

A LEARNBASE CASE STUDY

MICRO-CREDENTIALING: REBUILDING A PROGRAM FOR A UNIVERSITY PARTNER

MICROCREDENTIALS THAT ENGAGE THE NEXT GENERATION

The challenge for most continuing education departments today is building a micro-credential that actually carries weight in the real world. It's a delicate balance: creating something credible and future-proof that remains genuinely accessible to people's busy lives, all without the massive budget or the multi-year timeline of a traditional degree.

When we were approached to revamp a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) micro-credential, the existing program had been running for seven years without meaningful updates. It was solid in content, but the design around it was no longer fit for purpose.



AT A GLANCE

- **Sector:** Post-Secondary Education / Continuing Professional Development
- **Target:** University students and sustainability professionals
- **The Problem:** Outdated, passive content delivery (PDFs and videos), degraded technical infrastructure, and vulnerability to AI shortcuts
- **The Solution:** A ground-up rebuild featuring interactive micro-apps, a custom-trained AI learning assistant, and portable SCORM/xAPI-compliant architecture
- **The Outcome:** A scaffolded, AI-resistant learning experience built with significant cost efficiency and institutional portability

THE CHALLENGE: MOVING BEYOND "PASSIVE" LEARNING

The Triple Bottom Line is an accounting framework that incorporates three dimensions of performance: social, environmental and financial. It was actually coined in the mid 1900s by John Elkington who went beyond the traditional measures of profits, return on investment, and shareholder value to include ecological (or environmental) and social measures that can be difficult to assign appropriate means of measurement. The Triple Bottom Line dimensions are also commonly called the three Ps: people, planet and profits

People

"People" considers employees, the labor involved in a corporation's work, and the wider community where a corporation does business. Another way to look at "people" is, how much does a company benefit society? A triple bottom line company pays fair wages and takes steps to ensure humane working conditions at supplier factories.

Planet

The "planet" piece of the triple bottom line indicates that an organization tries to reduce its ecological footprint as much as possible. These efforts can include reducing waste, investing in renewable energy, managing natural resources more efficiently, and improving logistics.

Profit

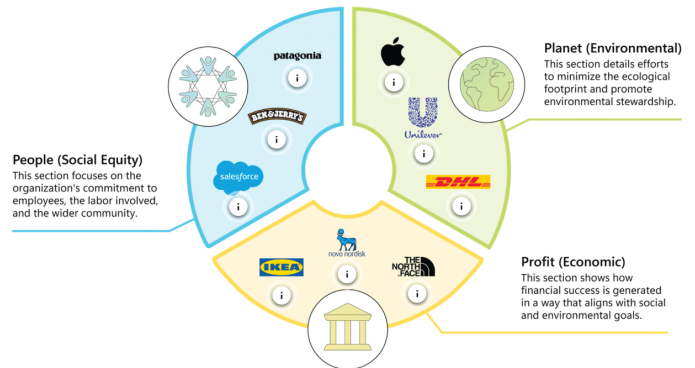
The Profit aspect of the triple bottom line is rather intuitive. While every business pursues financial profitability, triple bottom line businesses recognize that "profit" isn't diametrically opposed to "people" or "planet."

An example of that is that in 2016, IKEA company turned a profit by recycling waste into some of its best-selling products. Before, this waste had cost the company more than \$1 million per year.



CSR and the Triple Bottom Line in Action

Real examples of CSR happening now.



The original program leaned heavily on passive consumption, long stretches of reading and video. That kind of approach has been part of classroom teaching for years, but it's never been especially effective. When it's carried straight into a self-directed online environment, the cracks show quickly, and engagement tends to drop off.

Beyond the engagement gap, there were two growing problems. First, the technical infrastructure had started to degrade. The course was living in an old Thinkific format, with broken links, videos wouldn't play, and the ones that did featured that early-era "talking head" style: a professor in front of a PowerPoint slide or two, speaking in slightly tinny audio that made you want to check your speakers. Video can be good, but this particular format, static presenter, static slides, doesn't hold attention in self-paced learning the way it might in a live lecture.

