

Ketchum & Nomadic

Evolving and implementing a global
strategic initiative through digital learning.



Nomadic Learning 2015

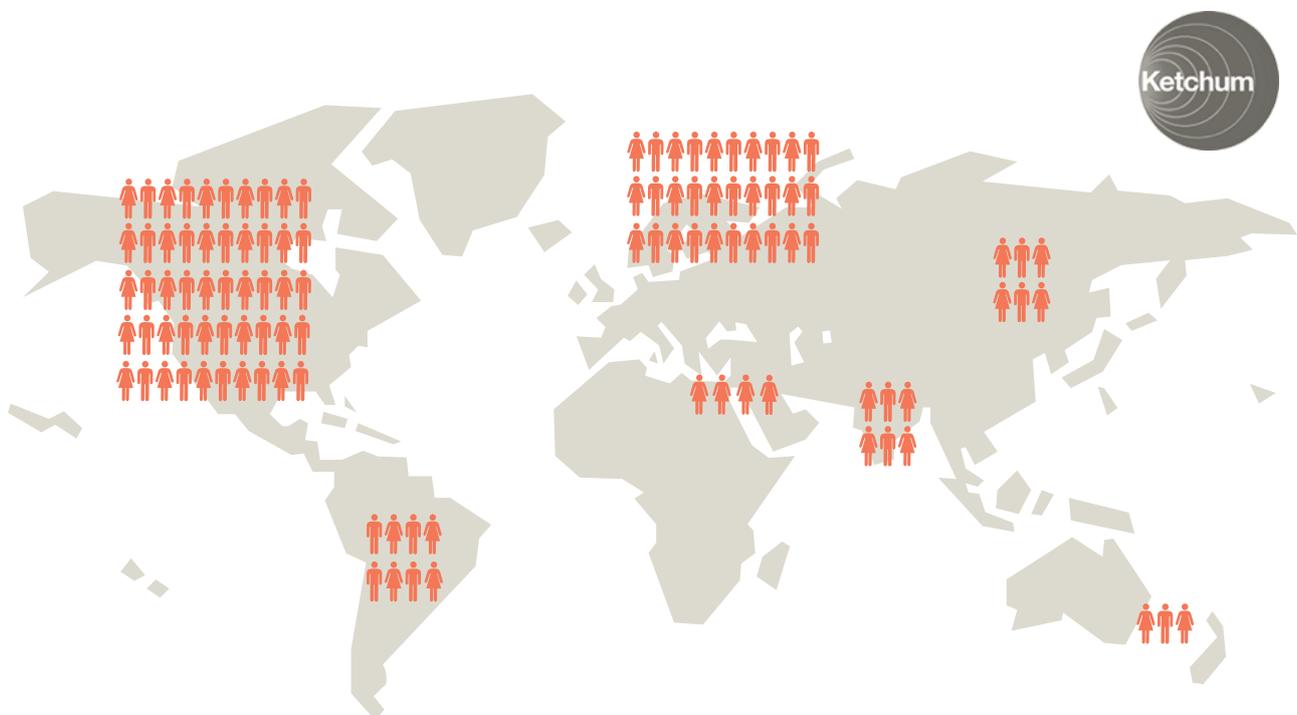
The Problem

Successful implementation of a new strategy depends on the support and buy-in of everyone in the organization. But getting that support is difficult. Asking 1000s of employees to not only support but also help shape the strategy sounds impossible.

Ketchum, a global PR company and part of the Omnicom Group, knew they had no alternative. The entire marketing communications industry is in a state of flux as the evolving digital and social media landscape demands new approaches to reaching audiences. The industry is moving from top-down mass messaging to multi-directional conversations where everyone has a point of view. As a leading communications firm, Ketchum needed to figure out how to practice internally what they preach externally.

They couldn't just introduce a new strategic direction from the top and expect wholesale buy-in; the era of "trickle-down" strategy at Ketchum was over long ago. The company was too diverse and too global, with different local markets demanding unique applications of any overarching strategy.

Ketchum had to find a way to get every client-facing employee around the world creatively engaging with one another about their strategy and delivering meaningful feedback to senior leadership. But how?



