

dash Labs



Case Study for



Smithsonian

for

COTR Refresher Course

2013 - 2014

DashLabs Engagement with the Smithsonian Institution

SUMMARY

About the Smithsonian Institution

The Smithsonian Institution is the world's largest museum, education, and research complex, with 21 museums and the National Zoo—shaping the future by preserving heritage, discovering new knowledge, and sharing our resources with the world. The Institution was founded in 1846 with funds from the Englishman James Smithson (1765–1829) according to his wishes “under the name of the Smithsonian Institution, an establishment for the increase and diffusion of knowledge.” We continue to honor this mission and invite you to join us in our quest. (*Source: si.edu website.*)

Problem Statement

The Smithsonian had been offering in-class training to their Contractor Officer's Technical Representatives (COTRs) for years using course materials that were updated from year to year to only align with changes in the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR). This presented a multitude of limitations. Some include the inability for COTRs who needed to re-certify every 1-3 years to take the certification course except for pre-determined dates, which were offered 2-4 times per year at a centralized location. Another challenge is that the course manual was ineffective as companion tool as it only included the changes that occurred since previous training but not the full scope of knowledge a COTR is to maintain. Finally, SI had found itself dependent on a single vendor to deliver training since the materials left little room for follow-on support outside of the expertise of the original vendor that created the training. SI wanted to scale their offering to become on-demand, and fully comprehensive.

DashLabs' Solution

DashLabs first consulted with the Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) to determine key details that would describe the long-term needs of new and existing learner. DashLabs conducted analysis of internal and external resources, uncovering a baseline approach that invited SMEs to further fill in gaps of coverage identified in the in-person COTR Refresher Course. From there, DashLabs worked with SI to deconstruct and then reconstruct the course materials by seeking out content from both Smithsonian-designated sources, and those located through our analysis and design processes. As a public entity, the Smithsonian Institution presented to DashLabs the opportunity to allow our instructional designers to do their due diligence to reference the FAR to return questions and gather clarity from SMEs prior to initial engagement. The team was also able to utilize resources from other departments/courses to build from relevant subject matter. Instituting our F.L.O.W. process, we were able to present in the earliest stages of our work, a solution that surpassed the client's original understanding of their learning needs, then recommend an approach that would adhere to their bottom-line.

The Final Product

DashLabs moved forward with building a fully interactive 4-hour eLearning course in which the learner's new colleague, Ted—an avatar used within the course—sought guidance from the COTR throughout the learning experience. The online learning experience opened with a scene from SI's actual workspace in which the avatar appears to introduce himself as the newest COTR. He'd like to confirm his own knowledge which, in-effect, reinforces the learner's own knowledge. This learning-by-teaching method (called Lernen durch Lehren in German, or LdL) allowed existing COTRs to refresh their knowledge while also considering its application in their day-to-day activities, which further supported practical knowledge transfer. Because the Smithsonian Institution complex consists of twenty-one (21) museums, DashLabs worked with SI to pull in scenarios and character design that would be relatable across each museum type, acquisition need, and role-based interest—from groundskeeper to Zoologist.

Scenes

This screenshot shows the 'COTR Emails' section of the training interface. On the left is a dark sidebar with 'Menu', 'Glossary', and 'Notes' tabs, and 'COTR Emails' selected. The main area has a purple background with the title 'COTR Refresher Training' and 'COTR Emails'. A white text box says 'Click each person below to view his/her email.' To the right is a large photo of a man. Below are five smaller photos of people labeled Ted, Steve, Janice, Cheryl, and Graham. At the bottom is a video player with a progress bar and 'PREV' and 'NEXT' buttons.


This screenshot shows the same interface after clicking on Cheryl. The main area now displays an email window. The email text reads: 'Hi Ted, Thank you for the compliment on the sea lions exhibit. That was a lot of work to get created and installed, and it was the start of a much larger project - the entire American trail in the Zoo started right as we were making plans to renovate the sea lion exhibit. The two projects merged eventually. So'. To the right is a large photo of Cheryl. Below are the same five smaller photos of people labeled Ted, Steve, Janice, Cheryl, and Graham. At the bottom is the same video player with a progress bar and 'PREV' and 'NEXT' buttons.

Menu Glossary Notes

Modern Tabs Introduction

COTR Refresher Training_Review_V4 Resources Exit

Preparing a Solicitation



Many different criteria can be used as Evaluation Criteria. The criteria should be broad enough to allow for the bidders to express their individuality and skills, but specific enough to let them know what you are looking for.

Click each tab to the left to learn more about what is included in Evaluation Criteria.

There is no audio for this portion.

- Technical Competence
- Relevant experience
- Past performance
- Product samples
- Key personnel & certifications
- Other Example

Previous Tab Next Tab

Search...

PREV NEXT

Menu Glossary Notes


Sketchbook 4 Tabs Interactions

COTR Refresher Training_Review_V4 Resources Exit

Preparing a RFQ

Click each tab learn more about each scenario.

- Seal and Sea Lion Exhibit
- Tree Maintenance Services
- Smithsonian Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum
- The Richards Collection



Search...

PREV NEXT