D2L BRIGHTSPACE

Success Stories

Learning Experiences That Matter

Orenda Learning pivots to online learning to help learners achieve sustainable development goals.

Orenda Learning is an educational consultancy firm that guides education providers to foster connection and collaboration between students and the community through the implementation of best practice service programmes. Orenda Learning is the provider of Be The Change (BTC)—an online programme in service for young people. BTC delivers a robust service curriculum through engaging lessons and a selection of carefully curated resources.

The BTC programme is powered by the D2L Brightspace. Orenda Learning offers a wide range of services to support education providers in the development of incredible service programs for learners.

ORENDA LEARNING

Challenge

In support of its core mission to foster active global citizenship through education, Orenda Learning offers an innovative program for young people in high school (BTC for High Schools) as well as home schoolers, un schoolers, GAP year students and university aged students (BTC for Independent Learners). They have plans to develop the BTC for primary and middle school students as well. Their BTC programme aims to engage the younger generation and motivate them to associate and bond with the world by empowering them to engage in quality service action.

As early adopters of learning management systems (LMS), the institute's founder and educators were no strangers to education technology and the potential of online learning.

They launched the BTC programme in 2020. Shortly, COVID-19 pandemic struck, making online education more pertinent than ever before. They were not completely satisfied with their original LMS and started looking for an alternative, better, and more innovative platform.

They needed an innovative platform beyond a conventional LMS which could cater to a broader demographic of learners—from primary to corporate and independent learners. They were looking for a platform to present a cohesive curriculum in an appealing and easy-to-use way for educators and learners.

Another challenge they were facing with their former LMS was the lack of a visually appealing user interface. Visual dynamics are crucial for student engagement. A joint **study** by Cleveland State University and The University of Akron had found that interface design and appeal affected the engagement and overall outcome of online learning.

Quick Facts:

- Orenda Learning works with schools from across the globe in a business-to-business (B2B) model.

- Their signature course called **Be The Change** (BTC) is a flexible 12-month online program that is designed to guide students to take informed action in their communities that works towards the sustainable development goals.

- Their offering includes BTC for High Schools and BTC for Independent Learners.

- Orenda Learning offers their BTC program to a wide variety of schools in locations as varied as Singapore, Dubai, India, New Zealand and across Europe. The students are from grades 9 to 12, aged 14 to 18 years old.

Furthermore, as a start-up, they were looking for a partner that could guide them and also provide on-ground help with technical support.

"We were looking for an innovative platform and a provider who could address these challenges within a set budget that was not restrictive for a start-up. We were running a community-driven course amidst COVID-19, and the need for a robust, reliable, budget-friendly learning platform was urgent," says Alice Whitehead, Founder of Orenda Learning.

WHY D2L?
D2L was an easy choice as it addressed all key challenges and limitations that Orenda Learning was facing with its previous platform and could do so at a reasonable price. More importantly, the quality of the support services provided by Edutech—D2L's authorised partner in the region is top-notch. "We were treated like a billion-dollar account," says Alice.

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Solution

Alignment Between D2L's Key Offerings and Orenda Learning's Requirements

Upon discovering D2L, Brightspace seemed an obvious choice since the platform offered features, capabilities, and services beyond the typical learning management system. D2L's offerings were very much in alignment with the institute's pedagogical principles and requirements.

"When we came to D2L, we were looking for an edtech vendor that was willing to be our on-ground support and come on board as our partner. D2L brought in Edutech India—a reliable on-ground tech support team who have since then been our eyes and ears on the ground. It was an easy and smooth transition from the previous LMS to D2L Brightspace with Edutech's support, and we have seen only success since the switch," said Alice.

Another critical feature that Orenda Learning was looking at was a platform that could cater to the needs of learners of all ages. As a global leader in education technology, D2L has the expertise and experience catering to schools, higher education, and corporate learning environments.

"Having spent several years in primary education, I understand how important it is to engage the young minds. I had a very specific vision of how the primary version would look and now, thanks to D2L, we have a solution ready to help materialise that vision," shares Alice.

FUTURE-PROOFED WITH EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY AND ITS LATEST KEY OFFERINGS
A course like Orenda Learning's BTC programme becomes more relevant and crucial during a prolonged pandemic. By leveraging the latest technologies, D2L Brightspace empowers Orenda Learning to help learners from all over the world engage in community-oriented activities during these unprecedented times.

