Solution Provider Profile

PwC ProEdge

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PwC ProEdge Solution Overview and Value Proposition

ProEdge is a cloud-based platform that delivers what businesses need to build, execute and scale digital upskilling programs. It brings together all of the capabilities needed to foster the digital transformation of today's workforce while planning for the workforce of tomorrow.

ProEdge surfaces a company's skill gaps and through a dataset comprising hundreds of millions of resumes and job postings automatically creates and deploys targeted learning pathways that close skill gaps by function and individual. Employees can earn valuable credentials by completing function-specific courses and projects created by PwC and can then share their knowledge across the entire organization.

Why Did PwC Develop ProEdge?

The 2020 World Economic Forum Future of Jobs Report predicts that by 2025, 85 million jobs globally will be displaced. Additionally, 97 million jobs will emerge that require a new division of labor between people and technology.

But there is a lack of key digital skills that represents a serious threat to the future growth of many organizations. Nearly three-quarters of CEOs are concerned about the lack of digital skills within their own workforce, and a quarter are extremely concerned about the digital skills of their leadership team. Business *has* changed. Digital transformation has taken hold. Companies need to adapt — and quickly. But how can leaders truly make the right choices if they don't fully understand the digital possibilities and risks for their business?

When PwC's leadership read the report, they saw something startling. Near the top of the list of redundant roles were Accountants and Auditors. As this pointed to an existential threat to PwC's core businesses, leadership decided to act.

PwC tackled the challenge in four phases, the same approach that ProEdge takes to upskilling: assess, learn, apply and scale. First, PwC needed to identify the people within the organization

who actually needed to be upskilled, as well as assess its overall level of digital fitness. One of the things that was intimidating to PwC, *and* for many of its clients, was figuring out where to start and deciding what technologies were actually important to its growth.

PwC developed and deployed tools such a [PwC's Digital Fitness Assessment app](#) (a precursor to ProEdge Learn) to baseline the people's skills in the company. Through the process of assessing its people, PwC also learned how big an impact that change management and adoption could have on the success of an upskilling program. These were lessons that PwC leveraged when it developed ProEdge.

Second, PwC needed to figure out how to get the right learning content to the right people at the right time. Learning management systems, while excellent at cataloging content and tracking CPE credits and compliance training, were not delivering that content in a manner that made sense to learners. ProEdge was developed with the learner in mind at each step of the learning journey.

Third, PwC also found that learning doesn't sink in unless it is practiced and then applied in the context of a person's job. The company created credential programs within PwC so people could bridge the critical gap from skill acquisition to skill application that could be generalized and repeatable.

Finally, PwC needed a way to scale the benefits gained through upskilling. PwC invested in a digital exchange where its people could contribute and find digital assets (e.g., automations, visualization templates) to simplify their jobs.

The results were remarkable and demonstrable. Among other benefits, PwC saw a minimal increase to headcount even while revenue grew by double-digit percentages.

PwC clients asked us how the company did it and wanted these same types of benefits. ProEdge was developed to capture the lessons learned by PwC through its journey and deliver it in a streamlined, cutting-edge product.

What is ProEdge?

Like PwC's four stage journey, ProEdge has four components: Plan, Learn, Create and Share.

ProEdge Plan

Plan is a company's data-driven "upskilling air traffic control center" that pulls from more than 250 million resumes and job descriptions from both public and proprietary data sources. This component also taps into PwC-developed skill taxonomies for thousands of roles within the most critical functions of an organization. All these data points, plus employee data imported from a

company's HRIS, provide the foundation for a thorough skill gap analysis based on industry, function and role.

Once the organization understands the gaps in employees' digital skills, ProEdge recommends tailored learning pathways for each role and each individual based on their specific needs. These pathways can be modified for the company's unique requirements and are based on the skills taxonomies.

Plan is typically used by a company's ProEdge administrator, and PwC's implementation methodology guides the company through the process of creating the most relevant learning pathways and deploying them to employees. Plan is also used to track progress of employees' learning journeys to ensure that the employees are engaged and taking advantage of the learning opportunities.

