Marketing your Training Program to a Remote Workforce

Cutting through the noise and attracting attention to your training programs can be challenging. And when workers are remote, it's even harder. But that's exactly what a well-timed, targeted marketing campaign can do. Learn effective promotion strategies for your training programs from a North American footwear giant.

Ashley Renzi, Sales Training & Development Manager
New Balance Athletic Shoe, Inc.
Corporate Overview

New Balance Athletic Shoe, Inc.

- Founded in 1906 and headquartered in Boston, MA
- Athletic footwear and apparel, licensed accessories
- 2,800 associates globally
- Products distributed in 120 countries (6 continents)
- *Only athletic footwear manufacturer making shoes in the USA*
  - Boston & Lawrence / MA
  - Norridgewock, Skowhegan & Norway ME
Training and Development Structure

- Corporate L & D / Job Function Training
- Sales Training responsible for North American Field and HQ Based:

- Sales Managers
- Analysts and Support
- Strategic Account Managers
- Sales Representatives
- 150 Associates and Independent Contractors
History: New Balance and Skillsoft
5+ Years of Partnership

Lesson Learned:
 4 hr courses too long
 Key topics (negotiating, sales simulations, customer service) exceeded expectations.

Lesson Learned:
 Management support critical to success.
Marketed directly to managers.

Lesson Learned:
 Sales Reps spending less time on laptops, more time on iPads.

Lesson Learned:
 Imperative to present tools at new hire on boarding.

2008
• Launch Skillsoft within Sales
• Licensed OTS Business Skills Courseware
• 1 Year Contract

2009
• Refreshed OTS Business Skills Courseware List (1 HR Course)
• 1 Year Contract

2010
• NB Moves to New LMS

2011
• Established internal license share
• Licensed ExecSummaries
• 2 Year Contract

2012
• Reviewing and replacing OTS Business Skill Courses
• Agreement to license:
  • Business Pro
  • ExecSummaries
  • 50 Lessons
  • LDC

Now what?
How does this all relate to marketing to a remote workforce?
Method to the Madness

Secure Management Sponsorship
Fulfill the Need to See a Bottom Line
Align with Major Corporate Initiatives
Tip the Scales

Understand Impacts to Traction
Barriers to Entry

Identify Ways to Show Progress
Assets Meeting Needs
Utilization

Test and Learn
Something is Better Than Nothing
Secure Management Sponsorship

Fulfill the need to see a bottom line.

1. Calculate cost of ILT vs. Online Learning

2. Identify Opportunity Costs
   What would it mean to your company if the resources were not available to employees?
   - Can all associates access ILT?
   - Are multiple modalities of learning available?
Secure Management Sponsorship (cont.)

Align with major corporate initiatives.

1. **Ride coat tails!**
   - What corporate initiatives can be linked to available assets? *Performance review, skill building, on boarding, manager training.*
   - Establish Marketing Calendar

2. **Competency Map**
   - Organize assets with corporate competencies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency Name</th>
<th>Aligned SkillSoft Assets</th>
<th>Type</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Persuasive selling</td>
<td><em>Breakthrough Business Negotiation: A Toolbox for Managers</em></td>
<td>ExecSummaries</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Mastering Business Negotiation: A Working Guide To Making Deals And Resolving Conflict</em></td>
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<td><em>Secrets of Power Negotiating for Salespeople: Inside Secrets from a Master Negotiator</em></td>
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<td><em>Presenting to Win: The Art of Selling Your Story</em></td>
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<td><em>The Lost Art of the Great Speech: How to Write One; How to Deliver it</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Solution selling</td>
<td><em>A Seat at the Table: How Top Salespeople Connect and Drive Decisions at the Executive Level</em></td>
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<td><em>Bag the Elephant: How to Win and Keep Big Customers</em></td>
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<td><em>Customer-Centric Selling: Integrate Sales and Marketing; Develop Sales-Ready Messaging; and ‘Clone’ You</em></td>
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Tip the Scales
Impacts to Traction

**Motivation**
- Identify main motivators for core audience participation.
  - Improvement in Sales ($)
  - Time Savings
  - Personal
  - Performance Review

**Constant Deadlines**
- Understand calendar – when is the audience ready to learn?

**Independent Contractor Regulations**
- Limitations on materials presented and compliance necessary.
- No formal review process.

**“Noise”**
- Competition in securing “brain real estate”.

“Pay attention to me – its training and development! No, not your manager!”
Ways to Show Progress

OR

Assets

Marketing
Hit them when they least expect it.

- Utilized branded wall clings to communicate course availability in office kitchen locations
- Rotated “HOT!” message to profile different courses/skills that could be taken in 5 minutes or less
- Tailored message to needs of groups using kitchen (ex: Advanced Excel > Analysts)

Feedback from learner: “First of all, thank you so much for your signs telling us about the available courses. I was just asking for more Access and Project training last Monday! This is fantastic, and I wouldn’t have known. It is amazing that sometimes the “low-tech” communications still work best.”
Marketing #1: In Practice
Marketing #2

- Bills, bills, bills... huh, what’s this?
- In-home postcard with course titles and access information

Growth of first time users of Skillsoft / Multiple Business Units
Marketing #3

- If its on their seat, it has to be moved to sit down.
- Linked ExecSummaries and ease of use to sales manager traveling schedules
- Provided example of ExecSummaries most relevant to manager’s role
- Step by step instructions to access / download

Increase in # managers accessing ExecSummaries by 20%
Marketing #4

- Teach a man to fish...
  - Created Manager “kit” with training & development information prior to performance reviews.
  - One-page overview and instructions on assets, access and best practices.
  - Covered ExecSummaries, Business Skills Courses.

Created a consistent user group within Sales management.
Marketing #5

- Using Deep Links
- Email “arm-chair” marketing.
- Check email from any device > capture curiosity.
- Demonstrate ease of use.

Hi everyone,

Sales Training provides access to best selling business books “ExecSummaries” - 6-8 pages that may be downloaded to PDF, Audio (MP3) or read online. To go to the ExecSummaries page on NB Learn (on laptop browser or iPad), click here.

You will see NB Competencies listed along the left side; and NB Sales competencies if you drill down into “Sales” on the right side and applicable ExecSummaries linked to each. Or you can use the search function to browse over 500 titles.
Marketing #6

- COFFEE AND MUFFINS WILL BE SERVED!
- Schedule “Exclusive” Demos
- In Person and Webcast
- Give Homework
Lessons Learned + Measurable Value = Impactful Marketing

1. Build on programs successes (and failures) each year.
2. Tip the scales with stakeholders to ensure they support the plan for the long term.
3. Identify any impacts to traction BEFORE developing a marketing program.
4. Engage with learners when they are ready to be engaged.
5. Use Skillsoft’s resources to be best in class.
   - Learning Consultants – Marketing Best Practices
   - Competency Mapping
   - Client Community
   - Course Swap
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