- 74 offices around the world
- 2400+ employees
- Part of the \$14b Omnicom communications company with 70,000+ employees

The Solution

Ketchum engaged Nomadic to build a digital learning solution that involved every client-facing employee in a meaningful conversation about the company's strategy. Key objectives for the program included:

1. Engaging a very time pressured and reluctant audience
2. Creating meaningful conversations on how the strategy could be implemented locally
3. Enabling sharing of best practice between colleagues in different offices around the world
4. Creating two-way learning between younger members of the Ketchum team and more senior leaders.
5. Ensuring every client facing employee understood the new strategy, felt ownership of it and could implement it in local contexts.
6. Surfacing insights to help the Executive Committee adapt and refine their strategy, whilst uncovering hidden leadership talent.

In response to these challenges Nomadic developed a 6-Field Manual program featuring a careful blend of content, delivered through a customized version of Nomadic's cohort-based social learning platform. The program features cases and concepts elicited directly from Ketchum's internal experts combined with content drawn from Nomadic's existing content library.



Fig. 1.1 Example Field Manual from the Ketchum program

Every Field Manual is a blend of different types of media, including videos, text, audio and interactive, and leads participants to engage in conversations with their peers around the content they've just viewed and how it applies to Ketchum's strategy.

The program was delivered through Nomadic's cohort-based social learning platform, featuring team and individual leaderboards, a conversation feed, favorites and notes, user profiles, and admin and analytics tools to manage learners and track progress.

The program was fully responsive, available on any device with a browser from smartphones and tablets to PC's and Laptops.

