

xAPI Spotlight

verizon[✓]

See how Verizon used a proof-of-concept as the foundation of a broader xAPI ecosystem strategy.

Overview & Challenge

A Quick Overview: Verizon

There's more to Verizon than meets the eye. The telecommunications giant makes approximately \$30 billion in revenue per year, and that's not just from its wireless services. They install fiber optics, provide internet and cable, and conduct business in more than 150 countries.

That means new hires have a lot to learn, and Verizon has taken steps to integrate xAPI into their L&D initiatives to incrementally change the learner experience. And Dwayne Thomas, Verizon's associate director of learning and development, is responsible for introducing xAPI into the company's ecosystem.

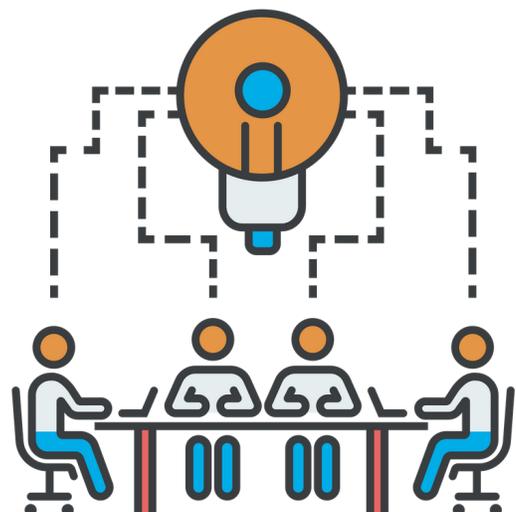
The Challenge: Dreaming too big

The goal of any L&D department is creating quality training content, but, more important, pointing people in the direction of the right content. In 2012, Dwayne learned about xAPI (then referred to as Tin Can) and knew it was just the thing that would help advance Verizon's lofty L&D goals, such as:

- Build a big data and analytics program.
- Enable personalized learning experiences.
- Facilitate an integrated learning system.
- Create an aggregation point for all learning data.
- Conduct training impact analysis.

These ambitious ideas could be achieved with the help of xAPI, but a meeting between the L&D and IT teams revealed that perhaps Dwayne and his team weren't quite ready for the commitment.

Adopting xAPI at the scale to accomplish their goals would involve downloading the code base, buying servers, implementing server support, and running the servers themselves. L&D decided that fully adopting xAPI was a great idea, but they wouldn't be able to present a successful business case to leadership built solely on their goals.



Approach

Focusing on the learner experience

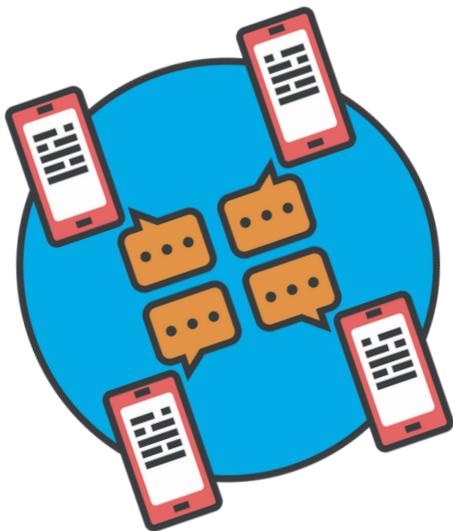
Dwayne and the L&D team decided to shift their focus to the learner experience and how new hires interacted with content during the onboarding process. Starting here could then help gain buy-in from IT and leadership.

At the time, Dwayne was responsible for the Verizon Wireline division's onboarding program, which consisted mainly of a 52-page PowerPoint presentation. He worked with Root, a custom content developer, to change the delivery format from a lengthy presentation to a 3-by-5 ft table top poster that would be used as a roundtable conversation piece. This custom resource helped new hires to quickly and easily learn about Verizon's culture, credo, values, and business divisions in an interactive setting.

Even though the material was helpful in teaching new employees about all of Verizon's services and employees' abilities to recall information improved, the delivery of information wasn't practical, especially since only about 40% of new hires in Wireline had access to face-to-face onboarding experiences.

