



The US Specialty Food Association

BRINGING EVERYONE TOGETHER

Innovative Strategies
for the Food Industry
are Taking on the World

Phil Kafarakis
President SFA

AI and Robotics

Machines Can't Dream

ECONOMICS

The World Economy in 2018

In the tenth year since the start of the global financial crisis, the US economy reached a new high-water mark, and the global economy exceeded expectations. But...

LE FONTI AWARDS
DUBAI 2017

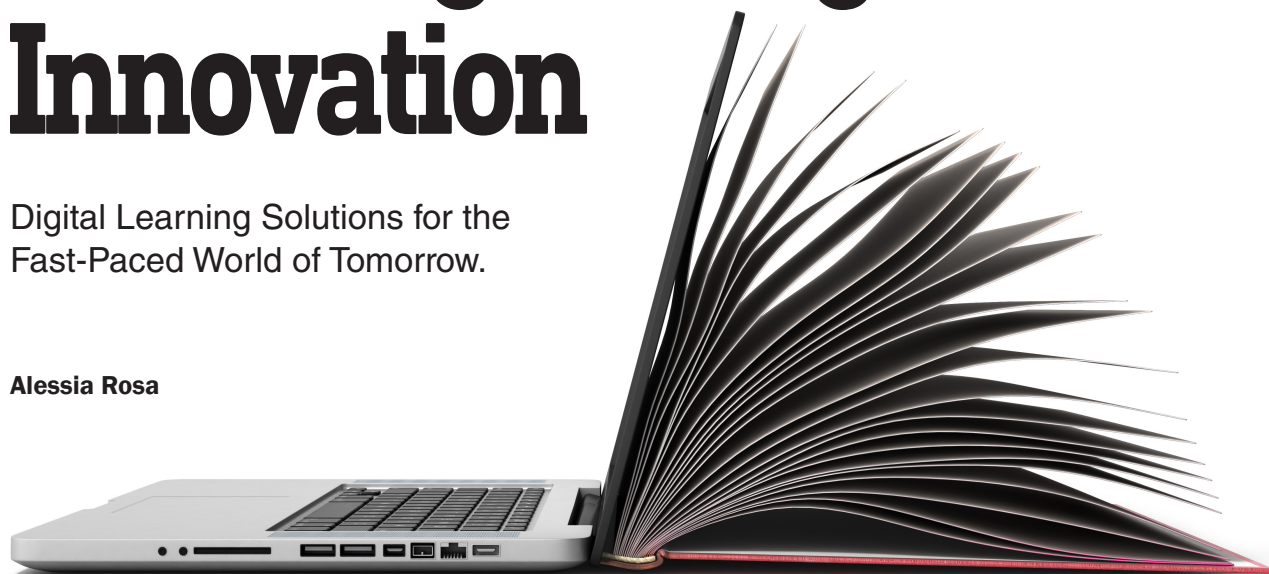


AMICUCCI FORMAZIONE

Learning through Innovation

Digital Learning Solutions for the Fast-Paced World of Tomorrow.

Alessia Rosa



CIVITANOVA MARCHE - Amicucci Formazione is a family-owned business leader in the provision of training material to companies interested in acquiring new techniques and methodologies for learning a wide range of on-the-job and off-the-job concepts. Amicucci's distinctive training model is based on micro-learning, gamification, and a multimedia format that ensures a high level of engagement through its visual appeal. What distinguishes Amicucci from its competitors is its absolute commitment to providing clients with a digital approach in training.

Amicucci Formazione works for high profile Italian multinationals in 14

languages via the Skilla.com brand. The company has now announced itself on the international market with the unique multimedia Skilla Library, offering micro-learning training in management skills and soft skills in English, German and Italian, soon available also in French and Spanish. WEIE took the opportunity to sit down and ask Federico and Marco Amicucci, sons of the company's CEO, Franco Amicucci, some key questions about the company and their accomplishments. We think their answers live up to Amicucci's reputation. Read on and see why.

YOU HAVE BEEN PROMOTING THE DIGITAL CULTURE FOR

SEVERAL YEARS NOW. IN LIGHT OF THIS, HOW HAS EDUCATION CHANGED IN RECENT YEARS BOTH IN ITALY AND ABROAD?

Training has been evolving rapidly; its mission today is to guide organizations towards the continuous innovation and development of skills needed to keep pace with today's digital revolution.