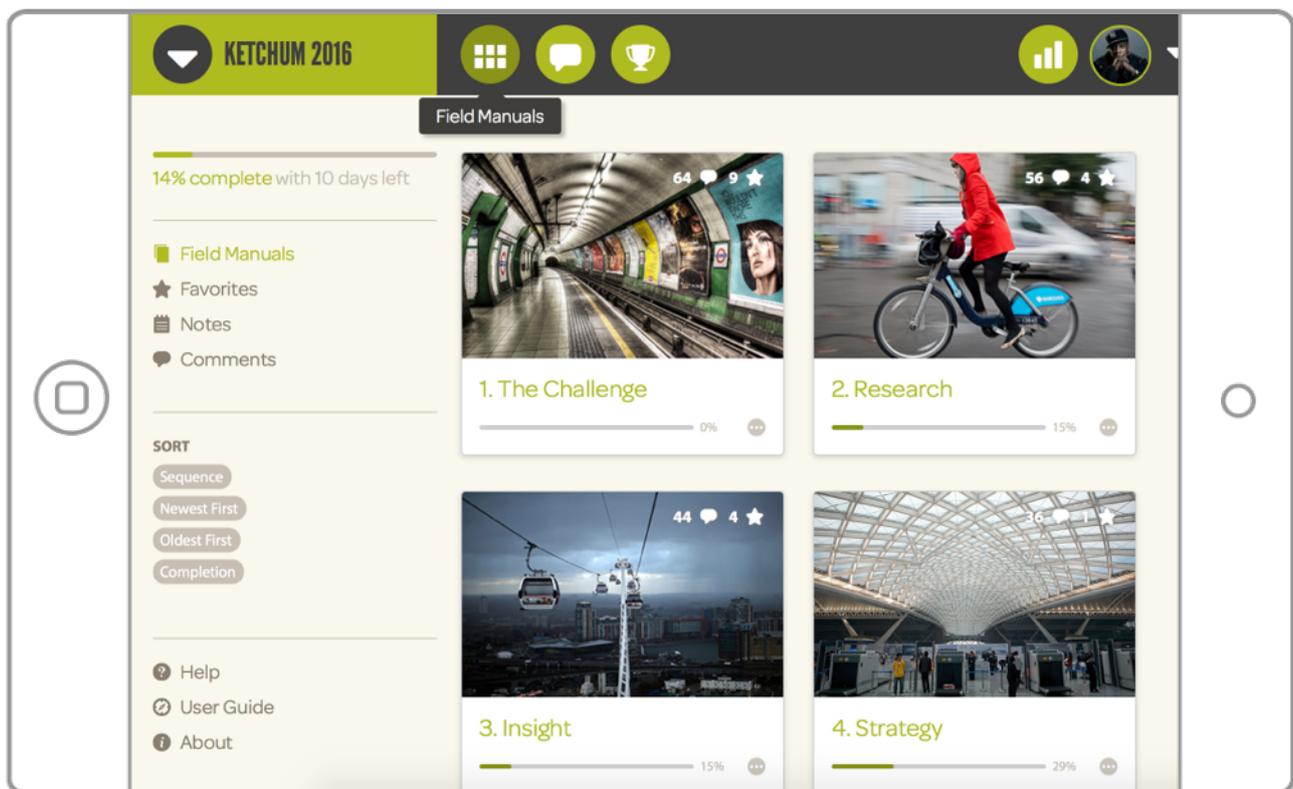


Fig. 1.2 Customized version of Nomadic's cohort-based social learning platform

Rollout

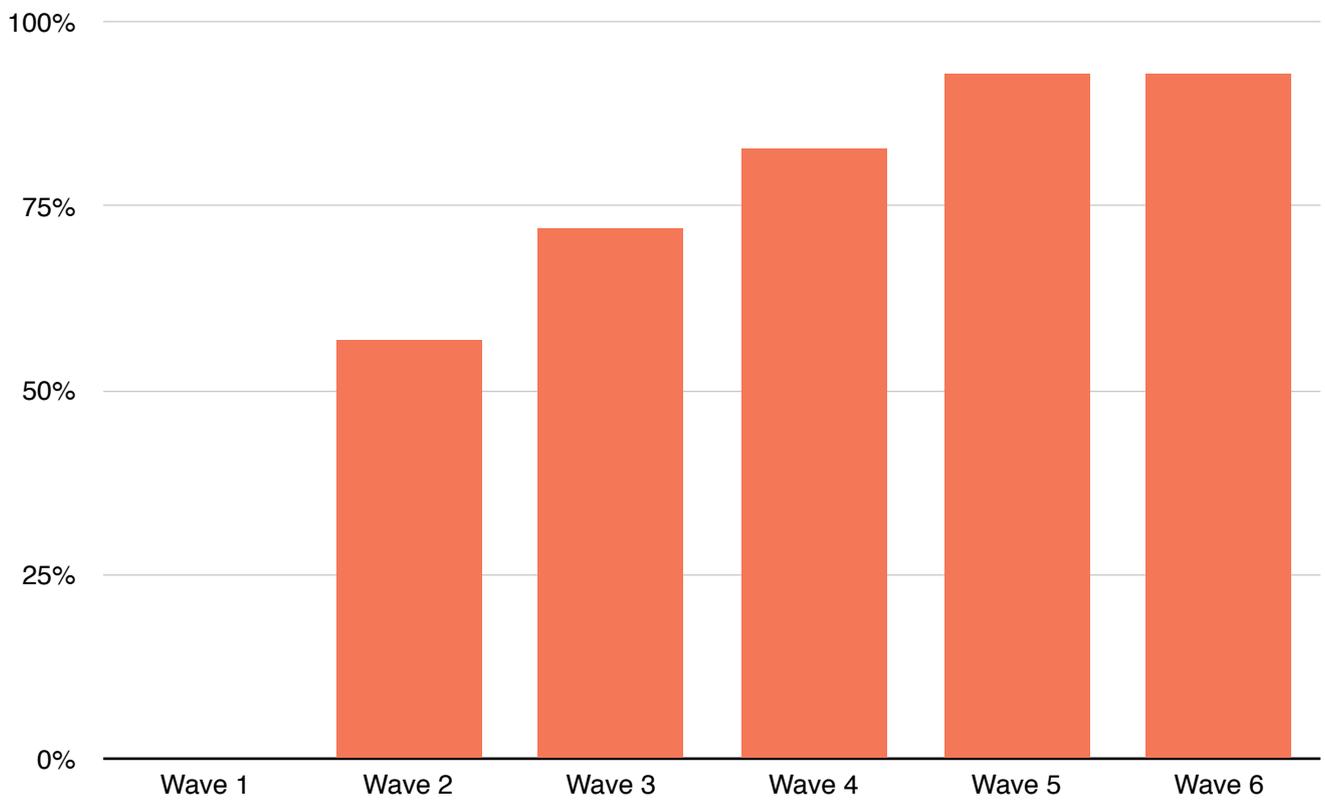
The program was rolled out in waves, each wave containing roughly 200 client facing employees. Participants had 4 weeks to complete the program with an estimated total time commitment of 8 hours per user. A total of 7 waves have been run so far.

