



How LinkedIn Learning enabled a growing business to access essential learning and development tools at a time when they were needed the most



Sokowatch is an American domiciled company with both American and African investor ownership. Sokowatch was founded on the principle that access to quality essential goods and services should not just be a privilege of the few, but a right accorded to everyone. With this principle in mind, Sokowatch launched operations in Nairobi in 2015 and has since expanded to nine cities across four East African Countries (Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda and Uganda).



Giving retailers, business owners and entrepreneurs smooth and easy access to essential goods and services is paramount to Sokowatch. The company, headquartered in Nairobi, enables communities across Africa to access distribution and e-commerce solutions, including mobile ordering and delivery services. It is Sokowatch's mission to make life easier for its customers, providing them with opportunities to transform and grow, with a range of business management tools and financial services.

In order to ensure that businesses get the solutions they need, it is important that Sokowatch employees have the right skills to support their customers in the right way and when they need it most.

So, when COVID-19 shook the world, it was vital that Sokowatch, a growing business, could support the learning and development needs of its employees. Especially at a time when being flexible and able to adapt quickly to market conditions was key.

"Sokowatch has a dynamic work environment, one that must rapidly respond to changes in the marketplace," explained Cecilia W. Gitahi, Regional Head of Learning and Development at Sokowatch. "We had planned on launching online learning at the end of 2020 because we already had a couple of Instructor Led Trainings (ILT) running in the organisation. However, COVID-19 accelerated and amplified the need of acquiring a platform. We, therefore, decided to look for a training solution that was scalable to ensure that we continued to cater for the learning and development needs of our teams in all our regional offices."

Broad portfolio of content and experts

Sokowatch chose to adopt LinkedIn Learning and acquired 250 LinkedIn Learning licenses. LinkedIn Learning's quality of content, scalability, breadth of industry experts and reputation appealed to the growing organisation.

"LinkedIn Learning is widely adopted by industry leaders globally and it promised to offer our employees a broad portfolio of programmes taught by best-in-class industry experts," commented Cecilia. "LinkedIn Learning offered macro and micro learning content that provided our employees with accurate just-in-time information.

"Also, the ability to upload our own Sokowatch content onto the learning platform was an incentive to go with LinkedIn Learning too."

The Challenge

- Align talent development with business strategy
- Leverage training to give the business a competitive advantage and embed a learning culture
- Give employees access to workplace training in the midst of a pandemic

The Solution

- Provide a learning platform that encouraged employees to learn
- Combine online learning with Virtual Instructor Led Training (VILT), encouraging employees to stay connected during the pandemic
- Provide employees with tools and skills training at the point of need

The Results



100% activation within three months



80% learner engagement within three months



Average 2.3 hours learning (per user, per month)

Investing in employee development

Launching LinkedIn Learning was an exciting undertaking. A month before the launch of the platform, Sokowatch's learning and development team rolled out a multi-channel marketing campaign to create awareness and pave the way for building a culture of learning. This was another key driver for adopting the platform.

Cecilia explained: "It all started with a video message from Daniel Yu [company CEO] breaking the big news of the LinkedIn Learning launch. His message signalled to employees that the business believed in them and wanted to invest in their development.

"The following week, we displayed LinkedIn Learning banners and posters in Sokowatch regional offices. We customised these materials with portraits of key influencers in each regional office so that the staff could relate and connect."

Cecilia continued: "Tapping managers to drive engagement and create a culture of learning was a key component of our strategy. Prior to launch, we held several webinars and used the forums to highlight to managers the importance of learning and the one-hour-a-week goal of learning that we had determined was our learning benchmark across the business. The objective was to convert the managers into learning champions."

Sokowatch created learner engagement initiatives. For example, Sokowatch used the intranet to make Learner of the Week and Learner of the Month announcements, with winners receiving a virtual certificate.

Phoebe Shiphira, Learning and Development Associate at Sokowatch added: "Once we had achieved a 75% activation rate of the LinkedIn Learning licenses, we changed our focus from Learner of the Week/Month to posting personal testimonials on the intranet, detailing learner experience with LinkedIn Learning. We also promoted how acquired skills had helped individuals to do their work better, faster, more efficiently etc. This boosted our activation rate to 100% and learner engagement to 82%."

Phoebe's task is to now analyse all the data that they have collated and tie all the learning to business strategy and results. They are currently focused on tracking high performing individuals to see if there is a relationship between learning and performance and are identifying opportunities for promotion.

Phoebe concluded: "LinkedIn Learning is a fantastic tool. It gives our employees the tools they need to adapt, react and create new and exciting solutions. I am excited to see how the learning opportunities that our employees have been given will translate into business results and to continuing our relationship with LinkedIn Learning."

In their own words

“Learning is a key that unlocks many opportunities. Unlocking potential is one of our values at Sokowatch. This means supporting our teams by giving them the tools, skills, resources and competencies they need in order to be successful in their roles. LinkedIn Learning gave us a good mix of curated courses, short videos and an opportunity to add on our own content. This was unlike other platforms that we had looked at. COVID-19 impacted face-to-face learning. LinkedIn Learning allowed us to continue providing training to our teams with little disruption.

“We have seen a correlation between our top performers and the number of courses taken on LinkedIn Learning. This is a testament to the importance of learning in any organisation.”

Carolyn Mwaura

Global Head of People
Operations, Sokowatch



“Training is the competitive advantage that we are leveraging to be a successful business. We use LinkedIn Learning in all our regional offices to enhance the ability of our teams to adapt, react quickly to change and create new and needed products and services. We believe that learning facilitates this by giving you insights that can translate into results.”

Cecilia W. Gitahi

Regional Head Learning and
Development, Sokowatch

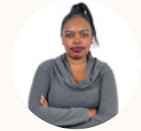


What the learners say

“Curating the business learning journeys, I got a chance to transverse the LinkedIn Learning platform from a curious perspective. This platform has helped our staff members unlock potential by gaining market relevant skills and connecting with best-in-class industry experts.”

Phoebe Shiphirah

Regional Learning and
Development Associate, Sokowatch



“LinkedIn Learning is full of learning resources. It gives people the option to download certificates and add them to their LinkedIn profile. This has increased career visibility. This has played a major role in my team’s skills gaps since they have the option to choose subjects of interest in areas of their expertise.”

Rose Kessy

Country People and Culture
Associate, Sokowatch Tanzania



“The wealth of knowledge on LinkedIn Learning provides for different approaches to leadership. With the exposure to LinkedIn Learning programmes, I am able to guide my team with actionable and practical solutions to work related challenges. I love the fact that it provides recognised certificates and it’s easily accessible even on a mobile phone.”

Esther Namubiru

Country People and Culture
Associate, Sokowatch Uganda



“Learn to grow, never stop learning; For when you stop learning you stop growing as well.”

Uzakira Christian

Kigali Branch Assistant Manager,
Sokowatch Rwanda