ProEdge Learn

Learn is at the center of ProEdge. Unlike the typical LMS that operates like a course catalog and tracking mechanism, ProEdge seeks to meet learners where they are today with a contemporary approach. Social media-like feeds are highly effective at engaging users. The Learn feed delivers curated and relevant content to the learner based on the learning pathways set by the administrator.

Learn delivers three types of content.

- **Read, Watch, Listen** — ProEdge has more than 175,000 assets ranging from articles to videos to podcasts from more than 30 leading content providers such as:
    - Axios
    - Badass Agile
    - CIO Magazine
    - The Economist
    - Forbes
    - Inc.
    - MIT Technology Review
    - TechHive
- **Courses** — ProEdge has more than 500 courseware titles from providers such as Coursera and Pluralsight.
- **Credentials** — PwC has developed its own courses in multiple functional areas. ProEdge Credentials are focused on applied learning and are specific to the learner's role in the

company. Upon successful completion of these courses, a learner will earn credentials that can be posted (via Credly) to the learner's network.

A person can access Learn by mobile devices tablets, or desktop computers. The learner will spend little time getting to the content as Learn pulls from internal and external data to populate the learner's profile.

ProEdge Create

ProEdge offers function-specific courses developed by PwC's learning and development experts. These courses, called Skillbuilders, are laser-focused on teaching learners the digital skills needed for their particular function. For example, the ProEdge offerings in the finance functional area consist of multiple Skillbuilders that guide learners through the application of digital skills and tools to the finance function. PwC has found that focusing on a specific function allows it to shorten the time it takes to show value to the learner and company.

Once a learner completes a Skillbuilder, they can earn a credential in that skill by completing a capstone project. This project is like a learner's final exam. PwC has created a capstone project for each credential. The project is a real-world function-relevant application of the course material. Unlike other solutions, real PwC people review the learner's completed project and provide direct feedback. The goal of ProEdge is learning, not simply giving a pass/fail result. After successfully completing the capstone project, the learner receives a credential that can be posted both internally and externally.

ProEdge Share

The final piece of the upskilling puzzle is scaling the benefits of this new digital knowledge, fostering a culture of collaboration and innovation. PwC observed that maybe 10% of a company's people will actually create digital assets for use in the organization and the remaining 90% will use these assets. However, that 90% will have ideas for new solutions or requests for help on tricky business challenges. To scale the benefits, it's critical to provide a straightforward environment where an organization's experts can contribute and the broader population can get the benefit of those contributions.

Share is a digital exchange or marketplace that provides all of the tools needed for people to contribute, find and use digital assets that automate routine tasks, submit ideas for assets and challenge each other to create the best solutions for pressing business problems. It also provides the tools needed for a company to govern and control the process.

Share manages the scale challenge through three lenses: the consumer, the creator and the controller.

For the consumer, Share is modeled after applications such as Netflix and Amazon with a push-pull model, where users are pushed recommendations based on their role and skills. They can also search for or pull assets from Share that are relevant or interesting. It's important to note most companies won't start off with a full set of digital assets. To get a company started, PwC has already built and tested a wide variety of digital assets. This collection of assets is called Digital on Demand and is a separate subscription. If a company subscribes to Digital on Demand, the assets are loaded into Share, so there is no need for the consumer to log into a separate application.

Each asset, whether company or PwC created, will have (or should have) clear explanations and detailed instructions on how to use them. If feasible, the consumer can either run an automation within Share or download it to make changes or enhance it.

Another Share capability relates to crowdsourcing and building an employee community of learning and interest. Share has the capability to encourage crowdsourcing via the Idea Marketplace. Employees can submit ideas for the rest of the organization to review, sponsor and build upon.

As an example, an employee needs a visualization of receivables aging but has no idea where to begin or what tool would be most appropriate. The employee could submit an idea to the marketplace to see if there would be a sponsor and coworkers with the know-how and bandwidth to bring the idea to life.