Within each wave learners were divided into cohorts of c.30 users. Learners experienced the program within their cohort, sharing ideas and best practice while collaborating to beat other cohorts on a team leaderboard. Cohorts were carefully designed to maximize interactions

between employees in different global offices, and interactions between more senior and more junior employees.

Program awareness grew over time:

% of participants who were aware of the program before they participated in it by wave:



Awareness of the program gradually grew as participants took the program and started talking about it. A real buzz about the program was slowly generated from the bottom up.

A truly “nomadic” experience:

% of users who accessed at home, at work and while travelling:



73%



71%



28%

Results: Engaging a Global Audience

The program was overwhelmingly successful at engaging a reluctant and time starved audience. We successfully created meaningful connections between employees in different offices around the world and between senior and more junior employees.

An extremely high percentage of users completed the program:

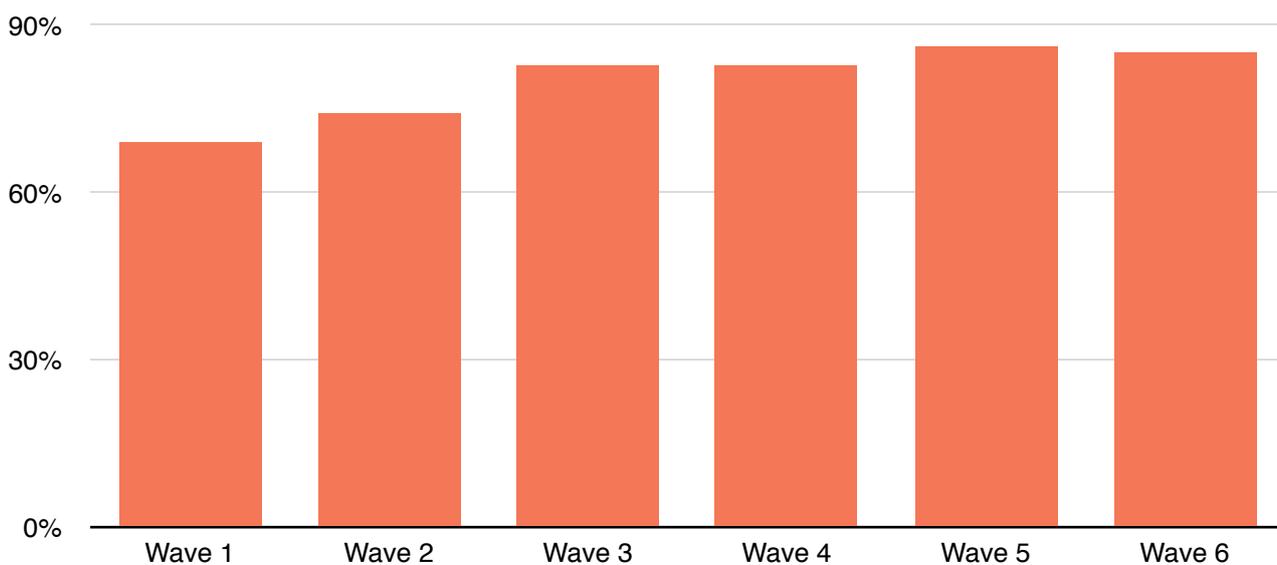
Avg. Completion*:



