

MillerCoors

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Leveraging getAbstract at MillerCoors - a Refreshing Approach to Learning

How do you change the learning culture of a company that is deeply rooted in a traditional learning paradigm? Jay Anders, manager of Learning Governance & Systems for MillerCoors, and his team build and deliver innovative, nontraditional learning solutions for a multigenerational workforce spread across the United States. In this Webinar, Jay shares some practical tips on how MillerCoors markets getAbstract to leverage flexible, self-directed learning.

Take-Aways

- MillerCoors has gradually been shifting the organization's learning paradigm from traditional classroom-based learning to self-directed learning.
- getAbstract is an important lever for promoting new effective learning solutions throughout the company across all of its locations.
- Prominent placement of getAbstract on the company's intranet and corporate university website creates exposure for this learning solution and facilitates access to the resources it offers.
- To reach learners throughout the organization, Jay Anders and his team provided material to educate human resources managers about the getAbstract solution and to help them become multipliers of its message.
- Internal print and web advertising campaigns have helped create awareness of getAbstract's services, content and usefulness.
- A popular one-minute video demonstrates the value of getAbstract to learners.
- MillerCoors promotes getAbstract's summaries as pre- and post-class material to enhance the effectiveness of classroom learning.
- getAbstract has helped MillerCoors identify relevant abstracts that align with critical success factors and leadership requirements to aid employees in their development.
- getAbstract has strengthened and supported MillerCoors' belief in substituting and complementing course learning with informal learning.
- MillerCoors executives see the value of getAbstract and participate in fostering a learning culture within the organization.

MillerCoors - a Young Organization

MillerCoors is a new organization – a merger of two legacy brewing companies from the 1800s: Miller Brewing and Coors Brewing Company. Our vision is to become America's best beer company. We have two global parent companies: SAP Miller based in the UK and Molson Coors based in Canada. We have about \$7.6 billion in revenue, 9,000 employees, 8 very large breweries across the US and 5 smaller ones. We produce about 70 million barrels of beer annually. We have a broad portfolio of more than 80 different brands in the US.

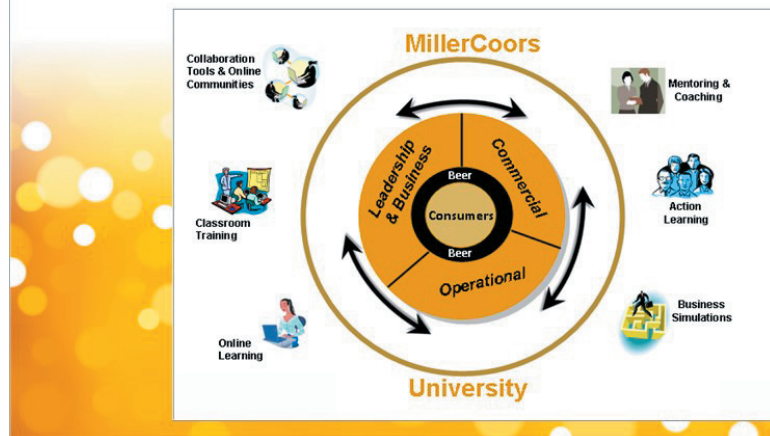
Shifting the Learning Paradigm

A company with more than 200 years of combined history is bound to have certain preferences and practices. We found that the organization had a deep affinity for classroom-based learning. More than 70% of all the learning solutions that the organization offered previously were face-to-face workshops or instructor-led classes.

“Within the last 3-4 years, we’ve been trying to gradually shift the organization’s learning paradigm from traditional classroom-based learning to self-directed learning.”

The Learning Paradigm...

- Historically leveraged traditional learning practices
 - Classroom, Classroom, Classroom
- Gradually shifting solution model to self-directed



Within the last 3-4 years, we’ve been trying to gradually shift the organization’s learning paradigm from traditional classroom-based learning to self-directed learning. We’ve introduced the benefits of social learning, online learning, both classic and web-based mentoring programs, action learning projects, business simulation learning experiences, etc. Each of these activities is aligned to support our three main capability-building areas:

- 1) leadership development
- 2.) commercial (sales and marketing) and
- 3) operation or supply chain organization.

