

Increasing the Use of Horizon Wimba

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Executive Summary

The University of North Carolina, Wilmington strives to maintain a technologically progressive environment. Academic Affairs strives to maintain and recruit faculty that supports technology-based instruction and learning both on campus and through distance education.

The University of North Carolina, Wilmington would like to see an increase in the use of Horizon Wimba, a live virtual classroom, within the online courses offered. The officials within Academic Affairs would like to see an increase from 1% to 10% in the first year. In the following years, a gradual increase in use of 10% each year until 50% of the faculty and staff incorporate Horizon Wimba into their WebCT courses.

Data was gathered through a variety of sources which verified that the faculty and staff have a lack of knowledge and skills regarding the use of Horizon Wimba. It was concluded that a formal training conducted online, utilizing Horizon Wimba, would be the most viable solution to increase the use of this tool. This solution would allow for the instructors to take the course from their home or office. This would eliminate the need for environmental resources and allow the instructors to experience a live virtual classroom just as students, which would enhance their training and experience.

The Instructional Design team proposes the development of Horizon Wimba training for the faculty and staff. This proposal contains the methods and procedures to design, develop, and implement Horizon Wimba training.

In order to ensure success, this proposal contains:

- A complete list of the required staff with a description of the essential qualifications
- A descriptive list of instruction materials
- Project timeline that is broken into eight phases
 - Descriptive account of each phase
 - Required personnel for each phase

Introduction

The University of North Carolina, Wilmington strives to maintain a technologically progressive environment. Academic Affairs strives to maintain and recruit faculty that supports technology-based instruction and learning both on campus and through distance education. The University continually researches new innovative technology that will support education and create an optimal learning experience for the students.

Several years ago, the University of North Carolina, Wilmington purchased Horizon Wimba. This fully featured live virtual classroom supports audio, video, application sharing, and content display. This tool enables instructors to add vitally important elements of interaction that simply cannot be provided in a text-based course. Since the introduction of Horizon Wimba to the University, less than 1% of the instructors have adopted this for their online courses.

The officials within Academic Affairs would like to see an increase of 10% each year. By increasing the use of Horizon Wimba within online classes, instructors will be not only be supporting technology based instruction but also striving to achieve the mission of the University by providing a technologically progressive environment for students.

The Problem

The promotion of online courses being offered at University of North Carolina, Wilmington has been emphasized and growing at an exponential rate. Currently, there are 91 online courses being offered at UNCW. New technological tools such as Horizon Wimba, a live, audio and video conferencing tool, have been added to the existing LMS to enrich student experiences in an online learning environment. Academic Affairs aims to improve student learning experiences in online courses and asked the Information Technology Systems Division (ITSD) to increase the use of Horizon Wimba in online courses. However, survey data shows that as of spring 2007, out of 91 courses being offered using LMS, less than 1% utilize the live classroom function, Horizon Wimba. ITSD would like to increase this number by 10% each year until 50% of the online courses being offered are using Horizon Wimba by year of 2012.

An analysis of the use of Horizon Wimba revealed that faculty and staff who offer online courses lack the skills and knowledge to utilize this tool as part of their course.

Proposed Solution

In order to increase instructors' ability and understanding of Horizon Wimba, formal training will need to be designed, developed, and implemented. Using WebCT as a delivery system would be the most viable solution for training faculty to use Horizon

Wimba. This would allow the instructors to take the course from their home or office, which would eliminate the need for having to reserve a room and providing equipment such as headsets with microphones for the instructors. This format would allow the instructors to learn and use Horizon Wimba as if they were actually performing the task in a live class.

This course will be designed in the same fashion as a typical online class. It will be an instructor led course, faculty and staff will have the chance to participate in a synchronous online class to learn the tools and functions of Horizon Wimba. Although the faculty and staff would be students, they would have access to Horizon Wimba as though they were presenters.

This method of presentation will not only immerse the instructors in the product, but it will allow the instructors to take the course without having to go to a remote location. The faculty and staff will have the opportunity to experience the benefits of synchronous learning through learning by doing.

Client Services is responsible for providing instruction of technology and services to the campus community. The staff in client services will be trained to deliver the instruction to the faculty and staff.

Products

Instructor Guide

The Instructor Guide will contain four sections: front-end material, WebCT support, presentation guidance, and reference materials.

The first part will consist of a table of contents which will list the topic and subtopics along with the page number. A concise description of each topic will be included. The logistics section will include the maximum participants along with the computer requirements for running the programs. The lesson section will describe how and what the instructor will need for each lesson. This may include any instructional materials that will need to be pre-loaded into the course for that lesson.

