



EDUCATION AND CULTURE

LEONARDO DA VINCI

Second phase:2000-2006

Project: «Title»

(www.nettskolen.com/in_english/megatrends)

ÉLOGOS

Facts about the institution

Name of institution	ÉLOGOS
URL of institution	www.elogos.es
Country	Spain
Levels in the education system	Professional, vocational, lifelong training and learning

Introduction

ÉLOGOS is the result of the fusion between FYCSA and the DOXA-group. It can look on over 15 years of presence in the field of consultancy and training in institutions and companies aimed at managers, engineers, postgraduates etc.

FYCSA as a content provider offering tailored online courses and DOXA-group as a solution provider dealing with training outsourcing and the development of e learning courses and Spain's first e-learning portal "Educadoxa" merged into a company that has always been the state of the art and succeeded in keeping its position of a leading company in Spain.

Contextual factors

The total population of Spain is 40 million. Spanish is the common language in all 17 autonomous regions. Three of these regions have an own language which has official status within the region.

Due to the characteristics of the business segment covered by ÉLOGOS it is of special interest to highlight the Spanish market regarding outsourced e-learning activities.

The following figures give a rough description:

Private companies: outsourced market 560 millions of € * 11% e-learning = 62 millions of €

Public administration: outsourced market 158 millions of € * 7 % e-learning = 11 millions of €

Social sector: outsourced market 500 millions of € * 12% e-learning= 60 millions of €

Other public administration programmes alongside social agents ("Forintel", a National support program for training in telecommunication technologies within the ESF (European Social Fund): = 10 millions of €.

TOTAL: 143 millions of € en 2006

ÉLOGOS covers about 20% of this market.

The results of the European e-user-Project¹ describe the diffusion of ICT in Spain unsatisfactory due to the low penetration of Internet in the households in comparison to the other EU members which could be related to the high prices of Internet connection.

¹ www.euser-eu.org



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Broadband diffusion, however, has been comparatively fast in the last three years, in particular in the more developed and urban parts of the country such as Catalonia and Madrid.

The same study reports considerably big disparities in access to and use of the Internet between sub-segments of the population e.g. genders, age groups, socio-economic groups etc.

The acceptance of e-learning within companies and the public sector can be considered relatively high so that the advantages of virtual teaching and training no longer have to be proved beforehand.

As indicated by Eurostat, in 2003 Spain maintained a high number of enterprises connected to the Internet (85%), the same as the average for the most technologically advanced, old member States.

The eLearning market is evolving rapidly: 95% of large companies in Spain have at least some eLearning strategy, and two thirds of them already implement a training scheme, even if it only involves traditional training delivery methods. However, it has been noted that the more companies become committed in training of their staff, the more they choose blended eLearning solutions.²

However the percentage of the total number of Spanish people aged 16 to 74 that do not use the computer or the Internet is slightly higher than the same figure for the UE-25.³

Neither the central government nor the regional administrations are carrying out a specific policy in order to promoting e-learning. The projects that are being undertaken are more generic and only have an indirect effect on the development of e-learning.

"Following the e-learning initiative launched by the European Union in 2000, the Spanish government has developed a set of policies and initiatives to promote eLearning. The main points of this policy are:

- providing all schools with the equipment and facilities for accessing ICT;
- developing Internet courses and training;
- setting up an observatory and laboratory concerned with the educational applications of ICT, thereby supporting innovation and development in such applications;
- strengthening cooperation between Latin America and Europe in the area of ICT in education.

