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Disguise Learn: A Best-in-Class Hybrid Learning Program Case Study

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ABSTRACT

This case study examines the development and implementation of "Disguise Learn", a hybrid learning program designed to elevate customer training experiences, enhance product adoption, and foster client success in the extended reality (xR) and virtual production (VP) realms. The study highlights the business needs that led to the creation of Disguise Learn, the strategic design of the program, its deployment, change management efforts, and the measurable benefits realised. The study aims to showcase best practices in creating a comprehensive and engaging hybrid learning environment that aligns with organisational objectives and industry demands.

KEYWORDS

hybrid learning, blended learning, brand design, case study, digital learning, workshop, learner engagement, knowledge gap

1   INTRODUCTION

1.1   Overview of Disguise Learn

Disguise Learn is a hybrid learning program developed by Disguise, a leading provider of creative and technical solutions for live events, broadcast, virtual production, and visual experiences. Launched to address the evolving needs of Disguise's sophisticated solutions and customer base, Disguise Learn combines online and in-person training to provide comprehensive, flexible, and accessible learning experiences.

1.2   Business conditions and needs

Prior to the inception of Disguise Learn, Disguise's training initiatives were limited to a few classroom courses and a modest online presence. Recognising the pivotal role of training in enhancing customer support and product adoption, Disguise

set out to revolutionise its approach to training. The driving force behind Disguise Learn was the critical need to elevate the training program to meet the demands of its sophisticated solutions and evolving industry landscape. Specifically, the goal was to provide comprehensive training that empowers clients to harness Disguise technology effectively, particularly in extended reality (xR) and virtual production (VP) realms. Disguise Learn was conceived as a strategic response to bridge these gaps and deliver unparalleled value to clients.

1.3   The need for blended learning in production

The field of real-time visual media requires a balance of technical knowledge and hands-on experience. Traditional learning methods often fall short in providing the flexibility and depth needed to master these complex concepts. Blended learning, which combines online training with traditional classroom methods, offers an approach that provides a more flexible and engaging learning experience, by providing information and theory where required and practical hands-on experience where most suited.

2   GOALS

2.1   Delivering a flexible, on-demand learning platform

Disguise Learn aimed to create a flexible, on-demand learning platform tailored to modern learners' needs. This included transitioning to a micro-learning format, accessible on-demand via a rebuilt learning platform, and incorporating a tiered content strategy focussed on learner engagement.

2.2   Enhancing practicality and accessibility of classroom training

The program sought to enhance the practicality and accessibility of classroom training courses by incorporating real-life case studies, expanding availability, and introducing a blended/hybrid learning approach.

2.3   Addressing knowledge gaps in the emerging virtual production industry

A core goal of Disguise Learn was to bridge the talent gap in the rapidly evolving virtual production industry. The programme aimed to upskill individuals from the earliest stages of their careers, supporting talent development and career progression across the media and entertainment sector. Through these efforts, Disguise Learn sought to address critical knowledge gaps, meet rising customer demand, and foster a community of skilled advocates to drive innovation and adoption of virtual production technologies.

2.4   Enhance learner engagement

The primary goal of Disguise Learn was to enhance learner engagement from the prior learning offering through a more learner focussed approach, including interactive and accessible content, making the learning process more enjoyable and effective.

By providing a comprehensive learning experience that combines theoretical knowledge with practical skills, Disguise Learn aimed to improve learning

outcomes and better prepare learners for careers across the various industries Disguise supports.

3 METHODOLOGY – PROGRAM DESIGN

Disguise Learn was meticulously crafted around three fundamental pillars: brand design, content design, and process design, each contributing to an immersive and impactful learning experience.

3.1 Brand design

The brand design initiative, spearheaded by the Disguise CX design team, yielded a distinct yet harmonious visual identity that seamlessly integrated with Disguise's corporate brand structure. This branding effort extended to the Learning Management System (LMS) and course materials, ensuring a consistent and engaging learner interface and experience.

The visual design of the platform played a crucial role in maintaining learner interest and engagement. A clean, intuitive interface with consistent branding and appealing visuals helped make the learning experience clear and accessible.