82.2%

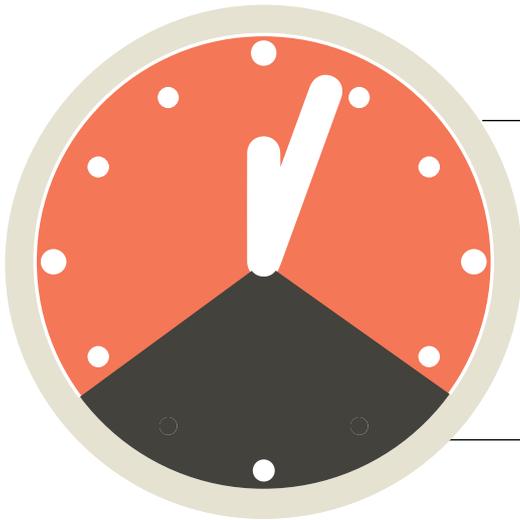
**to complete each field manual users had to not only complete all the content e.g. watch all videos, read all pages, take all quizzes and polls, they also had to submit a comment in every discussion section and vote on the best comments made by their peers.*

Avg. Completion by Wave:



Completion steadily rose from wave to wave as learners became increasingly aware of the value of the program.

Conversations kept learners engaged for longer:



8717 hrs

Total time spent using the program (6.3 hrs / user)

2688 hrs

Time spent interacting with peers in discussion threads. (31% of total time spent online)

“

I really liked the interaction with international colleagues and the whole setup. You really had to think about what you were writing, making you really deal with all the topics and tasks.

- Consultant, Munich

Overall, a wonderful experience, so it's hard to pinpoint exactly one thing, but I'd go for interacting with colleagues from all over the world.

- Managing Editor, Dusseldorf

I loved the interaction - being able to see other participant's comments and thoughts especially from all around the world!

- Account Executive, New York

Appreciate the interest of the Management into its employees opinions and ideas, that's how agencies have to work today:-)

- Executive, Paris

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Results: Surfacing Ideas

Discussion threads, interwoven into the learning content, were critical to surfacing ideas for how Ketchum could evolve their strategy and adapt it to local conditions. Peer voting helped bring the best ideas to everyone's attention while Ketchum's high level support of the program helped ideas get implemented.

Comments & votes were critical to surfacing new ideas:

19,439

(14 per person)

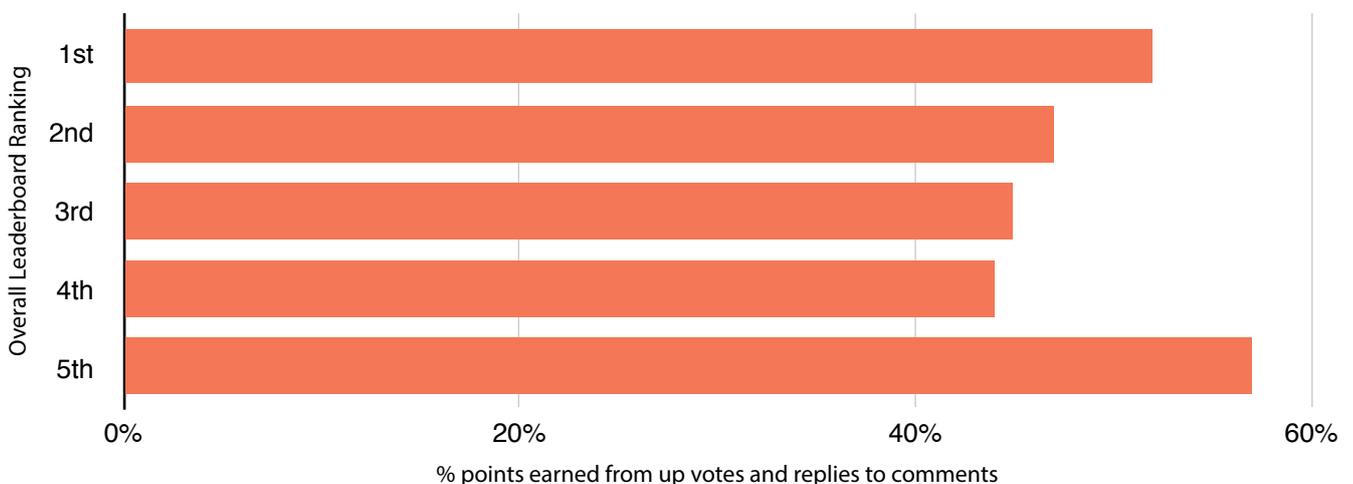
28,327

(20 per person)

The top-30 ideas from each wave were reviewed by the CLO and CEO to determine how Ketchum can best implement its strategy in local contexts.