Second, and more importantly, the assignment design was highly susceptible to being completed by general AI tools. If a student can "bypass" the learning with a prompt, the credential loses its value. The subject matter, CSR and ESG frameworks, is even more relevant now than it was seven years ago. The course needed to reflect that urgency.

THE APPROACH: INTERACTIVITY AS A PRIORITY

We didn't just want to "re-skin" the old course with a new look. We took a ground-up approach, retaining the expertise of the curriculum while entirely rebuilding the architecture.



CHOOSING THE RIGHT FOUNDATION

For the project we decided to anchor the rebuild in Articulate Rise. It's itself it's a limited tool, but it gives you a clean, responsive base and lets you move quickly, which mattered given how much content needed reshaping.

The difference came in how we used it. Rather than relying on its usual patterns, we threaded in small interactive pieces, micro-apps that tied in the content with the learners' action case studies as they progressed through the course. That's where it started to feel designed again, where our creativity was blended with AI speed to add a level of interaction that would have been well beyond the scope of the project previously. AI helped us move faster in building, but the decisions behind them were still deliberate.

Rise also outputs to xAPI and SCORM, so the course isn't tied to a single platform. It can sit comfortably in Moodle, Canvas, Brightspace, or a proprietary LMS. That flexibility tends to matter more over time, especially as institutions revisit and change their systems.

Building Your Action Case

Throughout this module, you will build an Action Case. If you aren't currently in a job, you will choose a Case Organization, a company you admire, or perhaps one you'd like to work for one day.

Think of this Action Case as your professional prototype. You will use it to:



Audit Potential Employers
Learn to distinguish between companies that "talk the talk" (Greenwashing) and those that "walk the walk" (B Corp certified).



Solve Hypothetical Challenges
Apply Triple Bottom Line thinking to real-world scenarios, preparing you to answer the tough questions in future interviews.



Bridge the Gap
Use the Borton Framework (What, So What, Now What) to translate the hard realities of our global environment into actionable strategies you can pitch to a current or future stakeholder.

Learning Outcomes

- Articulate the relationships between ESG, the Triple Bottom Line, and Creating Shared Value (CSV) to establish professional credibility.
- Execute strategic analyses and evidence-based evaluations to translate sustainability theory into actionable corporate initiatives.

BUILDING MICRO-APPS WITH FIGMA

The original program carried seven years of accumulated curriculum value, subject matter expertise, frameworks, and sound, structured learning sequences. Rather than treating the legacy build as a liability, we treated it as a content library. Existing material was audited, stripped of its outdated delivery format, and reintegrated into the new Rise architecture.

A core innovation in this project was the development of interactive learning micro-apps. Instead of asking a student to read a PDF about a framework, we built tools embedded directly into the course that guide them through those processes with personalized outputs.

By using design-first tools like Figma, we could build in a few hours what used to take weeks of heavy coding. In the past, creating anything truly interactive would have swallowed a month of development and most of the project's budget. Now, turning around a custom micro-app in an afternoon changes the entire creative process; it means those "wouldn't it be cool if..." ideas are actually realistic rather than just a wishlist.

The Triple Bottom Line



All businesses must make money. But triple bottom line companies realize that they can do more. This idea has only recently gained traction in the corporate world, but now that it has, the triple bottom line is driving the decision-making of the world's top brands.

What is the Triple Bottom Line?

Traditionally, business leaders concerned themselves with their bottom lines—or, the monetary profits their businesses made. Today, more leaders have begun to think sustainably. The triple bottom line theory expands the traditional accounting framework to include two other performance areas: the social and environmental impacts of their company. These three bottom lines are often referred to as the three P's: people, planet, and profit.


Here is each "P" in more detail.



INSTRUCTIONS PLANET PEOPLE PROFITABILITY STRATEGY MAP


Profitability Analysis

ECONOMIC VALUE & GOVERNANCE




Governance Criteria (ESG)

Is there clear evidence of leadership integrity, such as transparent executive compensation, independent audits, and protected shareholder/stakeholder rights?




Creating Shared Value (CSV)

Does the organization generate profit by specifically identifying and solving a social or environmental need as a core part of its business model?




Profit for Purpose

Does the organization operate under a mandate to reinvest at least 50% of its profits back into a primary social or environmental mission?