The WebCT support section will guide the instructors through the basics of working in an online environment. This will also serve as a guide to assist the trainers with uploading material to the course. The tools within WebCT will be listed alphabetically with concise descriptions of how the tool functions. This section will also include strategies for delivering instruction online.

The presentation guidance divides the lessons into topics. Each lesson will consist of the objectives, a list of materials needed, and the amount of estimated time required to complete the lesson. This will be followed by a brief explanation of the procedures that are to be used when delivering the lesson. Answer keys to any survey questions or problems will be provided.

The reference section will include a copy of the student guide, copies of all the instructional materials, and reference to additional readings and resources available.

Student Guide

The student guide will be divided into three sections: front-end materials, lesson materials and reference materials.

The front-end materials include the table of contents with topic, sub-topics and page numbers. The overview section will give an overview of Horizon Wimba, what to expect in this course, expectations of the student, and how the student will receive credit. A glossary will be provided with terminology regarding Horizon Wimba.

The lesson materials include the lesson objectives, a list of materials that the student needs to have for the lesson, and the estimated time for the lesson. Step by step instructions for completing each lesson are also included.

The reference section will include concise instructions alphabetically for the tools in Horizon Wimba. Also included will be a Frequently Asked Question section regarding Horizon Wimba and a section for troubleshooting technical difficulties.

Instructional Materials

Assessment Package

The assessment package will include the assessment and key for the instructor manual. Additionally, it will also include a formative evaluation for instructional materials and an evaluation for course design and delivery. Finally, it will include a summative evaluation that will evaluate the course, the students, and whether the problem was addressed through the training.

PowerPoint Presentation

The PowerPoint presentations will be designed to enhance the synchronous instruction using the Mayer Model. These visual aids will highlight the use of the tools in Horizon Wimba.

Job Aides

The job aides will include handouts listing the various tools in Horizon Wimba. Each tool will include a concise description along with instructions. The handouts will be available electronically in the course and also on the technical support website for faculty. There will also be short videos depicting the process of various tasks. These tasks will include: displaying content, application sharing, interactive polling, and using multi-way audio. The videos will also be available on the support website for instructors to access anytime.

Awareness Materials

The awareness materials will be flyers that highlight the training overview, benefits of utilizing Horizon Wimba, training dates, training times, and how to sign up for the training. These flyers will be given to each department head to pass out to the faculty and staff during departmental meetings. They will also be e-mailed to the faculty a week prior to the training date. The information will also be available on the technical support website.

Staffing

Project Manager

The Project Manager is an instructional delivery specialist that has work with synchronous programs. This person has also design, developed, and implemented trainings using a LMS. This person would need to have experience in managing day to day aspects of a project along with be able to identify resources needed and able to assign individual responsibilities.

Horizon Wimba Specialist

This person is proficient with Horizon Wimba. The Horizon Wimba Specialist understands the technical requirements as well as the instructional possibilities the tool offers. This person must also be familiar with technologies such as Blackboard Vista, WebCT, or other Learning Management Systems.

Evaluation Specialist

This person will need to be able to collaborate to develop objectives and learning outcomes. They will need to have knowledge of assessment methodology, educational research design, student learning outcomes, and information about computer systems will be required. The evaluation specialist has extensive knowledge with both formative and summative evaluation techniques.

Two Instructional Designers

The Instructional Designers both come from a background rich with instructional experience at the University level. They will need to have experience with designing, developing, and implementing new projects. They will be on hand throughout the entire planning process to add their expertise as needed. They are experienced at the practice of arranging media to help learners and instructors transfer knowledge effectively.

Writer

This will be an employee of the University that has experience with technical writing and also a background in instruction. This person would need to be able to plan and produce the content of training guides. The writer will be available for the entire development of the project.

Test Development Team

University Professor

The faculty member involved has already utilized Horizon Wimba within their own online course and is very familiar with all of the functions and incorporating them into online instruction.

Two Graduate Assistants

The Graduate Assistants are familiar with the WebCT and have some experience with Horizon Wimba. This experience is from both an instructor's point of view as well as a student's.

Staff Member

The Staff Member involved currently teaches online undergraduate courses that have used Horizon Wimba. This person comes with an extensive teaching background at all levels and feels comfortable within an online environment.

E-learning coordinator

The E-Learning Coordinator provides training and support for faculty using current technologies for enhancing delivery of course content. This person facilitates training and support for faculty and staff using a variety of delivery methods.

