning & Development department—"Employees and sites were well-equipped and well-trained on disease and therapeutic areas relating to the study."

Looking for Learning Innovation for
Today's Life Sciences Professionals?

Learn more about

SMi Source™

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About ScienceMedia & SMi Source™

For nearly 25 years, ScienceMedia has been delivering innovative learning solutions aimed at improving clinical competency throughout Life Sciences' R&D, clinical, medical affairs, and commercial organizations worldwide.

SMi Source™ is the industry's only cloud-based, on-demand, multimedia training content library of 15,000+ microlearning topics and 200+ full courses.