

HiQ uses Sony PSP (PlayStation Portable) in training for AstraZeneca

HiQ was given an order by AstraZeneca to create interactive training for the Group's marketing companies within AstraZeneca GI (Gastro-Intestinal). The result was game-based training – The AstraZeneca Code – that incorporates a Sony PSP (PlayStation Portable).

AstraZeneca GI (Gastro-Intestinal) holds an annual conference focusing on strategic marketing issues. Marketing staff from its marketing companies all over the world who work in the gastrointestinal sphere meet up to learn what's new as well as to exchange experiences. This year the conference was held at the company's head office in Mölndal in November.

"AstraZeneca was looking for a more creative way to train participants at this year's conference. The aim was to get the participants to discuss certain strategic issues using engaging means. In response to these requirements HiQ developed The AstraZeneca Code – training that takes the form of a game in which the participants use a Sony PSP to solve the tasks," says Oskar Eklund, Account Manager at HiQ.

"It is based around a story about a ship that has sunk with critical information on board. The participants were divided into teams and then used a games terminal to steer an underwater camera around the ship to look for information. The team had an hour in which to locate the information, discuss it and submit answers to questions. This qualified them for a competition that offered a Sony PSP as first prize," continues Eklund.

"We liked HiQ's idea straight away, though it was a bit nerve-racking just as the teams were given their games stations and were about to start – after all, we were breaking new ground and had never tried anything like this before at our strategy conferences. But the reaction exceeded our expectations. Nobody was negative – on the contrary, everyone thought it was fun, exciting and not least a good way of learning," says Ewa Rockmyr, Global eMarketing Manager at AstraZeneca.

HiQ faced several challenges during the development period. One was that the target group were relatively unused to games like this. By focusing on the content and minimising the interface, however, the solution was able to be adapted to suit the users. The solution uses Macromedia Flash to develop the game, a completely new way of developing this type of solution.

"We have been playing around with the idea of creating customised games applications for the Sony PSP for a long time. When AstraZeneca came to us with their inquiry it seemed an obvious opportunity to present such a suggestion. Naturally we are incredibly proud of the confidence that AstraZeneca placed in us to develop this solution," concludes Eklund.

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HiQ is an IT and management consultancy company focusing on high-tech solutions in the fields of communications, software development and simulation technology. The company is a leader in these fields and the Nordic region is its domestic market. HiQ employs nearly 750 people at offices in Sweden, Finland and Denmark. HiQ is listed on the Nordic Exchange's MidCap list. For more information, please visit www.hiq.se