



appsembler

The Ultimate Guide to Customer Training

Customer training is aimed at improving the customer experience by providing content and other materials to educate and support the users of a product.



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What is Customer Training?

Put simply, customer training is helping prospective and current users to properly use your product. Ultimately, the goal of customer training is to improve the customer experience through insightful learning material and content that supports and educates the users on your product.

Customer training programs come in all shapes and sizes, and the content included in your training program will be dictated by the industry you work in. For example, the software industry regularly combines [virtual training labs](#) with traditional learning content because hands-on experience is critical for customers to properly learn about the software.



Virtual Labs
By Appsembler



What is a Customer Training Program?

A customer training program consists of educational content delivered through a course that is designed to help users better understand and use your product. Your particular program and the content included in it will be dependent on the audience you serve and the industry you work in.

Customer training programs are an ongoing process and should cater to customers at every stage of the customer lifecycle to ensure you're attracting and retaining as many customers as possible.

Ultimately, your customer training program has the potential to improve the customer onboarding experience, as well as increase engagement and satisfaction with your product.





Why is Customer Training Important?

You're probably well aware of the value that comes with training your own employees. But many companies have yet to realize the range of benefits that come with training their customers as well.

First off, customer training helps establish loyalty between you and your customers, as training them to be experts of your product demonstrates that you're genuinely invested in their long-term success. By providing your customers with learning material that educates them on how to best use your product, you'll also diminish the amount of support and troubleshooting that your customer service team will have to provide.

Lastly, while acquiring new customers is many businesses' north star, retaining current customers is likely a more reliable source of revenue.



Providing existing customers with ongoing training will bolster your customer retention rates, lower customer churn, and keep more revenue coming through the door.

What Are the Benefits of Customer Training?

✓ **New Customer Acquisition Channel**

✓ **Improved Product Engagement**

✓ **Establish Loyalty**

✓ **Boost Customer Retention**

✓ **Open the Door for Upsells**

✓ **Less Reliance on Customer Support**

New Customer Acquisition Channel



Your customer training program not only functions as educational content but also doubles as effective marketing collateral that can bring in more business. Naturally, when customers find success with your program, they'll tell their colleagues and friends about its value. Customer training is a great, organic way of creating brand advocates that will connect your company with prospective customers.

Boost Customer Retention



As you establish trust with your customers through your customer training program, you're establishing your business as a reputable source of valuable information. If a customer derives value from your program and uses that knowledge to better their own career, they'll surely continue to lean on you for support.

In turn, you'll see a decrease in customer churn and improved customer retention rates, which has a positive impact on your bottom line.



Improved Product Engagement



Customers that have a thorough understanding of how your product works will inevitably use your product more. Knowing all of your product's features and benefits will enable them to better integrate your product into their company's business processes. And as your customers integrate your product into their company's processes, your product will become an indispensable component of their company's infrastructure.

This symbiotic reliance between your product, your customers, and their businesses leads to higher customer retention, as customers will be reluctant to remove or replace such an integral component of their technology stack.

Open the Door for Upsells



Once your customers have seen the value in your customer training program, they'll be more receptive to learning about your other products and services. Improving your chances to upsell with existing customers can prove to be a reliable source of revenue, so consider what products or services your customers would benefit from after going through a customer training program.



Establish Loyalty



Customer training shows your customers that you're invested in their success and understanding of your product. If your customer training program delivers real value for its users, those users will keep coming back to you for more information on how to use your products. Establishing customer loyalty through your training programs is a surefire way to retain existing customers for the long run.

Less Reliance on Customer Support



When your customers have the tools and knowledge they need to use your products, you'll have fewer customers calling into customer support. It's costly to tend to questions, so by lessening the support team's workload, you're in turn saving money. Creating a tailored customer training program that addresses the basic issues that customers have will reduce the volume of customers calling into customer support.

In summary, customer training has the potential to satisfy existing customers, appeal to prospective customers, lower costs, and bring in more revenue.



Customer Training Challenges

A Bad First Impression

Customer training has the potential to excite and delight new and existing customers. On the flip side, if your training programs further confuses customers and don't successfully guide them towards using your product effectively, then you'll likely leave a bad impression. On top of that, customers who aren't happy with your training program won't become advocates of it, impacting the long-term success of your training program.

The Training Experience

In today's fast-paced world, customers want immediate answers to their questions. Capturing the attention span of the modern learner (and holding it) requires a user-friendly, streamlined learning experience that communicates the most important information effectively without any extraneous fluff. Make sure users are able to easily discover and search for your courses, with easy in-and-out course access, the ability to save their progress, and the option to work on their preferred device (desktop, mobile, or tablet).



Ongoing Maintenance to Training Programs

Once your customer training program is up and running, the work doesn't stop there. Most companies build their programs with a focus on the initial onboarding phase, ensuring clients have the basic information they need to get started using the product. But as users progress to later stages of the customer journey, they'll want additional content that educates them on advanced topics regarding your product. This means your initial content strategy should account for the creation of additional content that caters to users at every stage of the customer journey.

