

case study

MRS establish partnership with Nelson Croom to provide online professional development courses as part of the MRS training profile

The Market Research Society (MRS) is the world's largest association representing providers and users of market, social and opinion research, and business intelligence. It has members in over 70 countries and serves both individuals and organisations who identify with its core values of professionalism, excellence and effectiveness. The MRS approached Nelson Croom with the view of establishing a partnership to provide online professional development courses as part of its training portfolio.

Nelson Croom is a publisher of online learning courses and has developed a range of short CPD courses for professionals, called the Professional Development Portfolio. They work in partnership with companies, professional associations and other organisations and believe that learning works best when it engages and motivates people.

The problem

The MRS were looking for a way to extend their professional development provision for their members to fulfil demand and provide improved benefits and service. However, they wanted to test the success of the initiative without having to invest a large sum up front.

At the same time they identified that some of the costs could potentially be offset by fees charged to members for the courses. Professionals wanting to invest in their CPD were willing to pay reasonable fees for courses that would help them improve their skills.

They had already had success selling two bespoke courses developed by Nelson Croom (*Questionnaire Design and Introductory Certificate in Market*

Research) and were interested in developing further courses online quickly and cost-effectively. They wanted to develop a broad range of professional development courses, so that they had a substantial offering for their membership. All this would help to raise the profile of the MRS as provider of a range of flexible learning solutions and provide further benefit to their members.

The solution

After initial discussion it was decided that the MRS would tailor ten courses from the Professional Development Portfolio to ensure they were relevant to MRS customers.

“ *Our partnership with Nelson Croom allows us to offer an even wider range and style of courses. This new suite of business courses will complement our existing programme and offer our clients an even more flexible learning environment. We continue to extend and refresh our training programme and Nelson Croom really helps us to do this* ”

Barbara Deutschle, Training and Seminars Manager, MRS

The Portfolio had been developed to specifically meet the needs of busy professionals and would allow their members to develop at a pace and in a way that would suit them.

The MRS and Nelson Croom split the costs of the development of the ten courses, and then organised a revenue share arrangement for each time a course was sold. Nelson Croom were responsible for the development of the courses and tailoring the content (with the help of MRS subject matter experts) to make it relevant to MRS members and other customers. The MRS will be responsible for promoting and selling the courses. Throughout the development process the MRS had

access to the courses to provide their input. This was created by developing a bespoke website with a login facility which allowed the project team at the MRS to see how the tailoring was progressing and provide ongoing feedback.

The results

MRS Learning and Development Online launched in Spring 2007. The MRS courses have been well received and the tailored courses complement the bespoke offering from MRS. To date, there have been over 600 registrations for the range of courses within MRS Learning and Development Online.

