

## Good e-learning is like buying confectionery from a supermarket (Getting more from your e-learning)

Think, for a moment, not of information security, financial crime prevention, risk or compliance, but of the supermarket where you shop!

As you pass the confectionery aisle you tell yourself, quite unexpectedly, that you fancy a treat! A treat that is not on your shopping list, if you have one, so you won't go too far down the aisle; just a bar of chocolate will do; just to provide much needed energy, or perhaps to give yourself a treat!



But as you browse, you realise that the bars of chocolate are not that exciting after all and your attention is drawn to what's alongside them! Something that looks great to share in front of the television! Before you know it, you find yourself venturing further down the aisle, your eyes scanning for something really indulgent. Wait a moment! What's that further along? Something you've never seen before? And further along still, there's something that looks even better. You imagine the expectation as you peel the wrapper from the chocolate; the taste as the smooth, rich, velvety chocolate slowly melts in your mouth! And before you know it, you have been drawn half way down the aisle! You have picked up a premium value item that you never intended to buy and it is several times pricier than the bar you originally set your eyes on!

The confectionery aisle is, to supermarkets, what information security, data protection and financial crime prevention is to learning and development and risk and compliance. It's the place most fear to tread! In fact, as many as two thirds of supermarket customers do not enter the confectionery aisle and a significant proportion consciously avoid it! Their reasons may be quite different from the reasons why employees fail to take an interest in information security and data protection, but evasion is, nevertheless, evasion! Just as the supermarkets have to find ways of drawing customers into the confectionery aisle, so too do we have to find ways of drawing employees into their privacy and financial crime prevention training so that it really changes their attitudes and behaviours and reduces risk.

How do supermarkets rise to the challenge? Often, the premium value (and most profitable) items, are carefully positioned towards the middle of the aisle. Product positioning and display tempts customers to venture further and further into the aisle. There may be some advertising. There will be some promotional activity; buy one get one free or extra loyalty points for buying this product or that!

At first there may seem to be a yawning gap between what supermarkets do to tempt us down the confectionery aisle and what we can do to draw employees into our regulatory training.

Yet there is much we can learn:

What supermarkets know:	How to bring e-learning to life:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• customers make connections between the products and their lives, (I need energy, or I deserve a treat)</li><li>• some products trigger customers' senses, (imagine the chocolate melting in your mouth)</li><li>• we are attracted deeper into the aisle by careful product positioning and layout</li><li>• customers consciously and unconsciously interact with the products on the shelves as they make their purchasing decisions</li><li>• we take advantage of promotional offers</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• help employees <b>make connections</b> between information security, data protection and financial crime prevention and their own lives</li><li>• link training to <b>personal</b> experience and the emotional effects of loss of privacy / financial crime for victims</li><li>• <b>draw people into the training</b> using stories and scenarios to which they can relate, making it easy to navigate, and by capturing their imaginations as each segment of the training builds to foster greater understanding</li><li>• <b>make e-learning interactive</b> so that employees can actively participate in their learning and make decisions, rather than read through dozens of screens of text</li><li>• have the training provide something of value to employees in their <b>private lives</b> as well as in their work environment</li></ul>

So how, in practice, might this apply to e-learning?

**Make connections:** The strong link between privacy and financial crime hardly needs to be stressed to experts in information security, data protection and fraud prevention; that failure to protect the first significantly increases the risk of falling victim to the second. Often, when training is designed into stand-alone 'subject-areas', the links between privacy and financial crime are fractured; the 'action' (protecting personal information), becomes divorced from the consequences (falling victim to financial crime). The 'why I should do this' loses its meaning for many employees.

Making the links between privacy and financial crime explicit to employees significantly increases the chances of changing their attitudes and behaviours, so reducing risk.

**Link training to personal experience:** When we talk of information security and data protection, we tend to talk of data, data principles, data sets, data sticks, CDs, secure emails, schedules, spreadsheets, and papers. We unwittingly use language that is abstract, impersonal and mechanistic, so de-humanising what is essentially about people. Using language that focuses on people helps bring training to life.

When we tell employees to shred letters that contain personal information, to operate a clear desk policy, to password protect their computer screens; when we tell them not to use public Wi-Fi when using their corporate computers, and not to respond to phishing scams, they rarely make the connection between the virtual or physical documents we wish them to preserve securely, and the fact that these represent, to varying degrees, fragments of peoples' identities, or that these fragments have value.

Emphasising the personal and the emotional over and above the corporate and the intellectual helps employees appreciate the value of personal information and the effects its loss or unauthorised disclosure has on those whose privacy is compromised. Employees typically come to think more deeply about the consequences of their existing behaviours.

**Draw people in using stories and scenarios and making it easy to navigate:** Stories allow us to communicate, without preaching or lecturing, what people should and should not do in their work and personal lives to protect personal information and to minimise risk of financial crime. They encourage employees to think for themselves. The beauty of stories is that they can be told using so many different platforms.



They can be told very effectively in the 'classroom' by a skilled facilitator. Video-clips of scenarios portraying 'real' people as they go about their business, at work and at home can be re-played on computer, or on evolving mobile devices such as Smartphones, iPods and iPads. Where video technology is not available, podcasts can just as effectively capture the imagination of employees. After all, radio is a well-established medium for drama! And if neither video nor sound technology is available via your e-learning platform, stories can be told simply, using text and images.

But the power of stories can easily be lost. Recent research shows that when e-learning is difficult to navigate, it is less likely to be effective... after all, if you wander through a cluttered supermarket aisle, you will never fill your shopping trolley to the same extent as if the aisle was clear and easy to navigate!

**Make it interactive:** Whether in the 'classroom' or through e-learning platforms, the more people must actively participate in their training, the more they must think about how they would act in real life situations, and the more they must make decisions, the greater is the likelihood they will transfer their learning into their ordinary, day to day, personal and work environment, thereby minimising risk to customers, colleagues and the business reputation.



**Provide something of value to employees in their private lives:** When employees complete training that has added value to their personal lives as well as their work, they go away satisfied; anecdotal evidence also suggests that their respect for their employer is increased because something of personal as well as of corporate value has been provided. For the firm, there is the added benefit that their employees' attitudes and behaviours really have changed and that those changes are more likely to be deep-seated and sustained.