D2L Brightspace helps create a collaborative digital environment where learners can participate in community activities virtually. Brightspace also enables the curriculum to have a visually appealing grid-like interface that is attractive and engaging. The use of images and videos in course content serves as an effective mode to engage learners and helps them better understand the concepts. Lessons now come with big thumbnails, attractive visuals and clear headers that explain each concept.

"I have a bit of a creative eye, and when I look at things, they have to be visually appealing. Visuals and User interface is another area where we struggled with our previous platform. As soon as we moved into D2L Brightspace, I feel like it brought us into the 21st century," shared Alice.

Furthermore, D2L Brightspace helps to provide a personalised learning experience for learners. For example, the progress bar helps students and the teachers to track the overall learning status of their courses. The platform enables learners to engage in self-paced learning while making it easy to submit quizzes and assignments.

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>
> **Alice Whitehead**
> Founder of Orenda Learning

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Result

Successful Adoption

Orenda Learning officially started using Brightspace in March 2020. Since then, the platform has been a success, with learners sharing positive feedback.

"The learning platform has an intuitive interface. The website is amazing and easy to navigate," shared one student of' BTC.

All schools have given great feedback, including the American Community School in Abu Dhabi. "D2L Brightspace is an extremely user-friendly platform that has been easy for my students and me to navigate. Getting started required no additional support or trouble-shooting, and we have been very pleased with the functionality. The design of the platform is clean and visually appealing, and I would happily participate in another course using the D2L Brightspace platform." said Melisa Pubil, Service Learning, and CAS Coordinator, American Community School of Abu Dhabi.

LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY FOR EFFICIENT EVIDENCE-BASED LEARNING

With a unique program like BTC, examinations cannot be the only way to assess the skills learned. Brightspace enables Orenda Learning to gauge learners' performance in this program based on their involvement.

"Performatively, some schools would want to know how their students are progressing towards their goals in the curriculum. This is where Brightspace's portfolio option offers us the ability to help schools track the progress of students," shared Alice.

This kind of efficient evidence-based learning helped create a positive environment for both educators and learners, encouraging them to make a real impact and demonstrate it with fundamental changes in the community.

"Today, we don't just work with schools, we work with universities, experiential education providers, corporate companies, and we also support and partner organisations like not for profits and NGOs," shared Alice.

Orenda Learning has recently onboarded GEMS Wellington School in Qatar, the International School of Kenya, and Liger Academy in Cambodia. Neev Academy in Bangalore, India and Nova International School in Skopje, Macedonia are currently undertaking BTC pilots with the view to implement the program across grade levels in the new academic year. Existing long-term clients of Orenda Learning include schools such as Diocesan School for Girls in Auckland, New Zealand, American School of Dubai and Tanglin Trust School in Singapore.
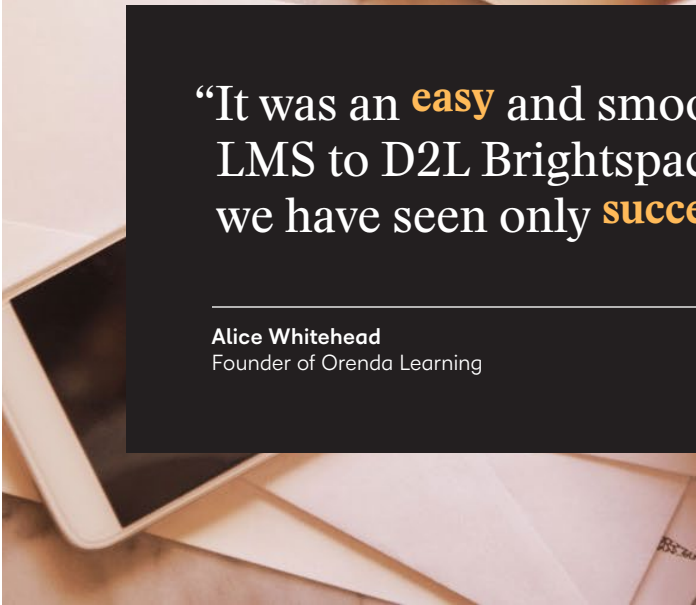

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About D2L Brightspace

D2L is transforming the way the world learns—helping learners of all ages achieve more than they dreamed possible. Working closely with clients all over the world, D2L is supporting millions of people learning online and in person. Our growing global workforce is dedicated to making the best learning products to leave the world better than they found it. Learn more at **D2L.com**.

About Edutech India

Edutech is a leading provider of educational equipment, learning solutions, and services for academic institutions, companies, and governments. Edutech oversees the 'Be The Change' program in D2L Brightspace, managing the administrative requirements and overseeing technology support for our clients.

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Alice Whitehead
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