CREATING AN INTERACTIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR SOFTWARE SIMULATION WITH CAPTIVATE

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Summary:
In Fall 2006, the Faculty and Curriculum Support (FACS) Center at GUMC developed interactive simulations for software training. This presentation will demonstrate how the FACS staff easily created the software simulations without any programming knowledge or multimedia skills, and how interactive simulations improved the workshop participants' learning experience. This skill and method will help faculty and staff that plan to create software simulations and user support tutorials.

Project:
FACS developed online tutorials with software demonstrations as supplements for technology enhancement workshops. The tutorials allowed the learner to watch pre-recorded on-screen actions including mouse and keyboard activities with captions. The software demonstrations were effective yet passive. The learner observed with no questions, no interaction. FACS realized this wasn't always the best way to learn how to use a software application. To improve the learning experience, FACS created tutorials with software simulations that allowed the learner to interact with the content presented and become engaged in the process. With Adobe Captivate, a screen-recording program, FACS recorded on-screen actions in the interactive simulation mode. The simulation asked the learner to complete a series of keystrokes or mouse-clicks to accomplish a specific task. To facilitate engaged learning and user interactivity, interactive elements such as click boxes, buttons, text entry fields, rollovers, and instructional feed back were added to the simulation. In addition, FACS added interactive questions to the simulation so that the learner could know whether they had mastered a body of information. FACS created the simulations in Flash format and published them online. FACS will implement the tutorials for the technology workshop participants and conduct a survey to see how the interactive elements in the simulations affect their software learning.

Benefits to the participant:
Participants will benefit from demonstration of skills to create interactive simulations for software training without any programming knowledge or multimedia skills. This workshop may be of particular interest to educators, instructional designers, and librarians developing user support tutorials for class teaching, lab software training, technology enhancement workshop, course management system training, library e-resource training, etc.

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