Corporate Social Vesting

Are community investments strategically designed to yield a measurable, long-term economic return or talent-pipeline benefit for the company?



Profitability Analysis



Profitability Analysis

BUSINESS > MISSION STATEMENT

Writing Vision and Mission Statements



An elevator pitch, vision, and mission are the three pillars of a solid business plan. Together, they tell the world exactly what you do, who you serve, your future goals, and your strategy for reaching them.

This tutorial provides a step-by-step framework for drafting your own statements. If you have been keeping up with our strategic planning series, you likely have all the ingredients ready to go.

Step 1 of 7 | Vision: Discovery

The Vision Board

Answer these foundational questions about your organization

Who are the primary groups we aim to empower?

Share your thoughts...

Beyond profit, why does our organization exist?

Share your thoughts...

If our CSR initiatives succeed in 50 years, what does the world look like?

Share your thoughts...

Which environment issue, governance gap or social inequality are we uniquely equipped to address?

Share your thoughts...

What headline would we want the media to write about our leadership in ten years?

Share your thoughts...

Is there anything else that we feel is relevant?

Share your thoughts...

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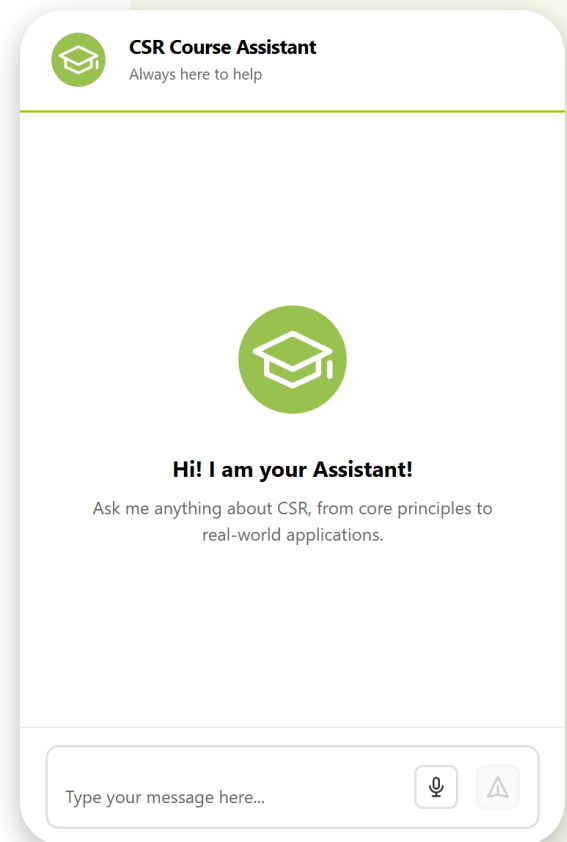
THE DEDICATED LEARNING AGENT

Rather than attempting to "police" how students used generative tools, we redesigned the assessments to make AI collaboration constructive. We deconstructed the curriculum into short, scaffolded activities built directly into interactive micro-apps. Each step in the journey requires the learner to input unique data and make localized decisions that feed into their final project.

To provide personalized support at scale, we embedded a custom AI tutor trained exclusively on the course materials. Operating as a closed-loop system, this agent is aware only of the specific curriculum. Unlike a general-purpose chatbot that might pull irrelevant info from the open web, this agent acts as a specialized teaching assistant who has "read the syllabus."

If a student asks how a specific metric applies to their sector, the agent directs them to the relevant section of the course. This provides the kind of high-touch guidance usually reserved for instructor-led programs, but in a way that remains fully accessible for self-directed learners.

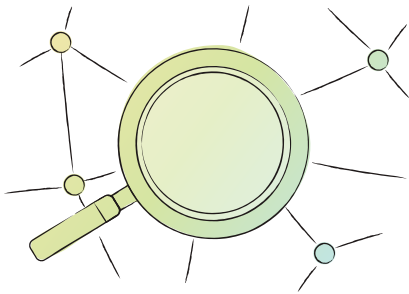
The AI integration wasn't a single tool; it was a multi-layered strategy applied at different points in the learner experience. Together, these layers add meaningful capability without introducing fragility into the architecture.



