

TECHNOLOGY SUPPORTED LEARNING: The Ministry of Defence Case Study

We have experience of leading the design and development of a number of high profile distributed and distance learning projects for the UK's Ministry of Defence, and also in taking a consultative role to ATRA (Army Training & Recruitment Agency) during the Defence Training Review (DTR). Projects have included the following:

- Distance learning pilot project for Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (see below);
- Distributed learning project based on AS90 for Royal School of Artillery;
- Simulation system based on ADCIS air defence system;
- Distributed learning project based on Bridging and Physics for Royal School of Military Engineering;
- Synthetic Environment Based Acquisition pilot system.



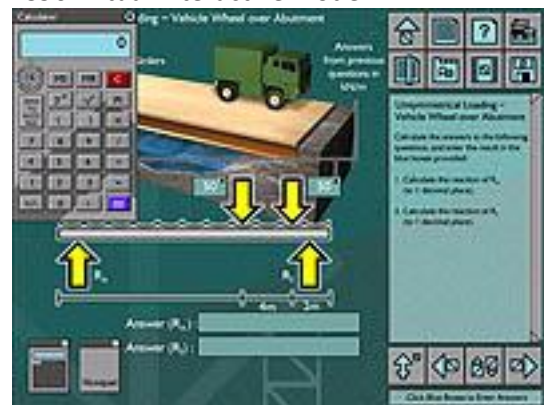
AS90 virtual interactive model



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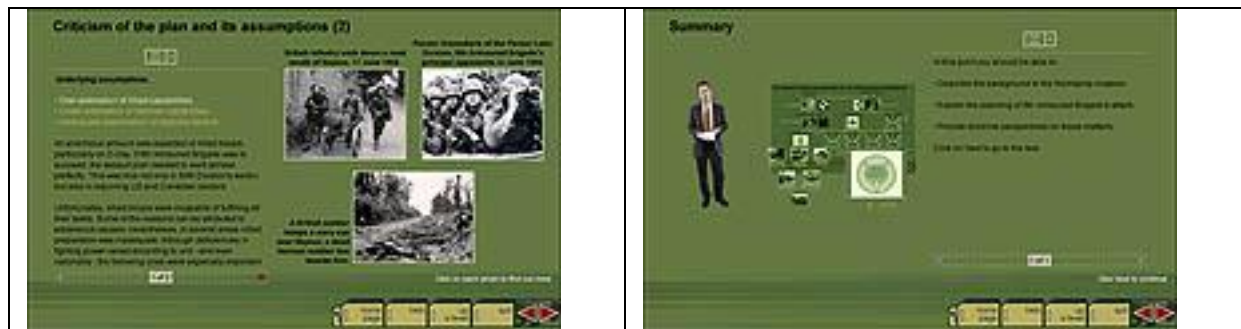


Interactive game-based simulation



Bridging and physics learning programme

Ministry of Defence: Royal Military Academy Sandhurst



Requirement: The Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, through the Army Training and Recruitment Agency, determined that a distance learning pilot project was needed to analyse the future impact, best practices and suitability of e-learning within the Academy's curriculum. The topic chosen was "Military Doctrine". There were also a number of complex issues to be addressed, including the SCORM™ issue. Distance learning and assessment were seen as a potential solution to the problem of ensuring viable knowledge levels in officer cadets prior to entry into Sandhurst.

Solution: Bearing in mind the need to develop compelling, engaging and interactive learning content, the solution took a case study approach, and based the learning objectives around a WWII event, making the most of interactive graphics, animations, historic video clips, audio clips and narrators. One of the most intriguing aspects of the application was the use of an in-screen mentor: as the application would be distributed via disc, this was achieved using VT clips which appear depending on the actions of the learner. The learner must work through the application contents in a pre-determined flow, after which they have free access, and then complete an assessment which is sent to Sandhurst in advance of their arrival to start a course. In this way, tutors are more able to target support specific to each learner's needs.

Ministry of Defence: Army Distance Learning Pilot

Requirement: As part of the Army Training Recruitment Agency's involvement in the Defence Training Review, it was determined that a distance learning pilot was required to explore and demonstrate how the modern British Army might benefit from and use e-learning. The pilot also set out to investigate best practice in procurement and contracting specific to e-learning projects, to consider IPR issues and, most importantly, the future infrastructure and management systems that would be required to support such an enterprise wide learning solution.

Solution: Working alongside an Integrated Project Team, comprising three members of ATRA personnel, the e-learning application was developed based on the use of templates, with two other e-learning developer companies subsequently contracted to develop further courses using the templates. In addition, a prototype Learning Management System and Content Management System were developed and trialled across target military intranets and internet. The project concluded with a detailed presentation given to the technology based training group within DTR. One of the most important outputs of this work was the decision by the Ministry of Defence to proceed with a tri-service, enterprise wide single Learning Management System (DELDEMC), which was launched in the summer of 2004.