After making this realization, L&D created new requirements for training Wireline new hires:

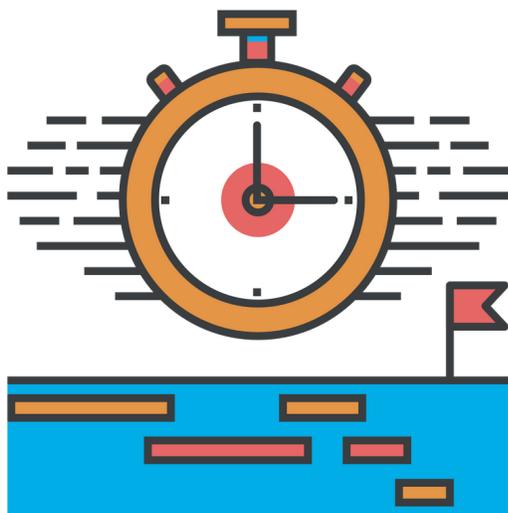
- Content must be accessible via mobile devices.
- Training content must be user friendly, so employees can enter and exit the content without losing their places.
- Insights into how new hires are watching training content must be reported on the LMS and readily available to L&D.



Approach

Focusing on the learner experience *(continued)*

From there, Verizon needed to build something outside of their LMS because it couldn't support the newly defined requirements. L&D only had three months, but making changes to the LMS would take much longer than that. They also didn't have time to partner with a company to set up a learning record store (LRS) because Verizon's purchasing process can take several months.



Instead, Dwayne employed Root and an in-house database administrator to hand code all the requirements into the database. This approach worked, but handling the reports was difficult because everything had to be done manually and L&D didn't put any of the reporting into a data analytics tool.

Once the course was launched, it was too late to enable it with xAPI, but it wasn't too late to look ahead. Dwayne's team hoped to conduct a smart experiment of xAPI by partnering with another division's L&D group who might have a need for similar requirements.

Luckily, a senior vice president from another L&D department took notice of Dwayne's course experiment and was interested in championing it for her division. Initially she was skeptical about the course and the underlying xAPI technology because it wasn't on the corporate-approved LMS.

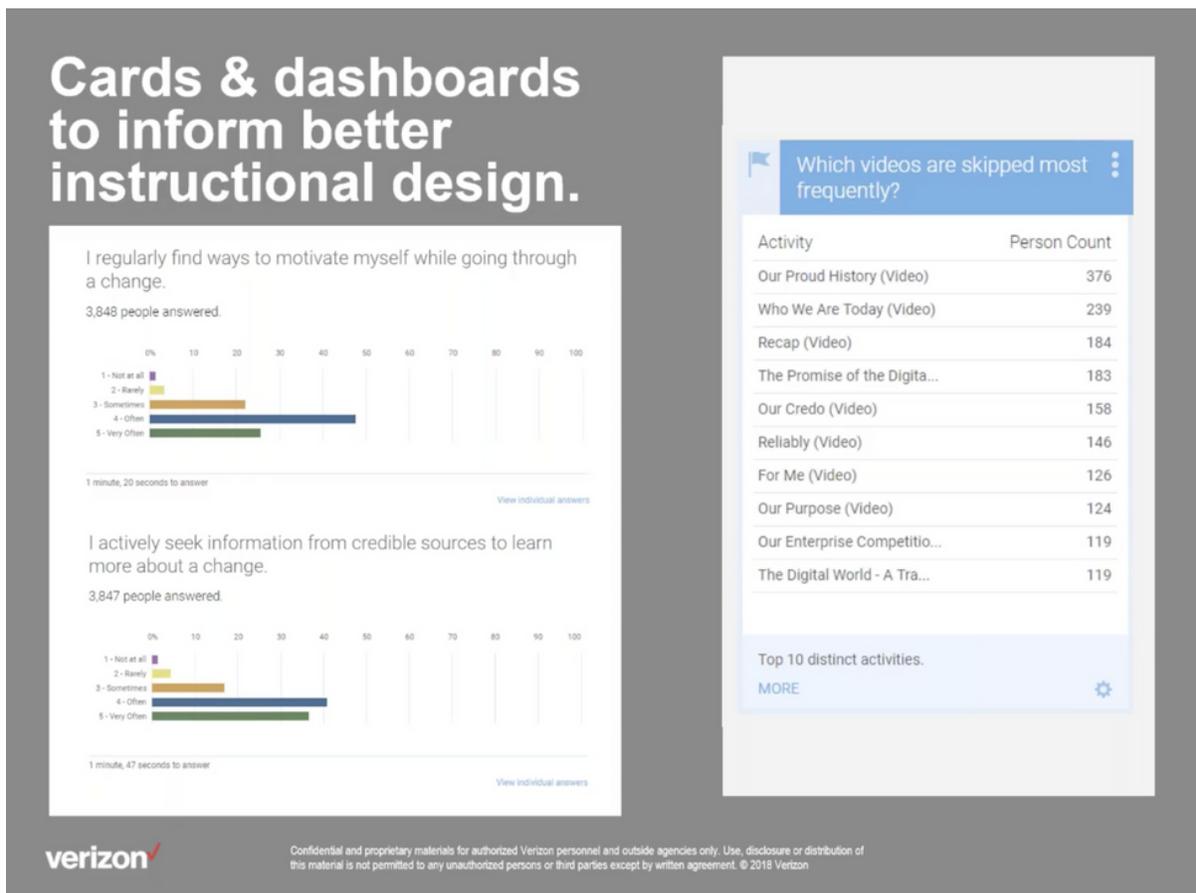
However, she changed her mind and was sold on xAPI once she learned that it could create the desired learning experience, provide course completion credits, and give insight into consumption and usage. The success from this experiment led to wider acceptance of L&D's plans to fully incorporate xAPI into the learning experience.