Traditional training models, based on lessons and conferences, are no longer efficient, and traditional eLearning itself is in a crisis. Training today has become more agile, continuous, pervasive, multi-channel and multi-focus than ever before. The methodologies, delivery channels and materials provided are all continuously changing. Virtual

learning environments, together with personalized training and coaching, experiential training, learning communities and on-the-job training are all growing considerably. Company roles are changing too; for example, it's not uncommon to see younger staff, even without the appropriate seniority, tutoring their managers to help them bridge their own digital skills gap!

HOW DID THE SKILLA IDEA COME ABOUT? WHAT COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES DID YOU ADOPT TO PROMOTE THIS INNOVATIVE LEARNING METHOD?

Skilla was created to innovate the way company training is implemented; this is because company training is no longer fulfilling the continuous and rapidly growing needs of learners. To fill this gap, Skilla has been developed and highlights two groups of learning models: 1. A new eLearning model based on micro-learning and an engaging, appealing multimedia delivery of content, sustained by advanced design, television-quality animation, gaming and continuous interactivity. Skilla is the first in Italy to respond to students' needs for continuous, rapid, bite-size learning. 2. Blended learning models, often delivered by internal trainers, integrating smaller and shorter classrooms, efficiently combining micro-learning, coaching, gamification, flipped classrooms, and storytelling, to create highly engaging "learning paths" for staff. Our model has been rapidly established

BIOGRAPHIES

Federico Amicucci

An expert in digital skills, digital literacy and soft skills evaluation. Federico has trained more than 2000 people over the years in the use of the internet and new technologies, via classroom teaching and reverse mentoring courses. In Amicucci Formazione, he looks after the products and services focussed on the propagation of digital skills, including courses designed for managers and frame-works on the use of new technologies for continuous professional development.



Marco Amicucci

A specialist in distance learning, new media and digital communication. Since 2008, Marco has worked for multinationals and major Italian organizations, for whom he has designed and coordinated internal communication campaigns, innovative training projects and eLearning initiatives. In Amicucci Formazione, Marco is responsible for strategy and management control.



in the most high-profile Italian organizations and multinational companies, because it has been recognized as breaking with traditional training formats and responding to the new digital cultures adopted by many modern structured companies. Some of Amicucci's innovations have been quite radical. For instance, we created an eLearning model for soft skills and digital skills comprising 15-minute bite-size courses, while in the marketplace such courses covering the same topics are typically two or four hours long. Amicucci demonstrated that 15 minutes of high-quality learning can be even more effective than a four-hour course! Prestigious, world-renowned luxury and automotive brands were the first to grasp the value of our innovative methods by adopting the "Skilla training method", which has

now become the company's flagship brand. In the early years, word-of-mouth and technical magazine surveys were the primary means by which our innovative learning methodology was publicized. More recently, the television, radio, and the internet have become key media channels. Finally, Skilla was the main elearning platform adopted at EXPO2015 in Milan, an accomplishment which allowed us to gain praise not only in Italy but also around the world.

WHAT ARE THE KEY CHARACTERISTICS WHICH DISTINGUISH THE SKILLA LIBRARY PLATFORM FROM THE COMPETITION?

In terms of method and content, the Skilla Library has features which are internationally distinctive. The contents cover a multitude of organisational training needs from training of new staff to management.

SPOTLIGHT

The Library contents support a wide range of HR processes, from talent management to performance management, from project management to organizational soft skills, and from business “core values” campaigns to corporate social responsibility. In the next few years, “digital skills” will be the Library component undergoing the most extensive development, with hundreds of micro-learning activities. Thanks to digital skills, students will be able to ride the digital “waves” without drowning in them.

The micro-learning method and the multiple delivery styles we use to create a course on a single skill are the results of intensive research activity, with 8 PhD programmes dedicated to our method, and books and scientific publications which have in turn validated its efficiency. By using the Skilla Library, our clients will reduce the time spent in the classroom for learning by 50 percent. For example, one of our clients, a bank with over 4,000 employees, recently placed 200 students in a negotiation course. In previous years, the course would have been exclusively classroom-based and would have lasted three days. Using Skilla Library, the classroom component was reduced by one day thanks to 25 “Skilla Library learning pills” which were integrated into the course. In this way, the classroom was transformed into a sort of gym, with exercises and simulations, and with no theoretical slides or presentations. Everyone benefited, including those who didn’t physically attend class, thanks

to the online “Learning Pills”.

IN ADDITION TO ONLINE LEARNING SOLUTIONS, DO YOU ALSO OFFER CLASSROOM TRAINING OR BLENDED MODE PACKAGES? WHAT ARE ITS ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES?

