

ABOUT SANDLER

Sandler Training is the largest sales, leadership and customer service training development company in the world. For more than 40 years, Sandler has taught its distinctive, non-traditional selling systems and highly effective sales training methodology—empowering sales professionals in small and mid-sized companies as well as Fortune 500 organizations worldwide.

Sandler Online delivers online courses and virtual training to tens of thousands of international clients from its learning platform. Sandler Training is made up of a robust catalogue of online training, physical learning resources and instructor-led training that is available at over 250 local training centers.



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MIKE MONTAGUE
Vice President of Online Learning & Development, Sandler Systems, Inc.

THE CHALLENGE

Sandler had been using a proprietary LMS and was very disappointed with the complexity of the solution. Students were bogged down by too many clicks and too many compliance-driven permissions to easily access the content. Clients struggled with adoption, trainers found the platform cumbersome to use and the company's sales had flattened over the past three years. The situation fostered a vicious circle. Since growth had stalled, there were not enough funds to invest in platform upgrades or new content. The system was so non-user friendly that the required participation from clients and trainers dwindled. “Instead of being the innovative solution we envisioned, the Sandler Online platform became a frustrating side note,” said Mike Montague, Vice President of Online Learning & Development for Sandler Systems, Inc.

Before Lambda Solutions, many of the user management and course enrollment tasks had to be done manually, requiring Sandler head office employees to spend many tedious hours administering the site. Sandler's need was to solve this challenge by integrating with an eCommerce and user portal (Drupal) to empower trainers and their end users to use self-service. Sandler's previous LMS was locked down, requiring many hurdles to be jumped through before any changes could be made.

In order to remain competitive and free its learning programs, Sandler was faced with the daunting, but necessary, realization that it had to migrate its present LMS to an open-source solution. “Since we had an existing user base of around 8,000 users, it was a must that the new system be in good working order from day one,” stated Montague.

An additional big challenge the training company had was with reporting. “Because our old LMS was so compliance driven, the reporting output was pretty good but the amount of clicks trainers, managers and administrators had to go through to create reports was frankly, ridiculous. It was such a loss of productivity.”

275+
FRANCHISES

300
CLASSROOMS

37,000
STUDENTS WORLDWIDE



THE SOLUTION

The Sandler team did an exhaustive search of all LMS offerings over the course of a year and hired an outside consultant to help evaluate the options and features. Having an open-source LMS solution was their primary objective, however, they also needed the solution to be able to deliver engaging courses on a large scale, be mobile friendly and have advanced analytics.

Sandler chose to work with Lambda Solutions for its top-rated support services and extensive knowledge of the Totara Learn open source platform. This coupled with Lambda's world class hosting on Amazon Web Services with a 99.9% uptime guarantee, the Zoola Analytics built-in reporting capabilities (both very important) and the team's development expertise sealed the deal.

The implementation included migration from the proprietary LMS to Totara Learn and a build of a Drupal site to facilitate the storefront and user management. With the complexity of the user hierarchy, the Drupal site required custom integration to Totara Learn to ensure the users entering the LMS were assigned to the right permissions that controlled which level of access they could have. "The Lambda Solutions development team built us a custom web service plugin that allows communication between Totara Learn and our separately hosted Drupal website. They also built a number of custom reports using Zoola Analytics that were required for our business model," the VP stated.

To ensure all the moving pieces came together as requested, the Lambda team also had an extensive onboarding program that included key members from Customer Experience, Learning & Development, System Operations and Product.

With the new solution in place and with the support of the Lambda Solutions team, Sandler rebuilt their outdated SCORM and compliance-driven courses into modern, interactive courses with micro-learning lessons that learners could start and stop at any time.



“ We definitely made the right decision going with the Totara Learn/Zoola Analytics solution. With Lambda Solutions, we have been able to reduce our overall costs, increase top-line revenue and deliver a superior online training experience—all at the same time. That is a very tough thing to do and we were able to accomplish all three, immediately from launch. ”

MIKE MONTAGUE

Vice President of Online Learning & Development, Sandler Systems, Inc.



THE RESULTS

Complete Ease of Use

Now that the LMS is compatible with all devices and operating systems, user engagement has soared. The team at Sandler was impressed, “We have over 300 classrooms and 30,000 students to monitor in 17 languages, so ease of use was a huge issue. Now, staff can more easily assign courses and monitor participation. Now it’s easy to gain access and clients can login and start learning within two or three clicks to any resource.” The Totara Learn platform removed the technology barrier to allow the LMS to disappear and for the content and learning to take the lead.

Smooth Setup & Launch

Considering the complexity of the migration, Sandler deemed the original setup and launch to be successful. Said Montague, “While we still had enhancements that we wanted to make, the original launch was quite smooth. With thousands of users on the old system it was important to not miss a beat, even for one day, during the transition. While we did experience some small growing pains, we did not lose any of our existing accounts in the transition. In fact, we grew our user base by about 3,500 users each month during the initial launch.”

Increased Revenue & Adoption

Sandler saw impressive results in the first year of implementation—online learning revenues increased dramatically, and adoption and engagement were both up by almost 200%. “Even more importantly, staff and student satisfaction and confidence in Sandler Online are skyrocketing,” said Montague. “Both our staff and clients had given up on trying to use our old platform, and now they are excited to be involved in the online learning space again. That’s a welcome transformation.” Sandler was able to raise the prices of its products due to the enhanced value, and rebuild, relaunch and re-engage clients with materials and programs that had not been updated in years. “Our home office, global accounts division, training network and clients have all seen a renewed enthusiasm in our services.”

The benefits keep adding up for Sandler. “Time spent learning, active users, logins per month, activities complete and new registrations per month are all up over 50% from our previous levels.”

Superior Support

Sandler tested the Lambda support team in every way possible. “We’ve seen quick turnarounds on small tickets and building custom reports, and even had them research additional plug-ins and new functionality. They have been great about getting back to us on all of those requests and we have found a real rhythm in resolving any issues and making the required upgrades.”

“The Lambda Solutions/Zoola Analytics team has extensive knowledge of the Totara system and I believe they are one of the only providers who could have handled a massive user base like ours, as well as providing the custom programming that we require for our global network.”

The Future Looks Bright

“As we enter our second year, we expect our overall user base to double again. Plus, we expect engagement and activity levels to continue to increase. Lambda Solutions has already upgraded our platform, and continues to build more customized reports to fit our needs.” With 22 UK locations and operating in a total of 17 countries, Lambda is preparing to move Sandler to Totara 11 which has GDPR compliance built-in and are also building client-facing GDPR assets to prepare them for the switch.



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ABOUT LAMBDA SOLUTIONS

As an LMS solutions provider, Lambda Solutions manages, hosts and supports some of the world’s largest Learning Management Systems, helping to deliver online learning and training for over one million users. We’re different because we’re data-driven - we built Zoola Analytics to extend and enhance the reporting capabilities Moodle and Totara LMS. With access to all learning data, you can drag-and-drop to create reports on any aspect of learner and course activity - in minutes. Lambda Solutions also provides LMS training and certification, set-up/configuration, data migration and integration, and development services.

Contact Our Team

We want to talk to you if you’re looking for robust reporting capabilities for your Moodle or Totara LMS. Zoola Analytics provides secure access to all of your LMS data and empowers users to quickly and easily create actionable reports and customizable dashboards. Gain real insights from your learning data in minutes, instead of days and have the latest information at your fingertips. Zoola is backed by Lambda Solutions’ decades of expertise in the Learning Management space.

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