Effective signposting was implemented to guide learners through the platform and their courses. Clear navigation, progress indicators, and well-defined learning paths ensured that learners could easily track their progress and know what to expect next. Building a workflow and platform architecture that ensured there was never more than 2–3 clicks from login to launching a course, resulted in a simplified user journey and better content accessibility.
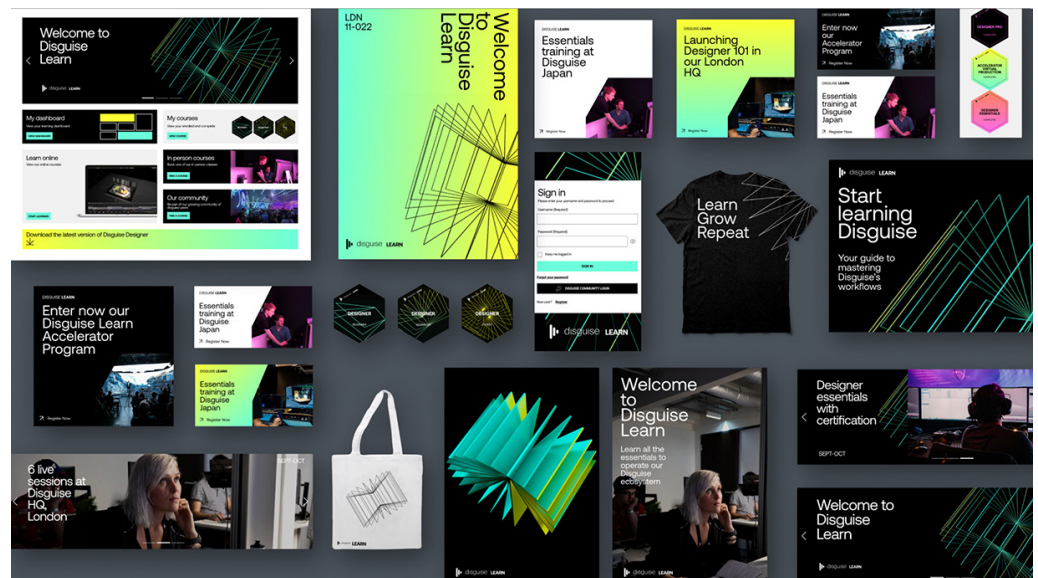

Fig. 1. Disguise Learn brand asset ecosystem

3.2 Content design

To cater to modern learners, Disguise rethought its content strategy, introducing a tiered ecosystem of hero, hub, and help content across various formats tailored