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MillerCoors University itself is roughly 18 months old. Before this, neither company had a corporate university to speak of so this concept was foreign to employees. We've been going from function to function, from team to team, from colleague to colleague, telling the MillerCoors University story. We created a "road show" presentation to explain the what and the why behind our university and to introduce a number of different solutions and resources that MillerCoors University can provide.

We're hoping to change some pretty hard and set paradigms people have about learning. So many people say, "I need to develop something this year. I'm working on this particular skill. What classes can I go to?" We're trying to shift that around, so learners think about effective development strategies and whether or not class is part of that.

Oftentimes we do a bit of digging before the roadshow presentations to see if the function leader is high on a particular book. If we find that information we may jokingly offer to sell copies of the abstract to the employees to save them the time they'd spend reading the entire book. That's always been a way to educate people and bring some humor to the value getAbstract brings.

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Leveraging getAbstract

We had a very traditional paradigm about learning solutions and really had to think about how to market this. How do we leverage getAbstract? Needless to say, our organization had never seen anything like this before. We opted to utilize a pull strategy: We do not push abstracts to our users on a regular basis. Here is what we did to market getAbstract in the company:

> Strengthening the Online Presence

MillerCoors University's online presence is a huge part of marketing getAbstract. The corporate university website gets 1,000 hits per month. Of all the intranet webpages in our organizations, it consistently ranks as one of the 10 sites that are most visited by our employees.

MCU Online Presence

The screenshot shows the MillerCoors University website. The header features "The Tap Room" logo with the tagline "TAP IN TO WIN." and the MillerCoors logo. A navigation menu includes: Functions, About MillerCoors, Career, Comp & Benefits, Policies & Guidelines, Tools & Forms, Miller Links, Coors Links, Help, and My Links. The main content area has a "Welcome" message: "If you're looking for opportunities to develop yourself professionally, then this site is for you. Explore the menu to your left to find out what we have to offer." Below this is a graphic with a beer glass and the text "THIRST FOR LEARNING". A sidebar on the right contains "TOP DOCS" (Booking a Course in HOPS LMS, Quick Tips for Creating Your IDP) and "CLICK AND GO" (Golden and Shenandoah Brewery Safety Training, The PNT Policies in Training).

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At first, the getAbstract link and info were buried; we pulled that forward so people can get to it on our front page. Once someone clicks on the getAbstract link, they are taken to a secondary page where we educate people on the service: What is getAbstract? How do you access it? What are some benefits of getAbstract? A link takes them to the getAbstract site where they can browse and download.

> Educating HR Managers and Learning Colleagues

We realized quickly that our HR managers and learning colleagues across the organization are the conduit to our employees and learners. We had to do a good job of educating our HR managers about the getAbstract solution, otherwise it would be very difficult to get to our end users, the actual learners in our organization. We created a product sheet – nothing high-tech – that explains the solution, how people can get to it and how it can address development opportunities. It details the product’s benefits, target audience and format. We also chose a testimonial from the getAbstract website, a quote from a Harvard professor talking about the value of getAbstract.

We distribute the sell sheets in hard copy and e-format to our HR managers and learning colleagues across the organization. Apart from helping them to be in the know as to what’s coming from MillerCoors University, it helps them to talk intelligently to their client groups about the service. Or, if they want, they can distribute the material – there’s nothing sensitive in these documents.

“The more we blend getAbstract into our curriculum, the more people will see the value in our solution.”