Server Administrator

This person works very closely with the E-Learning Coordinator. The Server Administrator sets up the course shells for all online courses as well as trainings. This person also has experience troubleshooting any problems regarding Horizon Wimba and WebCT.

Media Specialist

The Media Specialist has a background in various media and technology based programs that are used to deliver instruction. This person will develop the audiovisual components of the training and has experience with delivering instruction. This multimedia will be used for online content

Stakeholder

This person will give the final approval of the training and related materials.

Project Phases

Phase I

Product Project Planning

April 18, 2007 – May 21, 2007

Steps in Flowchart

Planning Meeting, Draft Development Plan, Approve Development Plan, Draft Goals, Approve Goals

Team Members

- Project Manager
- Instructional Designer #1

- E-learning coordinator
- Stakeholder
- Writer

The project will begin with the project manager contacting the team members to set up an initial planning meeting. This meeting will be to discuss the development plan and goals for this project. Also, the delivery strategies that will be used for this project will be discussed.

The meeting notes will be summarized into a draft development plan by the writer and sent to the team members. The development plan will include a summary of the delivery strategies along with a rough draft of the goals for the project. The plan will also include a list of the deliverables required for the project. The Project Manager and the Instructional Designer will collaborate to review the goals for the project.

Another planning meeting will be set to review and approve the rough development plan by the team and the stakeholder. Once the goals have been approved the team can move on to Phase II, Project Design. The next meeting will be set.

Phase II
Product Project Design
May 22, 2007 – July 17, 2007

Steps in Flowchart

Task Analysis, Set Course Objectives, Approve Course Objectives, Assessment Strategies, Content Development

Team Members

- Project Manager
- Instructional Designer #1
- Instructional Designer #2
- Horizon Wimba Specialist
- Stakeholder
- Evaluation Specialist
- Writer
- Media Specialist
- E-learning coordinator

With the support of the Horizon Wimba Specialist, Instructional Designer #1 and #2 will conduct a task analysis. This task analysis will be used to draft the course objectives and assessment strategies by the Instructional Designers and the Evaluation Specialist.

Instructional Designer #2, Writer, Horizon Wimba Specialist, and Media Specialist will develop the content needed for this project. A meeting will be set to review and approve

the course objectives and the assessment strategies by the team and the Stakeholder. The content development plan will also be reviewed. Once the team has approved the project design, the team will move on to Phase III.

Phase III
Project Development Planning
July 17, 2007 – July 26, 2007

Steps in Flowchart

Delineate Project Task, Develop a Projected Workflow for Project Tasks, Develop a Project Schedule, Create Course Shell and Section

Team Members

- Project Manager
- Instructional Designer #1
- Instructional Designer #2
- Horizon Wimba Specialist
- Evaluation Specialist
- Media Specialist
- E-learning coordinator
- Server Administrator

The Project Manager along with the Instructional Designers will come together to define the project tasks in vivid detail. A meeting will be set to delineate the tasks. A projected workflow and project schedule will be drafted. The Project Manager will distribute the project tasks along with the schedule. The Server Administrator will be contacted to create course shell and section within WebCT.

Phase IV
Content Development
July 31, 2007 – October 1, 2007

Part A – Content Developed

Steps in Flowchart

Instructional Strategies, Learning Activities, Assessment Items, Content, Approval for Content Development

Team Members

- Project Manager

- Instructional Designer #1
- Instructional Designer #2
- Horizon Wimba Specialist
- Stakeholder
- E-learning coordinator
- Evaluation Specialist
- Media Specialist
- Writer

The Instructional Designer #1 will collaborate with the Horizon Wimba Specialist to develop the instructional strategies that will be utilized throughout the course. They will then draft learning activities to be included into the course. Instructional Designer #2 and the Evaluation Specialist will collaborate to develop assessment items and answer key for the teacher guide. Instructional Designer #2 and the Writer will collaborate to draft the content for the teacher and student guides. The team will reconvene to approve the content items.

Part B – Teacher and Student Guide Developed

Steps in Flowchart

Develop Teacher and Student Guide, Approve Teacher and Student Guide, Develop Assessment Package, Approve Assessment Package, Develop Instructional Materials - Design Print, Tutorial, and Media

Team Members

- Project Manager
- Instructional Designer #1
- Instructional Designer #2
- Horizon Wimba Specialist
- Stakeholder
- E-learning coordinator
- Evaluation Specialist
- Media Specialist
- Writer

Once the content has been approved, the writer will collaborate with the Horizon Wimba Specialist, e-learning coordinator, and Instructional Designer #1 to develop the teacher and student guide. The guides will be electronic versions that will be access through the WebCT course.

