



On the ground

How do you maximise the benefits and effectiveness of floorwalking?



With companies looking to maximise the utilisation of new applications, bridging the knowledge gap from older versions to the latest technologies is essential to justify the investment made on new software. If carried out properly, floorwalking can be

a cost-effective and productive way to train users on-site over a short period, to ensure maximum benefit is gleaned from any application rollout or upgrade.

Planning must guarantee that all employees are reached in the most effective way. It is important to decide whether to have multiple trainers for one day or one trainer for multiple days. The full potential of floorwalking can only be reached if it is carried out in a timely fashion. Ensuring that training is done in line with the upgrade is imperative; otherwise productivity will be lost as employees try to

teach themselves how to use the applications, picking up bad habits in the process. Continually review the process. Work with your trainer to evaluate over a structured period of time and ensure that employees are comfortable with training process.

For an application roll-out to a large number of employees, consider training in-house 'power users'. Once trained, power users can train the rest of their department as necessary. As power users remain in-house, their expertise can also be used for follow-up queries. This ensures that costs are controlled, overheads are

reduced and employees can carry on their day-to-day tasks with minimal disruption.

Oliver Bruffell, Blue Chip

Trainers: this is your page – please send in your views for the next issue, or any comments about this week's advice, to the editor:

jutta.mackwell@hq.bcs.org.uk

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What to keep in mind when training a group that includes both staff and managers.

Breaking developments

How to best communicate system change before a rollout or upgrade.

To ensure a smooth rollout or upgrade, it's critical to provide timely, consistent and accurate information. This can be particularly challenging with a dispersed staff, so it is important for trainers to be aware of technologies that allow them to instruct, communicate and collaborate with local and remote staff at the same time.

Joint, real-time hands-on demonstrations and instructions give staff members the benefit of hearing all questions and discussion among the trainer and their peers-everybody gets the same information, the same way. Trainers also save themselves time and headaches, and the

rollout is smoother and more efficient.

Nick Schacht, Learning Tree

In a perfect world, when doing a system roll out, you would make contact with everyone. But in reality you will still not hit about 5-10 per cent. By improving your process you will increase your hit ratio and improve customer communication.

Firstly about a month before the upgrade add a news event to your website, establishing the nature of the upgrade. You can also post relevant links to your social networking pages. Use an email

marketing tool (for example www.constantcontact.com) to email customers who are affected by the rollout. This tool will also allow you to track which of your customers has opened the email, when they read it, if they followed any links for further reading and if the user forwarded the email to another address. If you can establish that 80 per cent of the emails were read, you can identify which 20 per cent of customers have not received the information.

Two to three weeks before the upgrade contact the remaining 20 per cent. This is can be done via phone or alternative email addresses. While it is an exhaustive and

time-consuming process, it allows you to inform them of the update and allow you to ascertain the reasons for them having not read the email.

Michael Barclay, Active Training

More advice and tips at: www.bcs.org/ittraining

Advisers:

Jooli Atkins, Matrix FortyTwo and Dave Britt, BCS Trainer of the Year 2006.

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How to create and encourage online learning communities.

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