to key industry verticals. Hero content utilised compelling storytelling techniques to captivate learners, while hub content provided regular updates and thought leadership pieces to foster engagement. Help content addressed common user queries, ensuring a seamless learning experience.
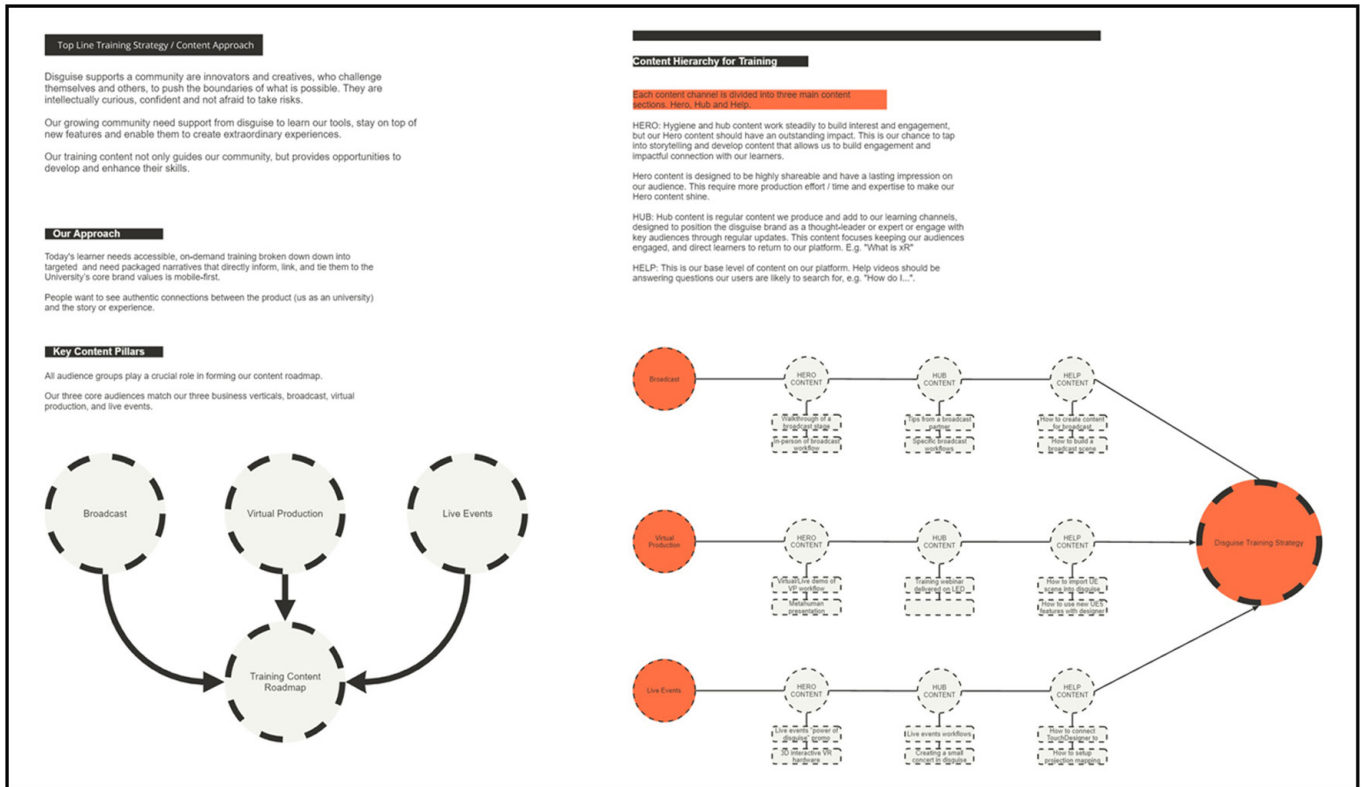

Fig. 2. Disguise Learn content strategy planning

3.3 Process design

Disguise revamped its production processes to accommodate new content formats and expanded training capabilities, establishing two additional roles in the department. This process enhanced content production cadence while maintaining quality control and meeting learner expectations.

4 IMPLEMENTATION AND DEPLOYMENT

Disguise Learn's development was driven by a learner-centred approach, emphasising personalisation and engagement. The design focused on creating an engaging learning experience through various strategies.