Additionally, as products and services change, your training program will have to change with them. New features to your products mean new training content to educate customers on how to best use these features. Adversely, products and services are sometimes canceled, in which case your training content will need to be updated as well. To facilitate the periodic changes and updates that will be needed to your training content, make sure your courses are modular and bite-sized. That way, if an update is necessary, you'll only have to update a small portion of the training program, as opposed to the entire training program.

Limited Resources

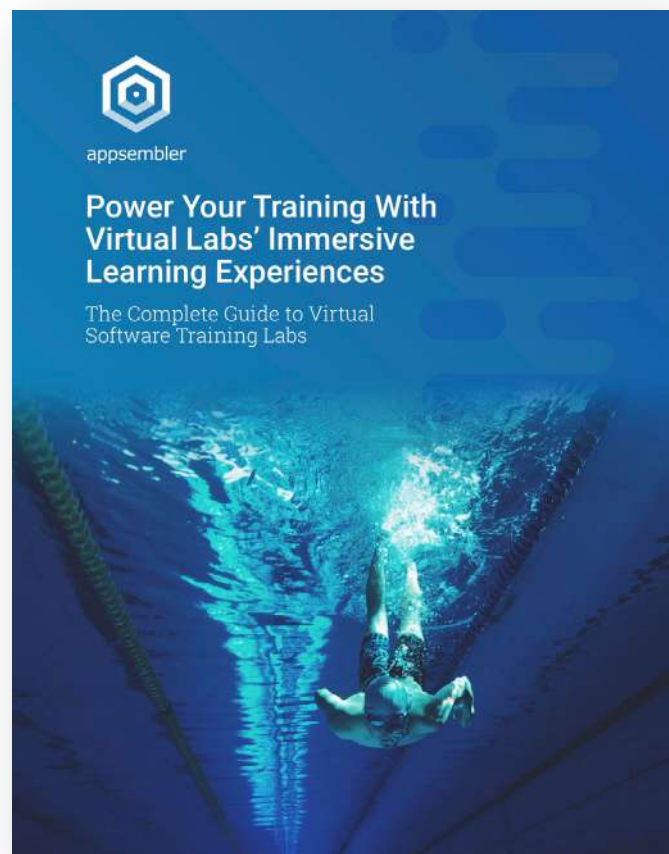
A quality customer training program requires effort and time. Your staff is likely handling a wide range of responsibilities as is, and the added task of building a customer training program may cause employee burnout. Before you can start to design your training program, ensure your employees won't be spread too thin by taking on a customer training initiative. To help facilitate the development of the program, consider investing in technology that can take some of the workloads away from your team. If outsourcing is an option, ask your customer training software vendor for referrals because they will have a network of service providers that are familiar with working with their software.

Hands-on Experience

To ensure that your customer training material is as effective as possible, your content should enable users to learn by doing. For example, in the software industry, delivering a hands-on learning experience that allows users to play with the software results in a more informative experience for customers.

Software companies typically provide these immersive learning experiences through what's called [virtual training labs](#), which are versions of the software that users can play with while they're learning how to use it.

But if your company is in the insurance industry, your learning material might include live interactions with insurance buyers that are asking for a price quote. And if you're in the medical industry, practice labs could be used to give technicians hands-on experience working with lab samples. The kind of hands-on experience will depend on the industry you belong to, as well as the skill that your course is teaching.



[Download](#)

Key Functionality Users Will Expect From Customer Training

✓ Searchability

✓ Availability

✓ Appropriately Priced
(or Free)

✓ Interactivity

✓ Course
Relevance and
Quality

✓ Ability to share their course
completion and success

Searchability



Before you concern yourself with the content of your training curriculum, you need to ensure prospective customers are able to find your training program. This means selecting a customer training platform that allows search engines to discover your courses, an SEO-optimized university, and ensuring that your courses are optimized for relevant keywords throughout your educational content.

Learners will prioritize training courses that show up in the first few search results, so make sure to give your program the best chance of being discovered by search engines. To help create initial awareness and traffic to your courses, consider pay-per-click advertising.

Interactivity



It's easier to keep your learners engaged throughout your training program when interactivity is included. Simply providing a 30-minute video with no checkpoints or user interaction is not enough.

Every few minutes, your content should feature a quiz, outline an exercise, or encourage a discussion that ensures learners are actively participating in the training program. This allows customers to confirm what they've learned and added much-needed recess between learning content.

Another form of interactivity comes in the form of offline homework assignments. This enables learners to engage with the course offline through assignments, exercises, and reminders that keep them engaged even when they're not actively in your course.



Availability



Your learning content needs to be available wherever and whenever customers want to access it. This means making sure that your training program is available as a web-based application—making it more accessible and user-friendly on both mobile and tablet devices, not just desktops.