For the creator, Share makes it easy to contribute new assets. The process is straightforward and guides the creator through documenting and uploading the assets.

And finally, the controller has a very important role in the Share process. Without controls in place, Share could quickly become unusable because of duplicates and unvetted assets. Share incorporates an administration and workflow capability that allows companies to monitor submissions of assets and ideas and reject those that are not aligned with the company's mission and business goals.

The controller will get a top-level view of areas within the organization where processes might be broken. If there are a number of assets created in a particular functional area, it might be a signal that there are process optimization opportunities. The controller can also vet each asset for quality and relevance and can send feedback to the creator for improvements if needed.

Finally, Share will identify potential duplicate or similar assets before others are added, reducing potential clutter.

Conclusion

PwC's clients wanted a way to achieve the level of digital transformation and upskilling PwC achieved through its efforts. ProEdge was created for that purpose. Following PwC's same four-step approach, ProEdge gives companies the tools to plan and execute their upskilling journeys — and scale the benefits across their organizations.
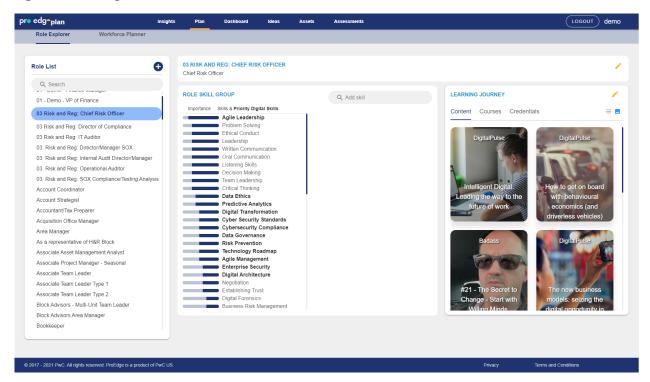
Screenshots

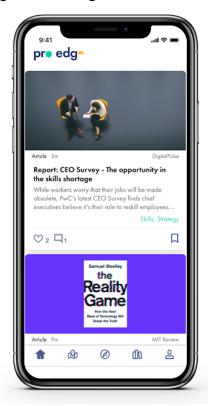**Figure 1: ProEdge Plan**

Figure 2: ProEdge Learn
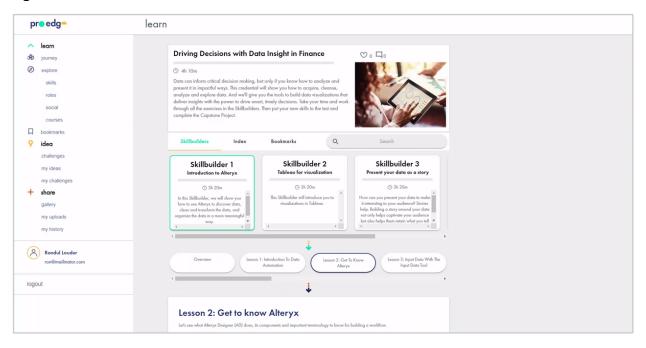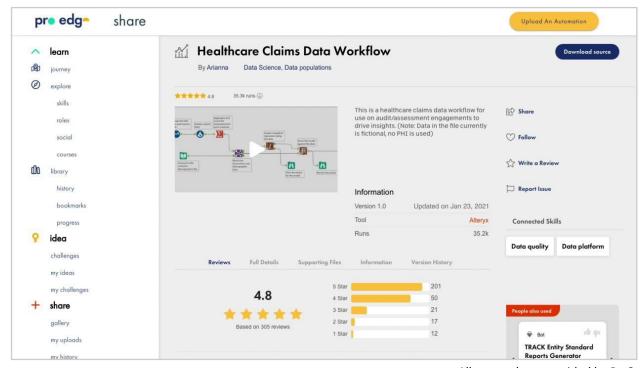
Figure 3: Skillbuilder