4.1 Learning management system (LMS)

Leveraging the Docebo platform, Disguise hosted its online training content and provided access to classroom workshops. Tailored learning plans guided users based on their expertise level and industry needs, balancing self-paced learning with blended interaction.
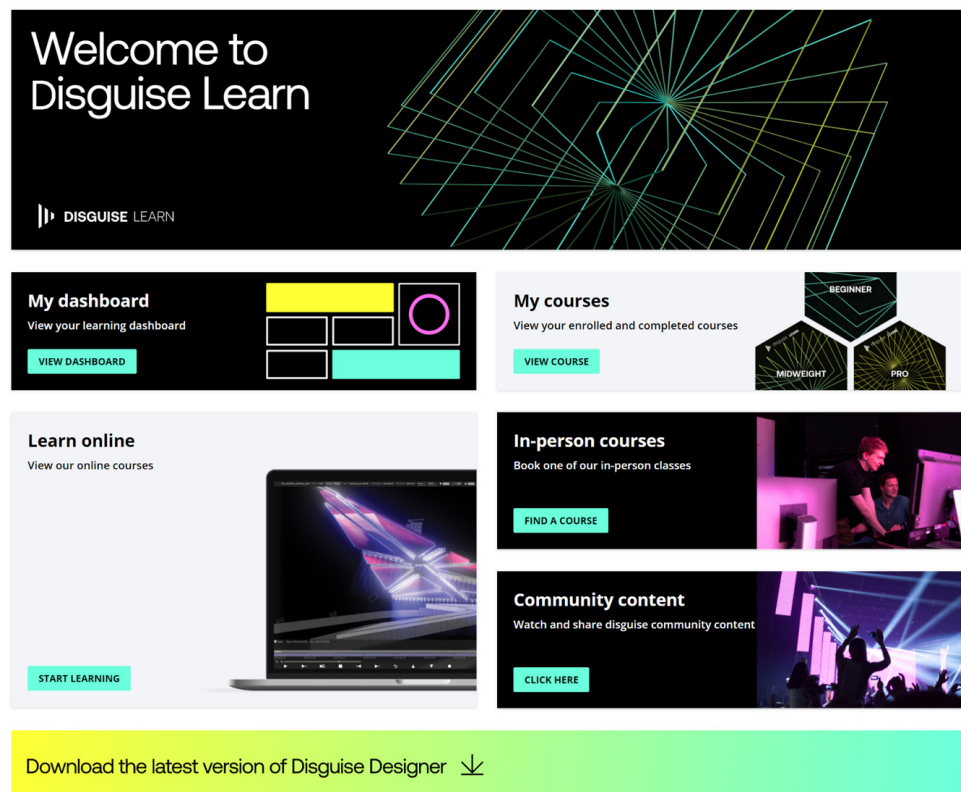
Fig. 3. LMS homepage

4.2 Event management

Further to the LMS, external platforms such as the Eventbrite platform were used for better visibility for workshop bookings and payments, also better enabling multi-region and multi-currency payments. Integration with the LMS using Docebo Connect ensured synchronisation between Eventbrite and LMS activities.

4.3 Communication strategies

Targeted email campaigns informed customers about the training program's availability and encouraged participation. These campaigns delivered information on course offerings, registration instructions, and updates on new content releases.

4.4 In-Person workshops

In addition to online training, Disguise offered in-person workshops at its offices and via partners, providing hands-on learning experiences and real-time interaction with trainers and experts.

Workshops were designed to be as practical as possible, to emphasise the strengths of classroom training, a comprehensive curriculum was developed, incorporating:

- **Core Modules:** Covering fundamental concepts and skills in the Disguise toolkit.
- **Advanced Topics:** Providing deeper insights into specialised industry areas.
- **Practical Exercises:** Allowing learners to apply their knowledge in real-world scenarios.

- **Accelerator:** To improve the identified virtual production skills gap a key element of Disguise Learn was an accelerator program. A short film was shot using virtual production technology, and that experience and content was used to produce an intensive 3 day on-set workshop blended with a range of online materials, designed to accelerate advocacy and adoption of VP technology.
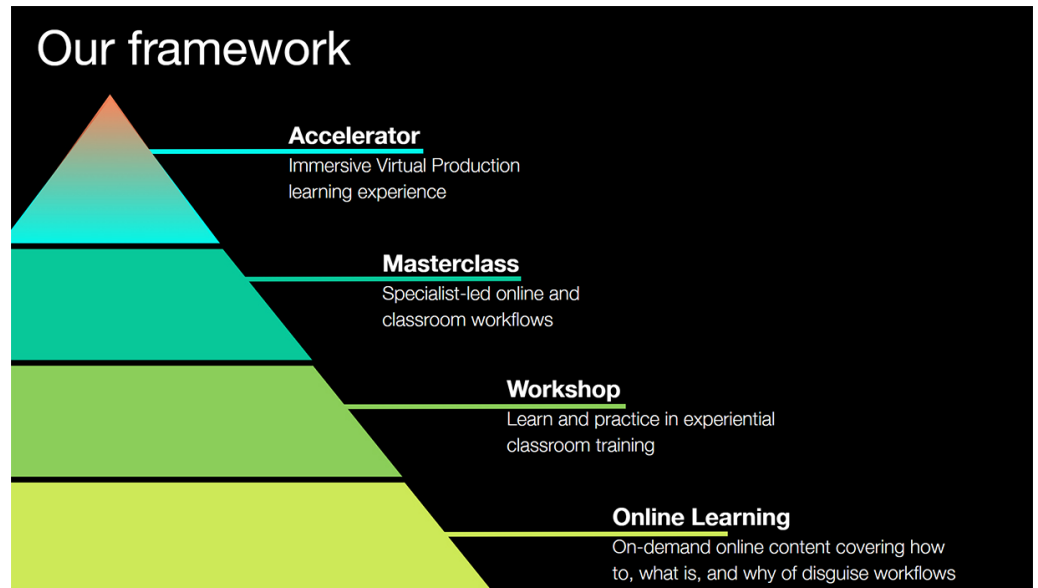