Competition motivated learners to excel:

Individual and team leaderboards “gamified” the program and motivated learners. Users earned points towards their leaderboard ranking by completing field manuals, answering quiz questions correctly and for receiving up votes or replies to comments they made. A close correlation emerged between users who made the best comments (measured by up votes and replies) and overall leaderboard ranking.



The top 10 learners from the entire program will form a Strategy Advisory Group to the CEO, and will be engaged in Ketchum’s strategy presentation at the annual Partners meeting.

“

The gamification is genius - my competitive spirit is limited to new business pitches and could typically care less about ‘winning’ something with points like this, but boy did I find myself checking the leader board.”

Director, Strategic & Creative Planning, New York

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Results: Implementing the Strategy

As well as generating insights and ideas for how Ketchum's strategy could be improved and adapted, the program was also very successful at preparing employees to implement Ketchum's strategy.

Ketchum's preparedness to implement their strategy is unparalleled in their industry:

% of users felt they were fully prepared to implement the strategy after completing the program.

74%

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My work is a lot more structured now and I have a much deeper understanding of what we are doing and why we are doing it in a certain way.

- Trainee, Germany

I think it helps you think about your client needs in a more complete way. I have already carried out a (Ketchum's strategy) experience with a client and the business results for the client were absolutely fantastic!

- Associate Director, Madrid

The program did a great job at breaking down (Ketchum's strategy) in a truly digestible way. I feel like I walked away with a much more clear idea of how to apply these processes to a client.

- Senior Account Executive, New York

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User Feedback

Users loved the content and the usability of the platform most:



4.2/5



4.1/5

Content (left) and Usability (right) rating (5=Excellent / 4 = very good).

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The technology used in this training was phenomenal. It blended listening, visual, polls, quizzes, really a ton of things that made it all around good for everyone's unique learning needs.

- Consultant, New York

I especially loved the case studies and 'practice' examples. I've gone back to reference the Nomadic modules multiple times since ending the program.

- Account Executive, Chicago

The system is awesome. It tracks your progress across multiple devices and you can do it on your smart phone. All the examples were interesting. I was genuinely interested in hearing about the Zara and Mad Men stories. It made doing the exercises much more fun.

- Medical Writer, London

The amazing examples and case studies provided throughout really helped bring the value of (Ketchum's Strategy) to life.

- Account Supervisor, DC

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Overall, users were very satisfied with the program:



4.12 / 5

5=Extremely Satisfied, 4 = Very Satisfied.

85% of learners were very or extremely satisfied with the program.

“

I was truly impressed with this top notch programme. Although there were quite a few modules to digest, it went so smoothly that I almost forgot to be in a 'prepped' environment! It was like playing a game and that I needed to get to the next level asap. Content wise it was top too. It's in fact the best programme I have ever participated in, seriously. Whoever developed it, and whoever decided to roll out the programme globally and for all client facing consultants: chapeau!

- Managing Director, Ketchum Belgium

Bravo to Ketchum and its leadership for taking the bold step of clearly outlining our agency's strategy and then putting together a cutting-edge course that teaches every single staff member where we are going and how to get there. This, to me, is leadership functioning at the highest level.

- Senior Vice President, Group Manager, New York

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Conclusion

The program resulted in an explosion of ideas, comments, and conversations that span the globe. New connections among Ketchum's people have been made, previously unseen talent was identified, and powerful new business opportunities and client solutions discovered. Ketchum people are seeing first-hand that great ideas can come from any level and any geography. Most important, Ketchum is achieving a level of alignment around their emerging global strategy that is unprecedented in their industry. Even better, the strategy itself is being debated and improved by Ketchum's employees, globally.