Figure 4: ProEdge Share

All screenshots provided by PwC

Analysis by Brandon Hall Group

Situational Analysis

As companies feel increasing pressure to upskill and reskill their workforce, especially in the face of digital transformation, they are trying to find better ways to deliver best-in-class content to learners in an engaging and modern technological interface. Several factors are driving corporations to improve their learning strategies:

- **Improve Learner Engagement** — Organizations struggle with developing and delivering learning content that captures the attention of the learner.
- **Create a Stronger Link Between Learning and Performance** — Learning in many organizations is developed without specific individual and organizational objectives in mind.
- **Better Measurement** — Learning is not improving in many organizations because the ability to measure impact on performance is not in place or is lacking.
- **Technology** — Learning technology is quickly evolving, and organizations are in serious need of re-evaluating their learning technology ecosystem to offer a more modernized approach to learners.

Challenges to the Business

Organizations have had difficulty in keeping up with all the technological advances for delivering learning. The learning technology environment is more crowded and complex than ever before, and organizations struggle with making the right selections.

Learner requirements have also evolved quickly and their need for just in time, just for me learning that is highly accessible is very important. Most traditional learning platforms are not in a position to offer an easy-to-use interface to the learner.

Implications for the Business

The implications are two-fold. For the learner, the learning experience is compromised because the learner cannot access content when they need it the most. For the organization, employees are not learning what they need to know. The result is an inferior knowledge transfer that does not advance an employee's competency and skill development, leading to widening skills gaps.

Questions to be Answered by the Business

Organizations need to rethink their learning technology strategy and decide on a system that can support the complex needs of the modern learner.

The key questions for the business are:

- How can an organization leverage the right technologies to identify and close digital skills gaps?
- Which technologies provide the right learning environment for digital reskilling and upskilling?

ProEdge by PwC

Developed first as a platform to close internal digital skills gaps at PwC, ProEdge is available to other companies who would like to leverage PwC's experience and expertise in this area. Their internal program identified four key areas the platform addresses: Plan, Learn, Create and Share.

The planning stage is where most companies fall short today when it comes to digital skills. They struggle to define and identify the skills they need now and those they will need in the future. ProEdge Plan makes this process simpler by identifying skills from millions of available resources. By benchmarking the organization against this data, the existing skills gaps come into sharper focus — and that is where ProEdge Learn picks up.

ProEdge links skills gaps to the learning elements best suited to closing those gaps, directing learners right to where they need to be. Using an intuitive, desktop and mobile-friendly, informal interface makes it easy for learners to follow their path or do some self-discovery. A vast library of digital skills-specific content is available in multiple formats, including traditional courseware. PwC has also bundled specific material into Skillbuilders that are focused on particular digital topics.

ProEdge offers the opportunity for credentialing through the ProEdge Create platform. This module provides a place for learners to complete projects based on the skills they have acquired, and in turn receive a credential (via Credly) that can be leveraged both outside and inside the organization.

Digital skills are an area where learners benefit greatly from peer-to-peer learning. Rather than letting that happen in the shadows in ad-hoc, one-on-one occurrences, ProEdge Share provides a platform for learners to share their knowledge and expertise with their peers. They can also easily rate, comment on and share other material they have found helpful. The company can

adjust the level of moderation in Share to ensure the material being shared is valid, quality and not redundant.

It is interesting to see an organization whose business model is helping other companies solve challenges develop a tool based on how they solve their own challenges. For years, companies have relied on PwC for their insight and expertise in a wide variety of areas. Now companies have an opportunity to use a digital skills-building tool that PwC has put through its own paces.

-David Wentworth, Principal Analyst, Brandon Hall Group
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Brandon Hall GROUP

About Brandon Hall Group

With more than 10,000 clients globally and 27 years of delivering world-class research and advisory services, Brandon Hall Group is focused on developing research that drives performance in emerging and large organizations, and provides strategic insights for executives and practitioners responsible for growth and business results.

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