It also means implementing on-demand training that the learner can complete on their own time. Giving your customers the freedom and control to learn on their terms will result in a more effective learning experience overall.

Course Relevance and Quality



Depending on the particular course, make sure that customers have all the relevant content they need to have the most effective learning experience possible. For example, in software, virtual training labs will give customers the chance to enjoy an immersive experience with your product. For medical training, hands-on medical labs, or virtual reality labs, will provide valuable learning experiences that will serve them well in the real world. Whatever the training is, try to strike a balance between a traditional learning experience with a hands-on learning experience.



Appropriately Priced (or Free)



Depending on the training content, customers will expect your training program to be appropriately priced based on the value the course is delivering to them. In some instances, a fee will help improve a customer's commitment to the course. For example, an introductory course that is essential to driving initial product usage should be free, whereas a fee might be necessary for customers to participate in live, instructor-led courses.

Take time to consider the value your courses provide to customers and make sure to price your courses accordingly.

Ability to share their course completion and success



Once a customer finishes your course, give them the ability to showcase their effort and success through a digital certificate or [badges](#). People like to be acknowledged for their hard work and commitment, and providing customers with a way to notify their team or boss about the successful completion of your training program will motivate them to see your course through till the end.



How to Implement a Customer Training Program

For starters, you'll want to get a sense of the training needs of your existing customers in order to determine how to develop and implement your customer training program. You can do this by reaching out to existing customers via surveys and interviews that ask them what training they would like to see on your product. From there, you'll be able to implement a training program that addresses the most pressing questions surrounding your product and delivers an effective learning experience.



[How to Author Your First Open edX Course](#)

By utilizing the right technology, defining your program goals, thoroughly developing your content, and optimizing along the way, you'll ensure that your customer training program reaches its full potential.

Customer Training Program Best Practices

1

Define Your Program Goals

3

Properly Develop Your Content

2

Invest in Technology

4

Find Ways to Improve



1

Define Your Program Goals

What will you define as success when it comes to your customer training program? Will you measure success based on the number of new customers you're able to attain? Or will you look at improved customer retention rates? Or how about reduced customer support costs? Or perhaps it's a combination of several KPIs?

Before you start to build out the course curriculum, your team needs to be aligned on the short-term and long-term goals of the training program. Your goals should take into account the needs and challenges of your customers, as well as what you can reasonably expect to achieve with your training program.



2

Invest in Technology

A quality customer training program needs to be backed by software that was purposefully built to deliver customer training. You'll need [customer training software](#) through which potential customers can discover your courses and where your existing customers can access your training program. And to keep initial costs low and startup times fast, you'll also need customer training software with content authoring features that will be used to write and create the actual learning content. Selecting a platform that provides both—course authoring and course delivery—will be critical to jump-starting your customer training program.



 **3**
**Properly
Develop Your
Content**

Once you've decided which customer training software you'll be using, ensure you're giving your team enough time to properly build out the educational content for your training program. Your content will ultimately dictate the quality of your training program, so it's important you dedicate the time and resources needed to ensure the educational content is effective, informative, and insightful.

Make sure to keep the customer learning experience top-of-mind as you develop your content. Creating engaging learning experiences depends on your team's ability to make an on-target curriculum with interactive courses that are available anytime, delivered on your learners' preferred devices.

 **4**
**Find Ways
to Improve**

Once your initial customer training program is built, you should be constantly looking to find ways to improve and evolve it. As you roll out your program and start to see what is (and isn't) working well, you should be open to making changes to the program that will improve the learning experience. Most customer training software has built-in learning analytics that can help you track and evaluate customer usage, engagement, and satisfaction with your training program.

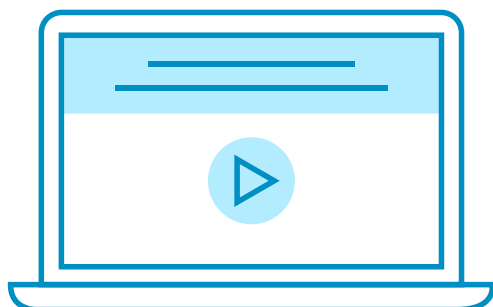
Use these reports and analytics to create a customer training program that is constantly being improved.



Customer Training With Appsembler

Appsembler is transforming how companies interact with their audiences and unleashes the impact of education to build a more empowered world. Our training solutions drive the world's knowledge transformation forward by uniting traditional learning experiences with the power of immersive, hands-on environments.

[Appsembler for Online Training](#) is used by companies like Redis Labs, Dremio, InterSystems, Progress Software, and more to inspire and educate external audiences like customers, resellers, and learners to achieve their full potential.



[Contact us](#) to learn how Appsembler can help you build your ideal customer training program with our bundled course authoring, customer delivery, and hands-on training products.

[Let's Talk](#)