



THE SLOAN CONSORTIUM
A Consortium of Institutions
and Organizations
Committed to Quality
Online Education

What Sloan-C achieved with Elluminate *Live!*

Live eLearning for eLearning professionals

Elluminate *Live!* added synchronous interaction, facilitating real-time discussion and true learning for all participants—regardless of location.

Availability to wider audience, nationally and internationally

With Elluminate *Live!*, workshop participants can share information across the country and around the world—without expensive travel or conference calls.

Intuitive, reliable leading edge technology

Elluminate's live eLearning and Web conferencing solution is easy to implement and easy to use—for administrators, moderators, presenters, and attendees.

Sloan Consortium Adds Synchronous Environment to Online Research Workshop with Elluminate *Live!*

Located at Babson and Olin Colleges in Needham, Massachusetts, the Sloan Consortium (Sloan-C) is an association of about 700 institutions and organizations of higher education engaged in online learning. Sloan-C's mission is to promote online learning to help continually improve its quality, scale, and breadth, so education will become part of everyday life, accessible and affordable for anyone, at any time, in a wide variety of disciplines. Members include academic institutions, corporate training organizations, and organizations that support quality in higher education.

The Challenge: Add Synchronous Interaction, Attract Wider Audience

According to Sloan-C's Director of Marketing Keith Bourne, the organization was planning one of its interactive, online research workshops used to disseminate critical information about the most important issues in online learning today. "For this workshop, we decided that a blended environment of asynchronous and synchronous learning would help us better meet attendee needs and open up our workshop to a wider audience, nationally and internationally," he explained.

"We looked at a number of synchronous solutions and determined that Elluminate *Live!* was the best fit," Bourne continued. "Elluminate *Live!* doesn't require a phone to use like some other solutions, and it works with both PCs and Macs, so it's convenient and cost-effective. Sloan-C likes to introduce new technologies, and we wanted a product that we felt confident promoting."

There were a number of additional requirements, according to Sloan-C Chief Technology Officer and Director of Operations Jeff Seaman. "Because this would be our first major experience using a synchronous environment for hundreds of participants, we wanted the product to be easy to set up and run," he said. "We also needed a solution with a small learning curve as this would also be the first time most of our presenters and attendees used the technology."

The Solution: Easy-to-implement, Easy-to-use Synchronous Environment

According to Seaman, implementing Elluminate *Live!* was easy. "One of our first tests for the product was to use it internally," he said. "One person was traveling in a rural area with only erratic dial-up service available, and she was still able to participate in the staff meeting."

"Once we were trained, Elluminate *Live!* is intuitive and easy to use," Seaman continued. "We just took the Session Administration System (SAS) training and jumped right in and did it. We handled the entire workshop ourselves, creating sessions, sending email announcements, and maintaining the workshop Web site. It was not really much work. Elluminate *Live!* is accessed via our site, so it was easy



What makes Elluminate the clear choice for live eLearning?

- Crystal-clear audio with voice over IP
- User-friendly, intuitive interface that's easy to use and customize
- In-sync communications, regardless of connection speed and quality
- Universal operation in Windows, Mac, and Solaris environments
- ESP Moderator Tool Set ensures best user experience
- Greatly reduced travel budgets
- No more costly, inconvenient conference calls
- Best-in-class return on investment, with no per-minute charges
- Accessible, responsive customer service

for attendees to join in, with no extra login required. We could also easily add sessions, create breakout rooms, or make other changes on the fly."

The blended environment worked well for the research workshop, according to Bourne. "There were 369 participants from around the globe. We displayed a map of the world and invited attendees to indicate where they were from. Dots were appearing all over the planet, including Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Ireland, Spain, Taiwan, the U.K., and the West Indies, as well as 43 U.S. states."

The Result: International Participation, Enthusiastic Interaction

"Our post-workshop surveys showed the asynchronous and synchronous environments met the attendees' needs in different ways," Bourne said. "We did a focus group on Elluminate *Live!* near the end of the workshop. Someone from Australia was actually participating in live sessions at 4:00 in the morning. But for most of the international participants, the recorded sessions were a big hit. We were also pleased that 70% of the attendees took advantage of the pre-workshop Elluminate *Live!* training we offered."

"Elluminate *Live!* enabled the academic attendees to see how synchronous technology worked from the learner's perspective," continued Bourne. "Every time a session was interactive, it helped pull people out a little bit more. First-time users were almost giddy. During the sessions, they were using the real-time chat pane to make comments about how exciting it was. We are definitely satisfied with Elluminate *Live!*. In fact, we're planning a similar workshop using Elluminate *Live!* in a blended environment this summer. We have 430 people on the waiting list."

"We learned a lot," Seaman said. "For example, in the future, we want to use our recorded presentation sessions to train other presenters. That way they'll understand how to effectively use the tool in this particular way. We are just beginning to understand where synchronous technology works best and where it doesn't. We're still evolving, but it's been an overwhelmingly positive experience. Elluminate gets really high marks for its responsiveness and high-quality training, and Elluminate *Live!* is reliable. Not all products are, so it's nice to find one that performs as promised."

"I was also very impressed with the customer support from Elluminate," Bourne concluded. "Every incident that I heard about from participants and partners was responded to promptly and efficiently, and I felt it certainly helped improve the customer satisfaction level of the workshop. That's an aspect that's hard to see when you are evaluating these different services but is of extreme importance to our organization and members."

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