Moreover, several plans and projects are dedicated to eLearning for vocational purposes. These are supported by the Spanish Government through the European Social Fund, and through FORCEM (Continuing Training Foundation). It is indicative of the situation that 30% of all training plans presented in 2002 were related to eLearning. Moreover, the Ministry of Industry Tourism and Commerce has created FORINTEL, a program to promote the use of ICTs in enterprises, which offers

² www.euser-eu.org

³ DEMUNTER, Christophe (2006): "How skilled are Europeans in using computers and the Internet?" [Online article]. In: *Statistics on focus. Industry, trade and services 17/2006*. (Data retrieved on 30/10/2006). URL: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-NP-06-017/EN/KS-NP-06-017-EN.PDF



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eLearning courses. Currently, the Spanish government has launched the Plan España.es for the period 2004-05. One of the action points of the Plan is the promotion of accessibility to training and digital content."⁴

Historical context

In 1990 the company was approached by the National Employment Office (INEM) in order to design, produce and manage the institutions distance training programme about The Management of Small and Medium Companies. ÉLOGOS established a personalized and flexible teaching and learning system for the required disciplines (finances, marketing, tax-laws etc.) of about 4000 participants over a period of two years.

In 1992, ÉLOGOS took part in the project "500 años después" ("500 years later") directed by the "Sociedad Estatal del Quinto Centenario" (State Society for the Fifth Century). It consisted in computer controlled multimedia stations that provided, on CD-I, information in different languages about five centuries of Ibero-American, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish history. This order was given to ÉLOGOS after having developed a prototype for an interactive videodisc (CD-I).

In the first half of the nineties ÉLOGOS carried out the project "LETRA", part of the ATENEA-program of the Ministry of Education. In this case, the advantages of the CD-Rom were widely exploited. Its educative content concentrated on Spanish and Latin-American literature of the 20th century and the information was offered in a hypermedia structure.

ÉLOGOS developed new multimedia systems for distance education aimed at computer engineers, computing service specialists and specialists in auto-edition (MILTINEM-Project, 1994).

The Distance Education Project for the "Federación Española de Hostelería" that reached over 5000 professionals of the Spanish Hotel business and the gastronomic sector. ÉLOGOS developed extensive multimedia based training material that covered different aspects of the sector's management (marketing, quality, accountancy, nutrition, equipments etc.). ÉLOGOS also delivered the correspondent tutoring and monitoring services.

ÉLOGOS has traditionally taken part in European R+D projects, particularly in projects that belonged to European programmes for the research and development of training technologies. Since the company participated as a coordinator in the Latin Project of the COMETT program, its consultants have cooperated in many more programmes like IMPACT, RACE, DELTA, EuroPACE, ADAPT, NOW, YOUTHSTART, LEONARDO and EUROTECNET.

Around the year 2000, ÉLOGOS started to concentrate on e-learning developing innovative solutions that lead to the strong growth the company is having this year (60% above the sales in 2005, a trend that is going to continue in 2007).

⁴ www.euser-eu.org



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E-Learning as an decisive element in the company's program has been developed gradually undertaking continuing investments in innovation that have grown year after year, while the demand became more mature.

ÉLOGOS avoided making strong investments in the first part of this decade when the market was still very incipient.

Technical issues

The company has solid experience in the use of technology. In addition, ALCATEL, one of the former owners of the company was simultaneously one of the main clients which made it necessary to have a large number of expert consultants in ICT at disposal. This has undoubtedly contributed to define the technological profile of the internal team of consultants.

In this sense it is day to day practice to use technology in projects and teams that deliver training and consultancy services to the clients.

The tools and applications developed by ÉLOGOS itself and the ones ordered from third parties have to fulfil certain requirements regarding usability, compliance with the market standards and easy handling.

Clients and students can access the company's courses and platforms using standard browsers. Also, the contents designed for clients follow the SCORM standard in order to be able to incorporate them into SCORM compliant platforms.

Due to the ability and competence of the company's team in the field of technology, the possible problems derived from processes of integration of contents and applications in different environments that might even be incompatible are usually solved efficiently and to full satisfaction of the clients.

The administrative systems have evolved, based on the company's own developments, focussing on the client's needs (access to administration, data-tracking, new functions...) on one hand, and covering the needs of improvement in the business processes, optimizing the activity chain on the other hand. The latter produced an improvement in the processes of student contact, enrolment and data capture, programming, monitoring processes and tutoring, reporting, notifying and evaluation of students' progress, quality control of the training process, emission of diplomas and certificates etc.