The assessment package will be developed by the Evaluation Specialist. This includes the assessments and answer keys for the instructor and student guide along with developing the formative and summative assessments. The formative evaluation will be

developed for both content and delivery. The summative evaluation will address the course, students, and the problem.

The media specialist will collaborate with instructional designer #2 and the Horizon Wimba Specialist to develop the Instructional Materials. These instructional materials will be short videos showing how the various tool work within Horizon Wimba. The faculty and staff will be able to access these at their convenience. The team member will reconvene to approve all content materials.

Phase V
Formative Evaluation
October 2, 2007 – October 8, 2007

Steps in Flowchart

Formative Evaluation of Instructional Materials, Student Guide, and Teacher Guide, Assessment Materials

Team Members

- Project Manager
- Instructional Designer #1
- Instructional Designer #2
- Media Specialist
- Test Development Team
- Horizon Wimba Specialist
- Evaluation Specialist
- E-learning Coordinator

The test development team will review the student and teacher guide along with the course materials within WebCT individually. After the test development team has reviewed the materials individually, Instructional Designer #1 will conduct the project for a small group including the test development team and the e-learning coordinator. The materials will be revised based on the data collected.

Phase VI
Awareness Materials
October 9, 2007 – November 5, 2007

Steps in Flowchart

Awareness Materials Draft, Awareness Materials Approved

Team Members

- Project Manager
- Instructional Designer #1
- Instructional Designer #2

- Media Specialist
- Graduate Assistant

In this phase the Awareness materials will be developed by Instructional Designer #1 and the Media Specialist. Once the Awareness materials have been approved the Graduate Assistant will update the ITSD website with the materials as well as sending the flyers to each department for their departmental meeting. An e-mail to the faculty will also be sent with the flyer.

Phase VII
Formative Evaluation of Course Project
November 6, 2007 – November 16, 2007

Steps in Flowchart

One-to-One Evaluation, Small Group Evaluation

Team Members

- Project Manager
- Instructional Designer #1
- Instructional Designer #2
- E-learning Coordinator
- Evaluation Specialist
- Server Administrator

In this phase of the project, the project manager will seek volunteers who currently teach WebCT to conduct individual evaluation of the course. The evaluation specialist will survey the participants afterwards. Once the individual evaluation has been completed, another group of volunteers will take part in the course. The Evaluation Specialist will review the results at a team meeting with recommended revisions. The course design and delivery will be revised based on the data collected by the Evaluation Specialist.

Phase VIII
Implementation of Project
November 16, 2007 – May 2, 2008

Steps in Flowchart

Train the Trainers (Implementation), Formative Evaluation, Final Training Date, Summative Evaluation, Summative Report Written, Summative Report Reviewed

Team Members

- Project Manager
- Instructional Designer #1
- E-learning Coordinator
- Evaluation Specialist
- Graduate Assistant #1
- Graduate Assistant # 2

- Server Administrator
- Stakeholder
- Writer

The trainers will be trained to give the instruction by Instructional Designer #1. The trainers include the Server Administrator, E-learning Coordinator, Graduate Assistant #1, and Graduate Assistant #2. Once the training has been completed, the training dates for the faculty and staff will be set.

The training will be offered at the end of the Fall 2007 semester and also at the beginning of the Spring 2008 semester. Once the trainings have been completed, the Evaluation Specialist will conduct a summative evaluation. The evaluation will be conducted over the course of the Spring 2008 semester. It will include an evaluation of the course, the students, and whether there is an increase in the use of Horizon Wimba.

The students would be surveyed to determine the overall effectiveness of the course along with whether they retained the course material. The side effects from the course will also be evaluated. The students will also be surveyed on whether they have or will be implementing Horizon Wimba into their online courses. At the end of the semester, the team will come together to review the report written by the Evaluation Specialist.

Based on the results of the report, the team may revise the course. If the data shows there has been an increase, then the revised course will continue to be offered at the beginning of each semester. The team will conduct evaluations once a year until the desired results of 50% of the WebCT users are incorporating Horizon Wimba into their course. If the data showed no increase, another front-end-analysis would be conducted to assess the gap.

[Appendix A](#)

– Gantt Chart

[Appendix B](#)

– Workflow chart

[Appendix C](#)

– Staffing Report

[Appendix D](#)

- [Salaries Budget](#)