

Performance Support Gets Even Smarter

Last month, we talked about the performance support spectrum and the various stages that go from Low Level (1), where support is in the form of scattered information to the Transformational Level (5), where support goes past being automated to being "smart."

So, what do we mean by *smart* performance support? We know this might be a little hard to imagine or it might sound a bit like science fiction, but smart performance support has the ability to observe and then evolve. As it evolves, it learns and becomes even smarter. It continually improves the support offered to the worker, without any additional effort. The only thing it needs is data!

Hopefully, you attended the [Big Data webinar](#) that Elliott Masie did for us. He demonstrated how data is being generated by everything we do and even things we don't! This large amount of data, in both content and context, provides intelligence for performance support to use to dynamically adapt the support to the worker.

Amazon was one of the first to use big data to create recommendations that are specifically targeted to their customers. As you probably know, when you shop on the Amazon site, it uses your profile and buying patterns, and combines it with all of their user data to find buying patterns of "other users like you" in real-time. It then uses that data to present you with buying recommendations.

Amazon offers a very *smart* shopping experience. When I go to the Amazon.com website, the pages I visit are customized just for me. As I shop, I'm presented with items "Frequently Bought Together", "Customers Who Viewed This Item Also Viewed", "More Recommendations for You", and of course "Your Recent History." I often end up buying things I didn't even know I needed! These recommendations are embedded into the website and use contextual data that is just enough to keep me shopping.

Are you seeing the link to performance support yet?

The shopping support that Amazon offers is not only deeply embedded, but it's embedded broadly. It's contextual in that it not only presents recommendations based on observing (like level 4), but those recommendations are continually evolving. And, the little pictures with hyperlinked titles are just enough to entice me to click through without being obtrusive. Pretty darned smart.

So, apply that to performance support. Instead of increasing purchases, we are increasing performance. The Significant Level (4) on the spectrum uses behavioral and contextual data to offer smart performance support. But, it really gets smart at the Transformational Level (5) where it offers support that continues to evolve based on data that has been gathered *over time*. The system now anticipates moments of need based on places where other workers have wanted support. It even adapts the kind of support offered based on the behavioral data it has about other *successful* employees. More about that in the next post.

Other readers like you who viewed this post also viewed the next one! Sorry, I couldn't resist.