The current result is an efficient system that provides information and support to the administrative side of the training and allows guaranteeing the efficiency of the training cycle with an optimized use of resources.

Courses

The training fields covered by ÉLOGOS are:

- Soft Skills: Interpersonal communication and presentations, leadership, teamwork, personal efficiency and productivity ...
- Sales Skills: sales techniques and commercial negotiation, client services and winning over the client, commercial management and accounts management

...



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- Business Management Skills: Project management, marketing, finances, quality ...
- Information and Communication Technologies: Programming languages, software engineering, systems and webs, IP technologies and mobiles...
- Computer technology in the office: Operative systems, office programmes and e-mail.
- Languages: English, French, German, Italian and Spanish..

Although every single area has its specific weigh, the management skills, the commercial field and the languages tend to be especially important.

Regarding onlineability of subjects, ÉLOGOS chooses the most adequate tools and environments for teaching and learning for each context. Certainly there are subjects that are more difficult to handle in a totally virtual environment, whereas others can be taught especially well with ICT. ÉLOGOS works with a range of different scenarios that include blended learning, distance learning, distance learning based on materials delivered on CD-Rom and others. Courses provided by ÉLOGOS always have flexible start-up and progression.

The company uses synchronous and asynchronous communication in all its programmes. Communication takes place via e-mail and forums as well as through programmed events that are carried out in a chat-like environment.

Management, strategy and attitudes

The company leaders have clearly supported the idea of using technology in training processes. This has been vital for the success of the company's strategy.

According to the staff, there is a wide consensus regarding the growing importance of online education for the success of our company. Nevertheless, ÉLOGOS does not see technology as an objective in itself, but as a medium in order to achieve improvements in the learning processes, in the administration of these processes, in the teaching methods and in the final results.

Regarding the company's strategy it is considered that online training stands as an additional channel that provides important advantages regarding the problems an organisation might have to face. Therefore the consultant businesses that are able to integrate the necessary contents in an adequate way in order to offer the services the clients ask for will place itself in a privileged position.

ÉLOGOS obtained the ISO-2000 certification in 2001 regarding all of its internal processes and external services. This shows that quality policy is not only based on the permanent evaluation of the courses run by ÉLOGOS, but also on the guaranteed quality of the company's processes

Effectiveness in the administrative routines can be described as very high.

The company's experience in the development of online contents and in the development and the authorization of online plans allows it to estimate in a relatively precise way the probable workload of each of the contracted projects, so that the implication of the consultants involved can be planned adequately.



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The recent fusion between FYCSA and GRUPO DOXA is one of the most visible consequences of collaboration between institutions. In addition ÉLOGOS cooperates with other institutions of the field through the "Circulo de Consultoras" and with other educational institutions like the BRITISH COUNCIL.

Experience and curriculum facilitates the company's credibility with the public administration, which in many cases has shown its confidence by asking for services (AENA [public company that manages the country's airports] , CORREOS [postal service], Comunidad de Madrid, local entities and councils all over Spain).

Key factors for the ability of handling large numbers of students are very powerful management skills and competencies and the possibilities offered by the use of technology for automatic and optimized business processes.

Economy

The cost effectiveness in ÉLOGOS' online education is very high. The administrative systems are highly optimized which allow to use important economies of scale due to the big investments undertaken during the last years. As a consequence, ÉLOGOS obtains high effectiveness thanks to controlled costs.

The possibilities of predict income depends on the ability of each organisation to generate contracts and capture students (demand). And it depends on many other factors, some of which are not controlled by the organisation itself (economic situation, rules and regulations...).

ÉLOGOS is a private company and does not have any other sources of income apart from its clients. It is, therefore, subject to the pressure of the competitors on the market, which is enormous and forces to constant innovations and the adjustment of the offered solutions according to the evolutions of the market. In those activities that are easy to externalize, that have a low added value and that have very little or none impact on the client, policies of flexible employment are partly applied.