Web Based Education — A New Paradigm (Part 4) by Rick Saindon

This is the last in a series of four articles exploring the detail features built into the new WTCA web training system. In previous articles we covered the detail features for integrated quizzes and exams (September/October 2002 - Part 2) and how students could maintain a direct link with their instructors and corporate training coordinators (November 2002 - Part 3). This column will address a number of student and administrator customer service features built into the system. We will explore, in detail, some of the following:

- An integrated glossary of section specific terms and definitions
- An accumulating list of frequently asked questions (FAQ) [covered in Part 3]
- A tutorial on how to use the training system
- Training on how Corporate Reps can administer the system
- Student feedback on percent complete and percent correct for each section [covered in Part 3]
- Online help feature. Comments or questions entered into the online help form are retained in our database for future entries into the FAQ system and to apply quality process improvements to our training system.

We first opened the web training system to a controlled group of beta users May 1, 2002. Since that time, we have gradually expanded our user community and as of December 16, 2002 have:

- 46 corporations subscribed to Truss Technician Training (TTT) Level I
- 300 students enrolled to take the TTT Level I course
- 68 students actively engaged in the web training experience
- 13 students who have completed the TTT Level I course
- 3 students that have successfully passed the TTT Level I Certification Exam

By the time this article is published, we will have completed moving our web servers into a professional hosting center, after which we will begin marketing our web training courses aggressively for the first time since its advent. We are also releasing a series of four continuing education courses (CEU) from our series of Truss Technician Workshops (TTW). We will be completing the TTT Level II course during the first quarter of 2003. Then in 2003 we will work on the online training priorities set by our membership that is certain to include additional TTT and TTW programs.

As the volume of customer traffic through this new web training system grew, we were very focused on customer service issues and continuous process improvement opportunities. We have implemented a number of customer (self) service features to fulfill our goal of empowering members and customers with everything they need to succeed as students and corporate administrators, without depending on a direct call to our support staff. We will always be available for our members/customers, but will encourage them to help themselves by taking

advantage of the system we created to foster independence throughout the course.

The integrated glossary of terms provides a comprehensive alphabetical listing of industry terms that can be focused specifically on the current course. The definition of each term is provided with supporting images or media when available or required.

We would be remiss if we did not use our new web training system to train our students and corporate administrators on how to use the many features built into the system. We now have three tutorials available and others are planned. The TTT and TTW student tutorials are publicly available for any student or guest visitor to view. They explain all of the system's features and recommended best practices from a student's perspective. The Rep Tutorial is very detailed and is available to all WTCA primary location reps and their designated training rep assistants. The tutorials include a number of focused screen captures with detail audio instructions. Tutorials can be viewed at www.wtcatko.com.

The integrated "Help" function allows the student to communicate their questions, problems, issues or ideas directly to the WTCA support staff. Every "Help" customer service management (CSM) entry is logged into the web training system database for tracking and process improvement analysis. It also generates a direct email for direct intervention. The "Help" form is accessed directly from the course navigation bar.

This concludes the series. We welcome you to join the growing number of structural building component professionals that are already taking advantage of this affordable, convenient web training platform. To register now, simply go to www.wtcatko.com and register online.

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