

MIAP: WEB SERVICE EFFICIENCIES

Case Study

Using the Managing Information Across Partners (MIAP) Learner Registration Service web services will reduce bureaucracy and lead to improvements in service, effectiveness and efficiency for Ufi.

Web services

Web services are critical to the success of MIAP, to deliver the benefits of efficient data transactions through a seamless interface with the Learner Registration Service, for the purposes of providing an efficient and effective business to business function.



Ufi

In ten years learndirect has become the largest e-learning network of its kind in the world, and has individualised the delivery of learning to a mass audience through a unique combination of flexibility, accessibility and support.

The creation of Ufi and the two strands of the learndirect service – learndirect Skills and Qualifications and learndirect Business - means the UK is now leading the world in online learning for individuals and the country's workforce. Through learndirect, since 2000, more than two and a half million learners have gained new skills, new confidence and new opportunities with learndirect.


Approach

Ufi engaged with the MIAP Service Team in February 2008 to pursue the development of web services.

Ufi's approach has three phases that build incrementally. Phase one, delivered in August 2008, allows the automatic extraction of learner information from their Learner Management System (LMS) and submission of their details to the MIAP system so they can receive a Unique Learner Number (ULN). Phase two and three will take Ufi towards a fully interactive model that will allow them to assign a ULN as part of the enrolment process. These are planned for October 2008 and July 2009.

The costs encountered to deliver the solution were minimal to moderate. However, Ufi will be enhancing their Learning Environment to give greater functionality to its users. The costs for this are yet to be gathered, it is expected to be moderate to significant.

In terms of resource costs, Ufi have worked very closely with the MIAP Team and as a result have kept their own resources to a minimum.



Deciding which web services to develop

A key requirement of the MIAP project was to ensure minimum impact to the Ufi Network. Accordingly, it was decided to implement a design that could easily be enhanced to provide a real-time process in the future. The initial release will process new learner registrations in batch overnight. Subsequent releases will make use of real-time web service calls throughout the day.

Ufi will be registering approximately 550 learners on a daily basis using the following LRS web services:

- FindLearnerByDemographics
- RegisterSingleLearner

Key steps to delivering web services successfully

- Raising ULN awareness across Ufi
- Updating the Learner Agreement and the Privacy Policy & Data Protection Notice to inform learners of the integration with MIAP
- Developing a solution to allow for cross year learners to see and acknowledge a revised Privacy Policy
- Delivering a solution with minimal impact on the business
- Transitioning the web service into business as usual

Required business change

Business processes needed to be modified for managing errors received when trying to match/create/amend a ULN via the web service.

A revised Privacy Policy was developed to inform learners of MIAP and seek their agreement to share their learner achievements.

Initial problems centred around out of date documentation on the MIAP portal. This resulted in unexpected interactions and results when testing. These were resolved with the MIAP helpdesk.

Benefits

- Ability to assign a ULN as part of the enrolment process
- Service improvement to learners
- Improved effectiveness and efficiency of Ufi services

Lessons Learned

If Ufi were to do it all again, they would have met with the MIAP Service Team earlier in the process as they were considered a great help to Ufi during the rollout.



Testimonial

" Integration of Ufi core service platform, the Learner Support Environment, with the MIAP LRS is an important element that underpins Ufi's technical and business strategy for the foreseeable future. The prize for the sector for getting this right is a massive reduction in bureaucracy and associated improvements in service, effectiveness and efficiency. Working closely with the MIAP team has enabled us to deliver the first stage in this strategic initiative while at the same time as minimising the cost and impact on our business."

Barry Haynes, Ufi, Chief Technical Officer

If you are interested in participating in the development of a case study, to share your experiences of using the MIAP services and the arising benefits, please contact, **Barbara Clark**, MIAP Benefits Manager by email at barbara.clark@miap.gov.uk