Fig. 4. Disguise Learn learning hierarchy

5   CHANGE MANAGEMENT EFFORTS

5.1   Technology integration

One of the initial challenges was integrating the Disguise Learn program with existing technological infrastructure seamlessly. The training team worked closely with the IT team to troubleshoot technical issues, implement necessary updates, and conduct thorough testing to ensure smooth functionality.

This ranged from integration into internal systems, to providing a seamless user experience by offering Single-Sign On (SSO) and integration with external systems (such as Salesforce, OpenBadgeFactory, and Eventbrite).

5.2   Content development

Developing engaging and informative training content for a diverse audience posed a significant challenge. Collaboration with subject matter experts and industry specialists was required to upskill the training team prior to implementing the content strategy. Regular feedback loops were established to iterate on content based on user input and evolving industry trends.

5.3   Cultural shift

The shift towards a hybrid/blended learning approach required a cultural shift with clients and staff, particularly those accustomed to traditional classroom-based teaching. Educating sales team members on the value of online training along with

blending classroom with prior and post online training helped facilitate the support for increased online activity.

5.4   Alignment of goals

Ensuring alignment between the goals of Disguise Learn and the broader organisational objectives was crucial for driving support and securing buy-in from key internal stakeholders. Regular meetings and feedback sessions with senior leadership ensured alignment with the company's strategic priorities.

5.5   Global reach and localisation

Ensuring the accessibility and relevance of training content across different regions and languages presented a challenge. A localisation strategy involving translation of online content into multiple languages and collaboration with local training partners for multi-lingual classroom training at scale was implemented to have the most impact on international presence.

6   MEASURABLE BENEFITS

6.1   Quality of learning experience and engagement

The transition to micro-learning courses significantly improved the learning experience. Average online course completion rates surged from 50% to 80%, indicating enhanced engagement and effectiveness. Classroom training demand also increased, contributing to higher training revenue and positive learner feedback.

6.2   Expansion of client reach

An emphasise on online training better blended into the overall learning system increased the 2,000 user base built up over the 3 years prior to Disguise Learn, to 11,000 in the following 2 years, fuelled by the availability of high-quality, accessible online training and regular promotion from Disguise. The launch of Disguise Training Partnerships attracted eight international partners, significantly increasing the availability of local language training and expanding Disguise Learn's global presence.

6.3   Client satisfaction

Learner feedback for the Disguise Learn programme was overwhelmingly positive, with client satisfaction and engagement reflecting the success of the initiative. The Net Promoter Score (NPS) rose from 53 a few months after launch to an impressive 63 by the end of 2023, validating the improvements made to the training offering (with 2024 early feedback scores climbing even higher). Classroom engagement achieved outstanding results, with user feedback ratings of 4.68/5 and 4.61/5 in respective surveys. Online training was equally well-received, scoring 4.49/5 and 4.52/5.

These strong ratings highlight the effectiveness of the enhanced classroom format and online learning modules.

Trainee testimonials highlighted the effectiveness of the new training format in simplifying complex concepts, praising the program's impact and further highlighting its success such as Jason Phillips ("Thank you for improving the online training ten-fold") and Martin Kern ("The training Disguise offers is what separates it from other media server companies").

Fig. 5. Dec 2023 NPS survey

6.4 Financial impact

The rebranding and development of new courses significantly elevated the perceived value of Disguise's training program, driving remarkable revenue growth for the training department. Between 2021 and 2022, Disguise saw a 35% revenue increase, followed by an impressive 75% year-over-year growth from 2022 to 2023, coinciding with the launch of Disguise Learn in Q4 2022.

