

## Using a digital learning platform – from a Training Providers point of view

Since the start in 2005, New Zealand training provider The Learning Wave Ltd, has been working with their clients to inspire and engage their employees and bring about a long-term culture change. Peter Allen, director, is sharing some key take aways and experiences from using the Promote® platform on a daily basis and the difference it has made during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Since 2019 The Learning Wave has been using Promote as a key platform for driving behavioural change and results to their clients. It has help them create the concept of "The Virtual Wave" and made them the forefront training provider in New Zealand. Peter Allen, director at The Learning Wave, tells us about the overcoming challenges, convincing clients to go more digital and the plans for the future of their learning business with Promote.

### From a Training Provider perspective, what challenges are Promote allowing you to overcome?

Promote has helped us overcome three challenges, that I am sure we are not alone in facing. Overcoming these has made a big impact on our business:

#### 1- How do we find a digital learning solution that is based on sound adult learning principles?

Promote gives us a great framework and tool to use with the specific High Performance Learning Journey methodology (HPLJ). They work in unison to help the learning be as clear, functional and easy to use as possible.

#### 2- Great adult learning occurs when learners, their managers' and the learning provider all have active involvement in the learning and there is clear visibility of learning.

Promote easily links the learners, their managers and us as learning provider/coach together and allows for good visibility over the learning. It's an easy tool that encourages conversations and allows for demonstrations of knowledge.

#### 3- In a 'time-poor' and 'Covid ravaged' business environment, how do we deliver great adult learning solutions?

Promote is easily accessible anywhere, anytime and that gives great amounts of flexibility for our facilitators, the learners and the coaches.

## In what ways has the use of Promote changed your way of delivering training programs?

Promote has allowed us to change the way we design and deliver our learning solutions. It provides endless possibilities to our clients; relieves time, money, travel restrictions and has opened up different ways of learning (socially, more manager involvement, greater on-site practice and learning in the “now”) and across wider geographical areas. It's forced our hand, and our client's hand, in moving to learning 4.0 and embracing technology to deliver a greater range of learning experiences. For example, a client that would not have considered learning on Zoom or on Promote, now wants this as with Covid restrictions on groups, they have no other options. This has also opened up new business with companies that are geographically spread that previously wouldn't have felt comfortable with online learning. Their staff are now much more comfortable on platforms such as Zoom as a way of connecting, so the idea of engaging in learning online is a much smaller barrier.

## What advice would you give other Training Providers thinking about investing in a digital learning platform?

Using Promote has helped us as we see it as being designed to facilitate conversations. If you feed in good learning design, good conversations will be the result. The Promote platform has a shallow learning curve also, this means that learners don't need much time to get used to the tool and are soon able to get on with learning on it.

We have also learned a lot and some key take aways are:

- Upskilling internal staff quickly and thoroughly is important to ensure they are capable and confident on the tools. In our case we created an internal Promote program to do this learning ourselves and also used this to engage the wider business so we can feel what it's like to use the platform that we are offering to clients.
- We have embraced a 'go fast and break stuff' mentality to help innovate quickly so we can flex without expecting gold standard out the gate given the time pressure we find ourselves under. If we get the basics right, we can fine tune the rest later.
- It's a big mindset shift to consider Promote as a co-facilitator with you, that's helping you facilitate learning. Zoom is a tool, but Promote is a co-facilitator.
- It's important that those doing the learning design truly understand the capability and limitations of the platform so they architect the learning accordingly.
- There is also a lot of frustration, insecurity, fear, and anxiety around, due to Covid and it's health, career, and financial impact on our own staff and on our learners. Lowering expectations of our learners, facilitators, and internal staff as they juggle these changes and emotions helped us to not add frustration and pressure to people who may already have a lot of internal pressure.

- Keep it fun for the learners!

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*“Zoom is a tool, but Promote is a co-facilitator.”*

## What is the best thing having the blended/or fully virtual learning program supported by Promote?

When Covid hit, we saw an instantaneous need for flexibility in timing, location, and modality of learning delivery. We moved to using blended and fully virtual learning delivery to adapt quickly to this need. To do so, we completely re-jigged our team, our priorities, our service offerings and our headspace to handle all that change ...and quickly. Using Promote was a no-brainer – all the hard work designing a great platform had been done! What we had to do was upload our learning programs onto Promote and get them running.

## What are the reactions from your clients when using Promote?

Initially there was some scepticism – clients were already overloaded with Zoom or Teams meetings and many had experienced 'death by powerpoint' webinars that left them with concerns about using a digital learning platform. However, once we were able to provide them with short demonstrations of how Promote works and how it supports good adult learning, they became excited and embraced all the good that is built into the platform. Learners love it! One example is a learner who had started an Inspiring Leadership program last year that was delivered over 8 x 1 day face-to-face sessions at monthly intervals. He had to drop off the program as he couldn't meet the time commitments. This year, he joined the version we created on Promote and he was so impressed that we now have a tool to help him get the skills he needs and still do his job.



*"I was on ILP2 last year but the commitment of 8 days was too much and I had to pull out, so thanks for listening to us and designing learning and development that fits in our busy world."*

And so do their bosses! A CEO for one of our clients is supporting a team member as their coach on a program using Promote. She says:



*"I love the opportunity to be part of their learning. I think the program is really engaging our team and the social aspects of it are fantastic. It's an easy platform to learn how to use and I'm getting a lot of feedback from the learners that they really enjoy this new style of learning. And I know that if they're enjoying it, they're much more likely to put their new learning into action in our business."*

## What is the plan for the future of your training business and the platform?

We'll be looking for every opportunity to use Promote with our clients and to continue to build our own capability in designing and selling learning solutions using Promote. There is still a lot of old school thinking both internally and externally that limits the uptake of online learning delivery. This can lead to limiting the efficacy due to naivety about what digital products are capable of. So, we need to make sure we become thought leaders in this area and drive the case for change. We're also determined to ensure we create our own Learning Wave 'magic' in every program we create in Promote. We need to continue to build strong engagement with learners and their managers and make sure we keep it fun for all learners!



### Info

The Learning Wave

Country: New Zealand

Employees: 12 full time employees plus over 20 independent contractors

Revenue \$NZ 4+ million

Web: <https://www.thelearningwave.com/>



Peter Allen - Director