Solution

Informing better design with insights

L&D received permission to expand the types of data they can put in the cloud, and they're working with the LMS and IT teams to improve how they support self-based content launches. These updates allow L&D to build xAPI-enabled content with Storyline 3, and the content can be launched and tracked using SCORM-based scoring with a bookmark, resume feature, score, and completion credit going into the LMS. Meanwhile, reporting on users' consumption habits is reported to the LRS. Though this is just a first step, it satisfies IT's requirements while giving the L&D team insight into the learner experience.

Verizon has used the learning experience perspective to change the type of content they deliver and how they deliver it. For example, a 4.5-minute video was skipped 33% more often than a 3.5-minute video, showing L&D that employees' attention spans are averse to longer content.

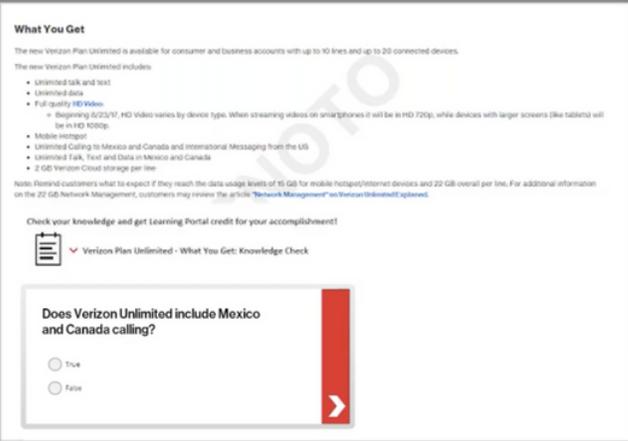


xAPI allows Verizon to see new hires' consumption habits via reports and dashboards, which has led to a better understanding of where improvements should be made

Solution

Informing better design with insights *(continued)*

The next adjustment was making content more accessible to learners. Wireline employees typically spend their days working in a performance support tool, but they had to leave that tool and login to the LMS to view training materials.



The screenshot shows a Verizon Unlimited plan page. The main content area is titled "What You Get" and lists various benefits of the plan, including unlimited talk and text, unlimited data, and full-quality HD video. Below this, there is a section titled "Check your knowledge and get Learning Portal credit for your accomplishment!" which contains a knowledge check question: "Does Verizon Unlimited include Mexico and Canada calling?". The question has two radio button options: "True" and "False". A red arrow points to the right, indicating the next step in the assessment.

Embedding assessments in performance support tools.

verizon

Confidential and proprietary materials for authorized Verizon personnel and outside agencies only. Use, disclosure or distribution of this material is not permitted to any unauthorized persons or third parties except by written agreement. © 2018 Verizon

Now, the material is embedded in the performance support tool, and managers can still see which content was watched and/or completed.

Solution

What's Next?

Verizon's L&D team wants to send course completion credits to the LMS after learners watch applicable videos via their video delivery platform. They also want to add a feature to the LMS that scores participation quality based on course data. The scoring will be based on video completions and if the video-related questions are answered correctly. These scores will then be used to see how they impact organizational KPIs.

The Verizon team's next steps are:

- ensuring that xAPI is compatible with all systems and platforms,
- implementing an integrated learning ecosystem, and
- making personalized learning recommendations available.



Recommended Resources

[xAPI xAPRIL](#)

See more of Verizon's xAPI case study at xAPIxAPRIL.com, including a recorded webinar and Q&A with Dwayne Thomas. And don't stop there—be sure to check out even more stories from Caterpillar, Behr Process, Quicken Loans, and PwC!

[xAPI xPLAINED](#)

What's xAPI? Learn more about the Experience API in [our handy eGuide](#) that covers the basics, including how xAPI is different from SCORM and how to get started.



Copyright © 2018 by Watershed Systems, Inc. All rights reserved. This document or any portion thereof may not be reproduced or used in any manner without the express written permission of the publisher.