



Customer story
Absorbie 2024 winner

Abigail Bruce

Global L&D Lead, Baker Tilly

“ At Baker Tilly we recognise that success lies in being people-first when it comes to our teams, clients and communities.

This is why we invest in our people to provide a clear career pathway built on a culture of continuous learning and development. This not only contributes to individual development, but also means our clients can trust that they are working with the experts they need. The truly global reach of The Learning Hub allows our people access to learning which will enable them to achieve their career aspirations wherever they are located.”





Leading professional services network

Using Absorb to create a global learning hub

Headquartered in London, UK, Baker Tilly International is a global top 10 professional services network of more than 43,000 people across 145 territories.

The network's global presence enables it to deliver the expertise that clients need, when and where they need it. In 2023, the network saw a remarkable \$5.2 billion in combined revenue.

The same global reach that brings the network and clients such advantage also poses challenges in delivering comprehensive, truly international learning and development (L&D) opportunities.

Beyond the local efforts of member firms, Baker Tilly International was able to provide only a limited number of in-person events and ad hoc recorded training videos on its global intranet.

“These limitations not only restricted the scope of our L&D efforts but also hampered our ability to foster a sense of belonging and advancement amongst our people,” says Abigail Bruce, Global Learning and Development Lead at Baker Tilly International. In 2021, the network evolved its people strategy with the aim of overcoming these challenges. Based on three transformative pillars — BECOME, BELONG, and MATTER — the evolved strategy

focused on delivering a more sophisticated, interconnected system to seamlessly disseminate knowledge, standardize learning experiences, and democratize access to learning resources.

Baker Tilly International’s goal is to position itself as the incubator for globally relevant careers, fostering personal growth through knowledge and connectivity. Elevating its L&D offerings by coordinating and disseminating leading people development programs, strengthening existing local firm-specific programs with additional training bringing a global perspective was crucial.

Creating the Baker Tilly learning hub

Recognizing the need for a more evolved, globally connected learning system, the network created the Baker Tilly Learning Hub, powered by Absorb LMS. A pivotal solution to its challenges, the platform eliminated geographic limitations, fostered collaboration, and offered a consistent, high-quality learning experience for all its people.



“There were two main goals driving this initiative. Firstly, we aimed to ensure equitable access to learning opportunities for all our people, regardless of their location or access to internal resources. This approach aimed to minimize training disparities across the network,” Abigail says. “Secondly, we sought to enhance knowledge sharing and foster connections among our people.”

In addition to overcoming the challenges posed by disparate geographies, Absorb provided an unexpected benefit, according to Abigail. It allowed the network to provide an LMS to member firms through subdomains (called a Department in Absorb). “The firms who have taken a subdomain can access both global and local learning resources whilst ensuring compliance with reporting requirements in highly regulated environments,” Abigail says.

An investment L&D success

To shore up support for the investment in the Baker Tilly Learning Hub (and Absorb), Abigail and her team formed focus groups with representatives from across the global network. Consisting of a mixed group of learning leaders, partners, and potential participants from firms ranging in size from less than 250 to over 4,000 people, the focus groups provided invaluable insights into unique needs and preferences. This further guided the platform development.

The feedback from the focus groups was included in the business case to the network's International Board in 2021, demonstrating a real need for investment in the platform, which went live in March 2022.

"Initially, the global platform was developed along with two subdomains for member firms," Abigail says. "This approach enabled us to gain insights into building a platform suitable for both global usage and customization by individual member firms."

"Following the platform's construction, we showcased it to other firms interested in adopting similar departments. In 2022, two firms embraced this opportunity, collectively adding 1,500 users to the platform. Presently, three other firms are trialing the concept, with the potential to add an additional 1,000 users between them."



Boosting adoption and understanding

The main challenge in implementing the new learning hub was helping people understand the platform, its capabilities, and its accessibility. In addition, Abigail and her team wanted to provide a structure so participants could easily navigate the vast volume of available learning resources.

The network's live virtual training sessions, delivered by internal specialists from across the Baker Tilly International network, were well attended. The live training season in 2023 attracted more than **2,500 people from over 60 territories, and more than 4,900 certificates were issued to session attendees.**

The Learning Journeys developed can be downloaded and shared by email, letting firms customize their learning experience while leveraging the global platform. "This resource has proven invaluable to some firms," Abigail says.

The team developed several educational initiatives, including:

Drop-in sessions to provide an overview of the platform and its available resources.

Platform demonstrations during Learning Leaders calls and partner meetings.

Development of a User Guide and Course List to help users handle the volume of learning materials.

Live virtual training seasons run using Absorb covering technical and non-technical topics.

A demonstration video circulated via email to those unable to attend the drop-in sessions (which has currently received more than 700 views).

Shared Learning Journeys focusing on specific topics such as managing people, leadership, presentation skills and coaching.



Innovation and **seamless** interconnectivity

Since its launch and subsequent success across the network, the Baker Tilly International global L&D team has found innovative ways to leverage Absorb and The Learning Hub. In 2024, it started using the platform to facilitate the registration for its inaugural People and Culture Conference.

The network's flagship coaching programme on The Learning Hub delivers hybrid learning through live Zoom sessions and reading materials, workbooks, and collaborations — all existing within the platform. It was attended by delegates from eight countries.

The network is continuing its mission to create frictionless interconnectivity. **“To continue to grow the use of The Learning Hub by our global network, we are integrating the platform with the LMS used by our US firms, giving over 5,000 people a seamless transition between local learning and global learning and reducing the need for clunky copying and pasting of training records between the two platforms,”** Abigail says.

By the numbers

Massive growth

It's no wonder that the global L&D team wants to help ensure people don't become overwhelmed by the learning resources they encounter. The platform evolved from offering virtually nothing to more than 2,400 pieces of content comprised of eLearning modules, live webinars, and recorded sessions on everything from professional skills to diversity and inclusion, international taxation, audit methodologies, and more.



By the numbers... cont.

In 2023 alone, 1,100 pieces of network-generated content were added to The Learning Hub using the platform.

The learning hub's content explosion isn't the only exceptional growth Baker Tilly International has seen. The platform now has nearly 10,000 users on it, representing nearly a quarter of the network — with ongoing conversations with other member firms about use. The L&D team continues to hold focus groups to improve user experiences.

Perhaps one of the greatest measurements of success, however, is the equitable access to learning Baker Tilly International has been able to provide across regions.

“As a global network where our people operate within different regulatory environments, our key goal was to give everyone access to the same learning opportunities regardless of location or access to local resources,” Abigail says. “Success is therefore measured on the current number of users on the platform which is close to 10,000 from all regions of the world.”

Abigail says this global reach allows Baker Tilly International to continually educate its global network and keep its people professionally up to date. She attributes close collaboration with Absorb to its success, thanks to the platform enabling tailored solutions and smooth implementations.

“At Baker Tilly we recognise that success lies in being people-first when it comes to our teams, clients and communities,” Abigail says. “This is why we invest in our people to provide a clear career pathway built on a culture of continuous learning and development. This not only contributes to individual development, but also means our clients can trust that they are working with the experts they need. The truly global reach of The Learning Hub allows our people access to learning which will enable them to achieve their career aspirations wherever they are located.”



Empowering learners to enrich their lives,
workplaces and communities.

Schedule demo