Sell Sheets

- Hard and soft copies
- Sent to HR Managers and Learning Colleagues



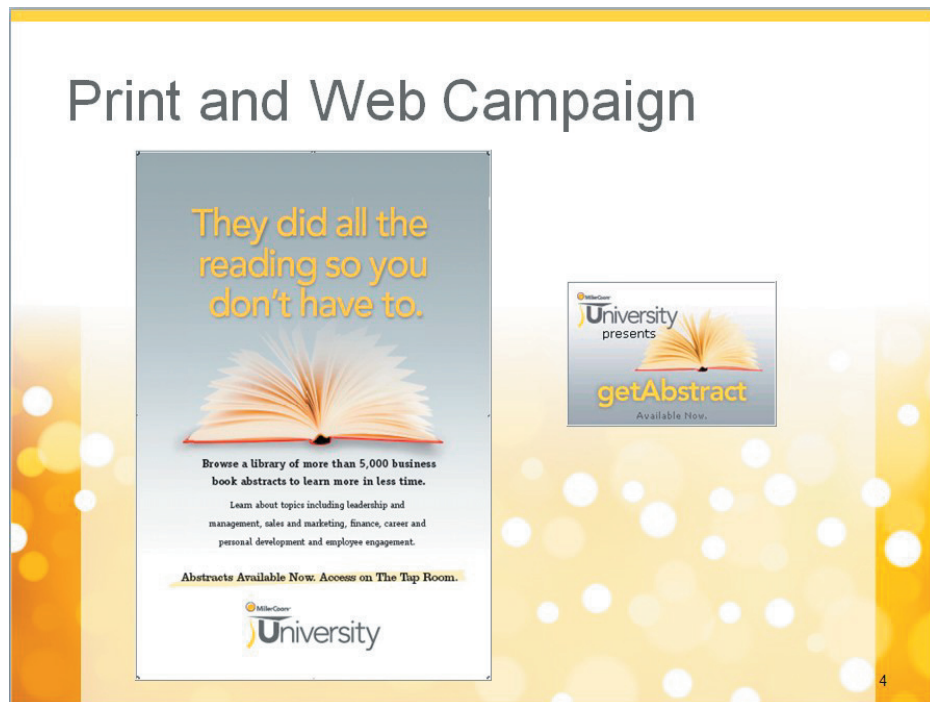
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> Launching a Web/Print Campaign

Another aspect of advertising getAbstract is a web/print campaign. It may be old-school but we found it remarkably effective. For our poster campaign for getAbstract, we used hard copies in different sites across the company. We also used digital signage, LCD screens with digital versions of the print posters on a loop. That has really had an impact. We've gotten a lot of exposure from these campaigns.

A banner ad is another element of this campaign. On the front page of our company intranet, we have some news stories and valuable links for employees. MillerCoors University has real estate on that site which we use to highlight different learning solutions. We used it to promote getAbstract. It catches people's eyes and it takes them to the page where they can learn more about the service, or they can jump to the getAbstract site by clicking that little button.

"Our web and print campaigns have been incredibly helpful ways of creating more exposure for the service, of cutting through the clutter to help people see value in a nontraditional learning solution."



Both of these campaigns have been incredibly helpful ways of creating more exposure for the product, of cutting through the clutter to help people see value in a nontraditional learning solution.

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> Creating a getAbstract Video

We created a one-minute video, called "Intro to getAbstract," which describes what getAbstract is and how it can meet business needs. In the video, a person is given feedback on his need to develop his managerial skills. It proceeds to talk about how getAbstract can be an element of an effective professional development plan. We placed the video in our Learning Management System and it was listed as a featured one-minute course. We then chose to house this video on the getAbstract page on our intranet and it's become a pretty frequently visited video.

> Using getAbstract as Pre- and Post-Class material

We also leveraged getAbstract as a vehicle for helping to reinforce learning that should have occurred in the classroom, as a way to further build employees' capabilities. As part of a post-class communication, for example, we send out an email to the attendees with some resources that were discussed in the class – and we also send them a description of some abstracts on the same subject. It helps people continue to apply what they've learned in the classroom and gives them some additional thought leadership from different authors on that subject. For MillerCoors, it's one more way to remind people that getAbstract is available to them; we don't charge them for it and we want them to take advantage of it.

We also use getAbstract for pre-reads for courses. We'll find an abstract that is spot-on with the subject matter of a course and we ask individuals to read the abstract before the workshop or conference.

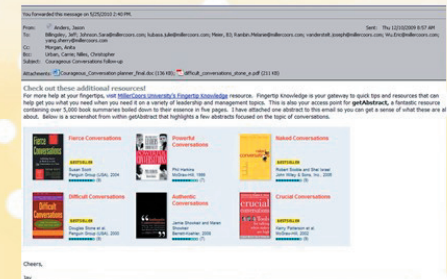
“We also leveraged getAbstract as a vehicle for helping to reinforce learning that should have occurred in the classroom, as a way to further build employees' capabilities.”

