

## Get in the Game

by Betsy Balgooyen Keller, Senior Project Manager

### With all the time and resources spent developing content for meetings and training, what can you do to improve engagement and retention?

When preparing a presentation it is important to remember there are three types of learners – visual, auditoral and experiential. Incorporating games and a little friendly competition is a great way to engage your audience on multiple levels and help them retain more information.

In a comparative study of students across business, economic and management courses conducted at an East Coast university, students whose course work included games had significantly higher grades than those whose course work did not. (Blunt, 2009) This study found adding a game related to the course of study engaged the students. Games not only kept students involved in the course, but impacted their final marks. In one course, for example, those students using the games all passed with at least a C or better, and the majority scored As.

Quicksilver has used games in both meetings and training. Audiences have responded enthusiastically to the departure from traditional presentation formats. And from a training perspective, we have achieved measurable improvements in safety over traditional training methods.

For BDO's Alliance Conference, we utilized a "Family-Feud"esque game show with a host and teams of audience members, giving attendees peer recognition without having to prepare a formal presentation. Information about the value of the Alliance program and data from BDO's

annual benchmarking survey were presented by asking the teams to find the "top answers on the board." The teams were selected on a regional basis and the audience was seated by regions, providing natural cheering sections. While some questions were fun, others were serious and generated conversation not just in the ballroom, but throughout the conference.



BDO Alliance Meeting at the Wynn Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada. Site of a lively and audience-engaging Family Feud game.

The challenge brought to Quicksilver by Zurich North America Commercial Insurance was to share updated information from all the areas of the business in an engaging way during a very limited time period. Quicksilver helped Zurich team members create fourteen breakout sessions, many of which employed easily recognizable game formats like Concentration, Survivor and Texas Hold'em as well as invented formats around speed shopping and golf.

One presentation focused on Operational Transformation across Zurich and their new eFile BPM process. Matching old and new approaches, for example, file folders verses computer files, was the cue for one of the three presenters to explain where Zurich was in the transformation process. As the concentration items were

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matched, more and more of a Rebus puzzle (a word puzzle that uses pictures to represent words or parts of word) revealed itself. The solution of the Rebus puzzle was “Operational Transformation”—the focus of the presentation.

Quicksilver also created an interactive training program, The Road to Safety for RSC Equipment Rental centered on workplace safety. It is a self-paced multi-media presentation using a host, video, interactive games and quizzes to coach individuals through real life situations faced at a typical RSC facility. “The Road to Safety has helped us advance our safety goals, and continue building our safety culture,” said Ken Colonna, RSC’s Director of Safety. “It forces every person in the company to virtually identify the common and not so common safety risks, and just as important, to be very clear about how they can help prevent them.” The program has a higher level of engagement compared to traditional training and RSC has found it is contributing to an impressive improvement in their industrial safety record. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) incident rate dropped 33% in 2008 over 2007. As of August 2009, RSC’s OSHA rate stood at 2.3, compared to a 5.8 rating at the start of its previous safety campaign in 2006.

**“Games can transform learning into a more-engaging and dynamic process, enhancing people’s work performance and driving business results.”**

—Gartner, 2006

The next time your company is planning an important presentation, meeting or training, you might want to consider how to get your audience “in the game”. Everyone will walk away a winner.

### References:

Blunt, R. (2009, December 1). Do serious games work? Results from three studies. [Online.] Available: <http://elearnmag.org/subpage.cfm?section=research&article=9-1>

Gartner, March 2006



Playing to win meeting attendees attempted to solve this eFile Concentration puzzle by matching old and new processes.



RSC is finding success through a self-paced hosted multi-media presentation.

*Betsy Balgooyen Keller has prepared and presented training classes for adults learning software and website management software over the last decade and tries to incorporate games and fun competition whenever possible. She is a senior project manager at Quicksilver working mainly with Internet based communication projects, but uses her experience in meeting and conference programming creation to help in other communication projects as well.*

*Quicksilver has been designing interactive websites since 2000 for clients ranging from prestige cruise lines to medical diagnostic companies to associations with business and medical foci. [Click on this link](#) to learn how our end-to-end Internet solutions integrate your strategy with our design and technology capabilities to make your Web presence a highly productive and valuable tool for communications and marketing or [contact our sales team](#) for more information.*