



CASE STUDY

Americo Leverages Synapse to Onboard 88 New Employees 100% Virtually by Revamping Course Development

When Maddy Poletis joined Americo as a Talent Development Specialist in 2019, her new responsibilities included the coordination of training and development.

At that time, Americo, an insurance company based in Kansas City, was still using manual processes and disparate technology tools to create both instructor-led training sessions and PDF job aids. Though the company had a learning management system in place, they had only dabbled in e-learning and the single platform was not enough to deliver the necessary mission-critical training components in such a way that everyone would benefit.



400
Employees

2
L&D Team

Insurance
Industry



Maddy Poletis

Talent Development
Specialist
Americo

Company Summary

Based in Kansas City, Missouri, Americo is one of the largest privately held independent insurance companies in the United States, servicing independent agents and policyholders with a complete portfolio of competitive life insurance, Medicare Supplement insurance, and annuity products.

So Maddy saw room for improvement, both in the way training was created and delivered, especially when it came to employee onboarding.

Working with Synapse not only helped Maddy deliver a new onboarding solution, but also provided a way for this small talent development team to work more effectively with the rest of the business to create and deliver training.

THE CHALLENGE

As part of a two-person talent development function within the HR team, Maddy works with a large number of subject matter experts (SMEs) and stakeholders across the organization to develop training materials. The stakeholders include:

- Training specialists that sit within different departments to deliver training
- Employees who also contribute to knowledge sharing and training content development
- The legal department who must review and approve certain training

Previously, Maddy and her stakeholders were using a complex and time consuming combination of email and documents to create and approve the training which was then usually deployed in Powerpoint form for instructor-led training or to the LMS.

“Within life insurance, there's a lot of compliance-based elements that we have to work with for all of our associates, but specifically our new hires. Our process wouldn't be as good or even as compliant without Synapse.”

With compliance and onboarding training that requires frequent updating and SMEs and stakeholders that are busy with their day-to-day responsibilities, the process was suboptimal and Maddy saw a huge opportunity to create efficiencies and enhance the onboarding experience for new hires.



“A lot of what we had done in the past was classroom style learning. But as that changed, even before the pandemic, we realized there was this opportunity to bring e-learning content into our organization.”

THE SOLUTION

Having recently been through the onboarding process at Americo herself, Maddy immediately saw an opportunity to improve the experience for new hires. Previously, the onboarding process mainly consisted of Powerpoints and a short quiz within the LMS.

Maddy began looking around for tools that would help her innovate the creation and delivery of training and soon discovered Synapse. Initially, she took on Synapse for its training intake capabilities. But soon, she turned her attention to the Design functionality as a way to consolidate how training was created and improve the learner experience.

"I think if I didn't have the Design feature over the last year, we would still be stuck in the past, using PowerPoints in our LMS as a way to train our associates, which is just not conducive to that positive user experience."

Maddy quickly started introducing SMEs to the new platform. The collaborative features and rapid authoring functionality made it quicker and easier to create more engaging experiences for learners. Trainers can add knowledge checks and assessments, add videos and pictures, and create audio narration right within Synapse.

"It's more effective than their PowerPoints, their Word docs, anything that they're currently using. And especially when the pandemic hit, they couldn't sit together in a side-by-side environment anymore and the resources that they were sharing were no longer effective. So I've been able to show them what it looks like from the user experience and how this could be totally improved by Synapse."

One key area of the new hire experience that will be overhauled as a result of implementing Synapse is payroll onboarding. A single administrator is busy managing payroll for the entire company, along with a sister company with 27 branches across the country. It's an overwhelming role that leaves little free time for developing new training, especially under the previous training creation process at Americo. Using Synapse to build payroll onboarding will create efficiencies for payroll, talent development, and new hires.

Heavy Duty Onboarding & New Hire Training

Working in life insurance means adhering to strict compliance regulations and data protection laws. New hires have to get to grips with a lot of new information, processes, and systems. For example, new employees on the policyholder services team at Americo require 4-6 weeks of onboarding training before they are equipped to handle live calls from customers.

This intensive onboarding training has been revolutionized. Now, the trainer within that department can work with Maddy quickly and easily to develop courses in Synapse and deploy them straight to the LMS.

"I work with a lot of SMEs, but specifically for those department trainers, Synapse is next level. It's so much easier to navigate and have everything live in one spot. That's a big deal for our trainers who want to do training differently."

Through Synapse, Maddy and her stakeholders have moved away from painstakingly creating and updating Powerpoint presentations and Word documents to a new way of developing training. Plus, the approval process is much more efficient too as the legal team can easily be invited into Synapse to review and approve frequently required changes to onboarding and compliance training.

THE RESULTS

Since introducing Synapse to Americo, Maddy has received positive feedback from trainers, SMEs, and new hires alike.

New Hire Surveys

Once onboarding is completed, Americo solicits feedback from new hires via surveys delivered at three different intervals: two weeks, four weeks, and six months after the new hire starts. Pretty soon, Maddy started to see the impact of Synapse reflected in those new hire surveys.

“It’s been overwhelmingly positive to see feedback from new hires saying they strongly agreed they had a great onboarding experience and that training was effective.”

Feedback from SMEs

Maddy works with approximately 20 department trainers to create training. From scrolling through multiple Powerpoints to contributing exactly where they need to in Synapse, the new process has had a hugely positive impact on the roles of SMEs and business partners in the training development process.

Now, SMEs and other stakeholders can make changes and updates with the click of a button from one centralized blueprint.



“That’s a huge selling point for our SMEs to see that it really is that easy, especially when we were working with Powerpoints and Words docs and PDFs previously.”

88

associates hired in 2020

42

new associates experienced the
updated onboarding process

360

associates completed
compliance training created
through Synapse

“New hires don't necessarily know that they want something better. They're just excited to be with the company. But if I can go from good to outstanding, I'm always going to do that.”

Double the capacity of your L&D team

Synapse software streamlines training intake, project planning, and content design processes to make training teams more digital, agile, and efficient.

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