“The combination of our intranet news, pre- and post-class communications has been a useful way to keep getAbstract front and center in the minds of our learner population.”

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E-Communications

- Intranet news articles
- Pre-reads for programs sent out via email
- Post-program communications with recommended readings



> Developing a University Handbook

We have also created a university handbook to promote our core values and leadership requirements. Again, old-school thought. We created one this year called “The Best of You: Meaningful Development Guide.”

Within the handbook, we promote on-the-job experiences people could use to further build their capabilities. We advertise classroom learning, online courses and recommended reading from getAbstract. getAbstract has helped us identify relevant abstracts that align with critical success factors and leadership requirements. It has reinforced our belief that development happens everywhere, not just in the classroom. The more we blend getAbstract into our curriculum, the more people will see the value in our solution.

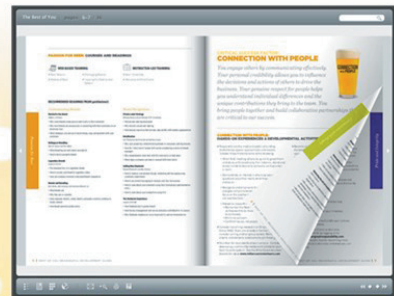
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The Best of You

- Aligned to the organization's Critical Success Factors and Leadership Requirements
- Promotes on-the-job experiences, classroom learning, online courses, and recommended readings from getAbstract
- Reinforces belief in development on-the-job and outside the classroom



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Q&A

To what extent do your senior executives actively promote the learning culture of MillerCoors?

Our executives are involved: They have been supportive and helped a lot in fostering a learning culture in the organization. For example, during a tough economic time right now, we just invested millions into a physical representation of MillerCoors University.

What feedback have you had from senior managers who have used getAbstract?

Our senior managers love the bite-size nature of it. They have found great value in the succinctness of the learning solution. Many of them have come to us to help them bring a getAbstract topic into team meetings. They have their employees read a summary before the meeting so they can have a deep discussion about how a specific topic affects the team or the company as a whole.

Our leaders understand the value of a learning solution that doesn't have geographic boundaries or a high price tag. They're finding great value in the quality and the flexibility of being able to deliver a solution that works for an employee population as spread out as ours.

“We have people opting in to receive the weekly emails, asking for these summaries to be pushed to them. The fact that people say, ‘Please send me another email!’ is a wonderful expression of the value they see in the solution.”

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Did you provide incentives to employees to get them to start using getAbstract?

We’re on a pretty thin budget so incentives were not much of an option for us. People who have been taking advantage of this use it because they see the value of it. They tried it and liked it. They’ve probably seen this through a road show presentation or heard about it from their HR managers or became familiar with it through our other marketing campaigns. But the people who are doing it are not doing it for incentives. They see it’s a unique and innovative way to learn a lot without having to read a potentially 396-page book. Curiosity and desire to learn are bringing them in.

How do you make getAbstract available to employees that don’t have access to computers?

About 5,000 of our 9,000 employees are hourly brewery workers. And while they don’t have computers next to them all the time, computers are accessible to them in break rooms and team rooms. They all have email and they’re all able to log in to getAbstract. We promote it through the use of sell sheets and posters in the team room to help remind this part of our population that this resource is out there for them. Actually one of our brewery employees in Georgia is one of our top 5 users.

What are the 3 most important factors that have contributed to the success of getAbstract at MillerCoors?

1. A multifaceted marketing approach – It’s not a one-size-fits-all. A multifaceted marketing campaign gives you a greater likelihood of being able to cut through the clutter to reach a very diverse employee population.
2. Blending getAbstract into our more formal learning solutions – Within our mentoring program, for example, pairs of mentors and mentees read certain abstracts and come prepared to talk about the implications of that topic for the company.
3. Tailoring getAbstract to meet the needs of our culture – We brought our critical success factors and leadership requirements into getAbstract by identifying specific tabs linked to our strategic objectives and noting specific relevant titles within those tabs.

getAbstract Contact Details

Contact us for more information on how you can use getAbstract book summaries to leverage flexible, self-directed learning:

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