

# Improved Training Reach with Custom Training Feature of Atomic Learning

Francis Howell is one of the largest school districts in Missouri. This makes it challenging for training staff to provide support, and is the reason why the district implemented the Atomic Learning solution to provide professional development and training to thousands of staff and students.

“It’s very difficult to meet the technology professional development demands of our teachers with only two full-time technology specialists,” said Gina Hartman, an Instructional Technology Specialist for the Francis Howell District.

The ability to add customized training within Atomic Learning is one of the features the district uses most, providing the IT team the ability to upload district and school specific content to address the training needs that aren’t already met by Atomic Learning’s online library of training resources.

“One way we’re using the custom feature is building online workshops for teachers to learn how to create websites using the SharpSchool<sup>SM</sup> program,” said Hartman, who has been thrilled with the progress made in a short time. “In our first year of implementing Atomic Learning, we added 10 buildings—and created district-specific training series on SharpSchool<sup>SM</sup>.”

“What I really like about the custom training feature is we can include videos, PDFs and handouts, all in one place, together,” stated Hartman. The ability to add PDFs

## **Problem:**

Limited support staff, multiple platforms, inconvenient training times and reduced budget.

## **Solution:**

Cost-effective custom online training platform, available 24/7

## **Outcome:**

Extended, improved training reach to meet the needs of teachers and staff



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Instructional Technology Specialist  
Francis Howell School District

and documents, such as user guides or examples of projects, further extends the reach of current training efforts.

The Francis Howell School District also uses the custom training feature of Atomic Learning to share one of the high school's Codes of Conduct, which includes videos made by district staff and students to provide a creative alternative to a lengthy handbook or administrator presentation.

“One of our high schools was looking for a creative way to talk to their students about the Code of Conduct, by getting the students involved, they created short videos based on the Code of Conduct as a way to communicate the lengthy rules,” Hartman stated.

Also featured in Francis Howell's training library is the employee reference guide which features Human Resources training on district-specific software and equipment.

Another district that implemented the custom training feature is Renton School District in Washington, which serves 14,500 students and 750 staff in 24 schools. The district has found that the summer is the most popular time for professional development and training, and Atomic Learning's solution allows the teachers and staff to get training where and when they want it.

“One of the reasons we looked at Atomic Learning

initially was because of the small staff that is tasked with training all staff on technology. We wanted to put a resource in place to serve our staff with a just-in-time professional development concept,” Brooke Trisler, Director of Instructional Technology at Renton shared. “We also wanted a way to track usage, and Atomic Learning can do that.”

Another convenience Renton wanted was to have the training all in one place. “With custom training, staff and students can find and access external resources they need from one location,” Trisler said.

Custom training is developed by several different people at Renton. According to Trisler, “Members of the training staff, help desk contacts, and instructional technology staff have given input on and helped create training.”

Renton has found that by creating a template for departments to use as a guide helps speed up the process for creating content. “Since the departments are the experts on the content they want to include, they simply enter the content into the template and work with the training staff to develop the videos to be included in the custom training series,” Trisler stated.

Each district uses a variety of programs for creating training videos including Camtasia® or Jing® to record video from screen captures, and even PowerPoint® presentations with voiceover. When

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creating content, Trisler recommends getting a good microphone—preferably connected by USB—so the audio is clear on the videos.

Training staff at both Francis Howell and Renton school districts look forward to expanding their custom training libraries as the technology available in their districts continues to grow. “Our content library continues to grow as we work with other staff, and even other districts, to make it the best it can be,” Trisler stated. “Hopefully by next year we’ll have 2-3 times as much training as we do now.”

Atomic Learning’s custom training feature helps districts meet the professional development needs of teachers, staff and even students. With a variety of challenges such as budget cuts, over-burdened training teams and multiple buildings to provide training to, many districts have found Atomic Learning’s technology training solution and the custom training feature extends the reach of their limited resources.

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