THE OUTCOME: A PORTABLE, SCALABLE TECHNICAL STACK

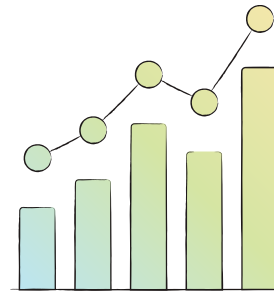
By the end of the project, we had transformed a passive, dated course into a modernized, interactive experience.

CASE-FOCUSED LEARNING



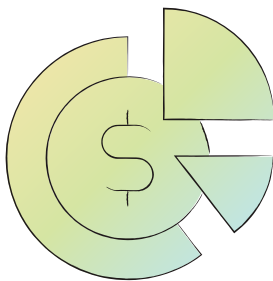
Passive reading has been replaced with micro-apps that keep learners active and engaged throughout the program.

MEANINGFUL ASSESSMENT



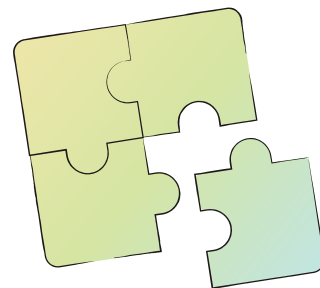
The assessment structure encourages genuine engagement rather than shortcuts, making the credential actually meaningful for the long term.

COST EFFICIENCY



We developed complex, interactive activities at a fraction of traditional production timelines, making high-quality micro-credentials financially accessible.

UNIVERSAL COMPATIBILITY



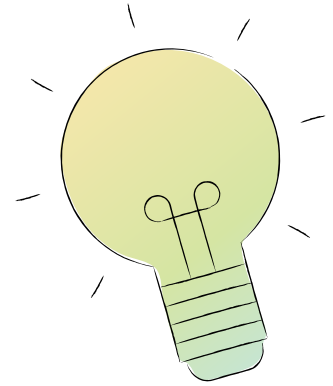
The final build is fully LMS-agnostic, SCORM/xAPI compliant, and designed for institutional deployment at scale.

The combination of Articulate Rise's authoring environment, purpose-built micro-apps, and embedded AI tooling creates a technical foundation that can be maintained, updated, and extended without requiring a full rebuild every time the content evolves.

WHY THIS MATTERS

This project demonstrates that you don't need a massive, multi-year budget to build a high-quality micro-credential. The tools and design thinking exist to create learning that's both interactive and resistant to the "shortcuts" of the AI era.

By using the right tools thoughtfully and building on a portable, maintainable technical foundation, we were able to take a seven-year-old program and turn it into something worth the badge at the end.



BUILDING LEARNING PROGRAMS THAT ACTUALLY LAST

If you're running continuing education programs, micro-credentials, or professional development courses that feel like they belong to 2018, the path forward doesn't have to mean starting from scratch or blowing the budget.

We've worked with post-secondary institutions, professional associations, and corporate training departments to rebuild learning programs that had quietly become obsolete. The pattern is usually the same: solid content trapped in outdated delivery, assessment structures that don't account for how students actually learn now, and technical infrastructure that's one software update away from breaking entirely.

What's changed in the past few years is how quickly we can turn interactive learning experiences around, and how intelligently we can layer AI tools into the process without handing over the learning itself to a chatbot. The custom learning agents can provide real, contextual support at scale. And the authoring tools let us build once and deploy everywhere, rather than locking you into a platform that might not exist in five years.

We work with institutions that need their programs to be credible, portable, and maintainable over the long term. If you're looking at a program that needs more than a cosmetic refresh, if the foundations need rethinking but you don't want to lose what actually works, that's the kind of project we're built for.

Let's talk about what it would take to bring your program into 2026.

If you're thinking about micro-credentials and how to better engage a new generation of learners, feel free to reach out. We're always up for a conversation.

Contact us at info@learnbase.com

ABOUT US

Learnbase replaces the standard, forgettable eLearning experience with high-production micro-credentials and custom platforms. We ground our work in instructional design that actually respects a learner's time, combining creative media with technology built specifically for the task. For universities and professional associations, we deliver the kind of development that carries weight in the real world.

