Point-of-Need Resources in the LMS: Providing Performance Support to Thousands of Online Graduate Students

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Maureen Joyous Morasch, MLIS and Kim Read, MLS

Serving Thousands Globally

How can one library serve 5,000 global adult learners in online graduate programs?

Challenges:
- Over 5,000 online doctoral and masters of education students
- Requires efficient responses to graduate-level information literacy needs
- Solutions need to be asynchronous
- Too many sections and courses to embed a librarian

Solutions:
- Looked to field of performance support
- Point-of-need “job aids” embedded in online subject curricula at assignment level

What is Performance Support?

Rosenberg (2013)
- a tool or other resource, print or technology-based
- provides user with exact amount of needed guidance and support
- at the moment of need
- makes work easier and people more productive

Barker, van Schaik, and Famakinwa (2007)
“The rationale underlying the use of performance support is based on the fundamental belief that all aspects of human performance (both physical and cognitive) can be improved through the use of an appropriately designed performance intervention” (Barker, van Schaik, & Famakinwa, 2007, p. 245).

7 Characteristics of Performance Support

Good performance support:
- Makes assignments easier.
- Makes students successful by meeting learning outcomes.
- Integrates into coursework and assignments in the LMS.
- Is easy to navigate and designed to be accessible for all students.
- Is easy to scale within a program, department, or university.
- Is easy to update.
- Is cost-effective for librarians.

Adapted from Marc Rosenberg’s (2013) “Seven Characteristics of Good Performance Support”

Best Practices

- Establish relationships with course designers, teaching faculty, and LMS technicians and know how to talk their talk
- Get very familiar with the curriculum
- Don’t wait to be asked, suggest resources
- Pay attention to repeat reference questions—they can be cues to needed resources
- Create resources that are directly relevant to an assignment
- Answer learner questions preventatively
- Integrate resources seamlessly into students’ workflow
- Brevity and succinctness go a long way (e.g., 2 minute videos)
- Make learners more efficient
- Consider accessibility and Universal Design for Learning in the design of resources
- Simplify complex and unfamiliar information literacy skills

Resources


Want More Information?

Check out our online handout at http://tinyurl.com/pointofneedresources

OR

Follow the QR code!