Our online solutions are created using the method of micro-learning. This allows learners and organisations to use parts of our courses, whether to make classroom-based, teacher-led learning more innovative and engaging, or for on-the-job learning to support work



performance. The blended learning model is rapidly becoming more widespread, with time divided amongst classroom, eLearning, webinars, project work and experimental laboratories. These new training models provide more engaging learning paths than the traditional training format of the teacher lecturing passive students. Besides e-learning solutions, we offer consultancy and train-the-trainer courses as an incentive to create a new training culture in organizations. We

also train groups of trainers/coaches within organizations to give them the tools to plan and manage blended learning sessions. Finally, we provide intensive classroom-based education as a means to transfer core digital skills to employees within an organization. This activity is fundamental because it compensates for the lack of progressive digital skills, allowing us to provide innovative training methodologies to our clients through elearning.

HOW IMPORTANT IS SELF-EDUCATION TODAY? HOW DO COMPANY HRS APPROACH NEW DIGITAL LEARNING TOOLS?

Learning continuously is a fundamental characteristic of today’s learning process and will remain so in the future. Our society is evolving rapidly, and the technological revolution demands continuous up-skilling and re-skilling of people whether for work or pleasure; our training is deeply involved in this transformation. Keeping up-to-date professionally via traditional classroom-based methods remains difficult; in our opinion, a major educational process of self-directed learning and a new approach to learning and development will be required for companies to succeed and excel in the years ahead. Organizations will need to create online-learning environments for their staff to be used for self-directed learning whenever needed and, especially, wherever needed. Human Resources are involved in this innovative process as well, since all HR activities will

be involved in digitalization, from recruitment to onboarding to skills development.

IN AN INCREASINGLY DIGITAL WORLD, DO YOU OFFER EDUCATIONAL SOLUTIONS ACCESSIBLE FROM DIGITAL DEVICES?

Our entire offer is accessible on a wide range of devices (smartphone, tablet and desktop). Smartphones have profoundly changed our lives. Educational content must adapt to a modern lifestyle and workplace, and not just adapt to the technological device on which it has been accessed. In marketing, the number of touchpoints and interactions with clients has multiplied; the approach has now become omni-channel. Therefore, learning opportunities for people are also multiplying, which has, in turn, led to omni-channel learning. The real

PC before the start of the work day, or perhaps at a meeting room by exploring relevant content on a tablet.

To be able to offer the best learning experience, you need to put yourself in the user's shoes and pay close attention to how often they use the material and why. As a result, you need to create learning material which is coherent with its usage, and we have come to realize that it needs to be short and sharp as well as accessible on any electronic device. The real challenge for the future is to create flexible learning paths accessible on technological devices such as smart watches or virtual reality headsets.

WHAT ARE YOUR GOALS FOR 2018?

Today we are leaders in the training industry in Italy; Italian companies and organizations have the same challenges as their counterparts in the rest of

these demands, which are common to all European businesses. Our entire catalogue of courses is already available in Italian, English and German, and will soon be available in French, Spanish, Russian and other languages. Our dream goal is to find commercial partners in every European country who share the same passion for beautiful, efficient, engaging and pleasant learning that we share.

IN ADDITION, WE WOULD LIKE TO CONTINUE TO DEVELOP TECHNOLOGIES AND APPS FOR LEARNING,

from solutions designed for fast-paced mobile learning, to developing technologies that improve the learning experience in the classroom. In 2018, we will be organizing the third edition of "Exploring eLearning", an event dedicated to eLearning for business. An event for hundreds of trainers and HR managers representing an opportunity for debate, for the exchange of ideas and for community-building. It's not only a training event designed to enable the acquisition of the skills needed to manage the rapid evolution of organisations' learning and development systems and processes, but also a space in which we can build the future of eLearning through workshops and laboratories alongside businesses. The real, strategic objective of 2018 remains the same every year: to further develop our passion for innovative approaches to learning and to managing change in organisations. **WEIE**

LEARNING TOMORROW

A MAJOR EDUCATIONAL PROCESS OF SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING AND A NEW APPROACH TO LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT WILL BE REQUIRED FOR COMPANIES TO SUCCEED AND EXCEL IN THE YEARS AHEAD.

innovation here is not technological. The learning material has been streamlined to be adapted to modern lifestyles. The micro-learning method provides the learner with the opportunity to continue learning, during a taxi ride with the smartphone, or at his desk on his

Europe. There is an accelerated rate of social and technological change in our society and, hence, there is a need for more rapid and efficient learning solutions; employee engagement is an integral part of this process. Our approach to e-Learning responds to