

SAP Academy Individualizes Global Training at Scale with **Second Nature**

The Results

- ✓ Increased product sold by 21%
- ✓ Increased practice time 7x per person
- ✓ Increased opportunities by 32%
- ✓ Cut onboarding time by 20%

THE COMPANY

SAP is one of the world's largest providers of enterprise application software, with over 112,000 employees that cover 160 nationalities and 78 countries. Part of its success is due to the SAP Academy for Customer Success, an internal project that trains customer-facing role leaders.

THE PROBLEM

Scaling Remotely While Maintaining Individuality

Until COVID-19, SAP Academy ran in-person training, but then it had to adapt to support remote training. Training leaders searched for ways to maintain the same high quality of content and delivery that they achieved for in-person training. It was important for every lesson to "teach by doing," but traditional one-on-one training methods were not working for increased numbers of remote trainees.

The SAP Academy team wanted to teach its Associates to effectively listen to customers, understand their pain points, and communicate SAP's value messaging, while accommodating differing learning preferences. At the same time, it needed Associates to become familiar with its diverse customers, which cover 30+ industries ranging from oil and gas to retail.

THE SOLUTION

Second Nature's AI-powered Role Play Training

- Second Nature's AI role plays delivered realistic, multilingual sales training experience
- Gamified learning boosted engagement across in-person and remote cohorts
- Role plays were fast to create and refine using existing training content

SAP Academy introduced Second Nature to run AI-powered role plays that deliver realistic, engaging training experiences with timely feedback, to prepare trainees for its multi-industry, multilingual customers. Topics included industry challenges, negotiation skills, product demos, and discovery calls.

The team used the AI training platform to gamify the learning journey with missions, leaderboards, and bite-sized content, delivering AI role plays to both their in-person and growing remote training base. They offered incentives for progress, and encouraged Associates to experiment freely with their own conversational styles.

It is quick and easy for SAP Academy's training leaders to prepare the necessary role plays. They simply fill in a form to answer key questions, and then they can refine the role plays generated by the system through natural conversation. SAP Academy training personnel also feed in existing training content, like weekly quizzes, to turn them into role play training conversations. Most of the work involves deciding which scenarios to cover and how they wanted Associates to interact with the customers.

THE RESULTS

Happy Trainees and Higher Standards of Service

SAP Academy trainees enjoy the new training experiences, onboarding time has dropped, and both customer service standards and sales are soaring.

Higher Standards of Customer Service

SAP saw a rise of 21% in sales volume and 32% in opportunities at the same time as onboarding time dropped by 20%. Overall, with Second Nature, SAP gains employees who are better prepared, reach productivity faster, and are equipped to deliver exceptional customer service.

Instead of having representatives learn only on the job, SAP ensures its Associates are fully trained to interact optimally with customers. Going back to human-only role play training is not on the table.

7x

More
practice time

20%

Drop in
onboarding time

21%

More
product sold

32%

Increase in
opportunities

Better Role Play Conversations at Scale

SAP Academy now trains 600 associates each year. Each associate completes 6-10 different role play courses, totalling thousands of role plays annually, so it wouldn't be humanly possible to offer this level of support without AI.

Associates took advantage of the option for unlimited practice, with practice time soaring by 7x per person. What's more, Second Nature significantly improved the quality of practice conversations, providing role play partners that are always knowledgeable and never miss a word.

A Safe Space for Practice

When SAP Academy associates were asked about the benefits of Second Nature, they were clear and specific. They pointed to:

- A safe space where they felt comfortable speaking up
- The opportunity to learn from their mistakes
- Reduced anxiety when just starting out
- Increased confidence from learning in a lower-stress environment
- Highly realistic conversations

"It was a great way to practice over and over till I felt comfortable being able to speak to our key differentiators as well as our main selling points," said one SAP Academy Associate.

”

It's been quite a tool for both worlds, the remote and in person because the actual learners have the chance to do it their own way, at their own pace, at their own time, as many times as they want. And we are still complying with the learning objectives that we wanted to achieve, which was standardizing value messages, making sure that the right things were communicated to our customers.

IVAN AGUILAR-DUCLAUD
GLOBAL SOLUTION ADVISORY MANAGER

Consistent Globalized Training on an Individual Level

The SAP Academy now delivers seamless globalized training. The AI role play personas and timely feedback are always available, 24/7, in every timezone. Second Nature's platform allowed Associates to express themselves in their own style while conforming to SAP's requirements for communicating value and benefits. With Second Nature, SAP Academy could standardize value messaging and align with learning objectives, while giving Associates the freedom to communicate in their own way and their own language. The AI also does a good job of picking up on accents and interpreting what is said by an associate who may be speaking in their second language.

"I could practice, practice, practice at my own pace," said one Associate.

Actionable, Constructive and Consistent Feedback

SAP Academy noted that AI-powered feedback is always consistent, so Associates always receive the constructive, unbiased feedback they need to learn and improve.

Second Nature's timely feedback also delivers significant value to managers, enabling them to see user progress and know which learning objectives to reinforce and which are perfectly done. Second Nature takes over time-consuming tasks like evaluation, lightening the load for SAP Academy's training leadership and freeing up more time for managers.