This strategic overhaul not only boosted financial performance but also enhanced the program's visibility and appeal, offering greater value to learners. By aligning course offerings with industry needs and improving the learner experience, Disguise Learn demonstrated a clear financial impact and strengthened its position as a leader in virtual production training.
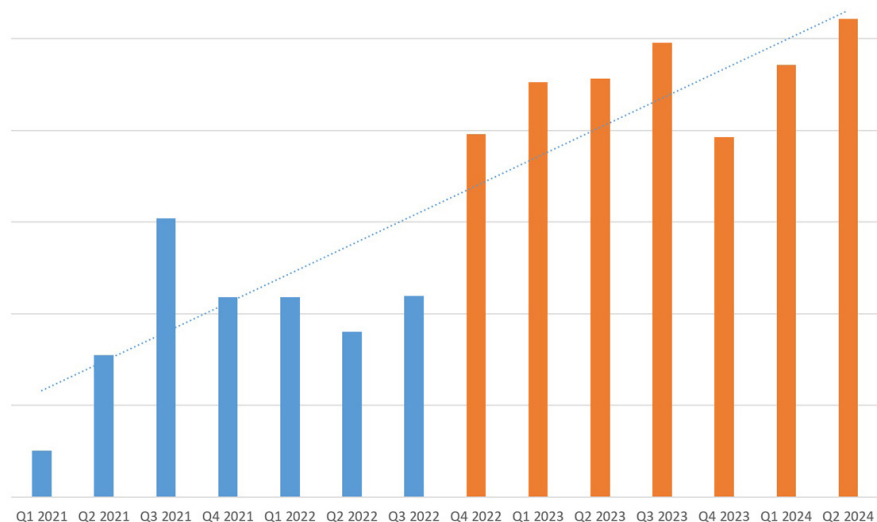

Fig. 6. Training revenue over time

6.5   Bridging the virtual production knowledge gap

The Virtual Production Accelerator (VPA) program significantly enhanced client proficiency in using Disguise's VP tools. Post-launch feedback indicated a notable increase in self-reported confidence levels among participants in their ability to effectively utilise VP technology.

The launch of the VPA led to the establishment of several new international training partnerships providing the VPA program, in addition to the VPA expanding from the US to UK, Spain, Singapore, Korea, Japan, Brazil and Hong Kong.

The VPA program received its own recognition and awards for its approach and impact on VP (Definition for VP award), plus several awards for the short film produced for the VPA as a training mechanism.

By focusing on practical, hands-on training and ensuring global accessibility, the Virtual Production Accelerator not only accelerated VP adoption among clients but also solidified Disguise Learn's position as an industry leader in virtual production training.

Fig. 7. VPA in-action

Fig. 8. Accelerator training in-action additional

7   CONCLUSION

Disguise Learn exemplifies a best-in-class hybrid learning program that effectively addresses the evolving needs of comprehensive training, customer support, and product adoption within Disguise and its client base. Conceived as a strategic response to elevate Disguise's training standard, the program has achieved remarkable success through its multi-faceted approach, enhancing the learning experience, expanding client reach, and establishing itself as a distinct sub-brand within Disguise.

The program's impact on the Disguise organisation and its clients has been profound, with measurable benefits spanning various domains. Notable achievements include a significant enhancement in the quality of the learning experience, evidenced by notable increases in course completion rates and positive client feedback. Furthermore, the program's strategic alignment with organisational objectives has led to substantial growth in user base and revenue, driven by an improved training offering that more effectively addresses client needs and strategic partnerships on an international scale.

Lessons gleaned from the Disguise Learn initiative underscore the importance of continuous improvement, adaptability, and user-centric design. By prioritising innovation and engagement, coupled with ongoing feedback mechanisms with learners, Disguise Learn remains committed to maintaining its position at the forefront of learning and development in its industry.

With this strategic vision, Disguise Learn is primed to continue its trajectory of success, driving customer satisfaction, organisational growth, and making a lasting impact in the industry.

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