



How the Vision For a Healthcare Training Platform Evolved Into A Suite of Nationally Used EdTech Products

By Ryan Casey, *Principal*, Skapa

In 2016, a global private equity fund sought to address a critical problem that had plagued the healthcare industry for years—the severe shortage of qualified, licensed Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) for elderly care centers. Nursing homes couldn't find or train enough quality candidates to fill the ever-growing need brought on by the aging baby boomer generation. They realized their traditional training and onboarding practices were clearly insufficient. Coupled with high rates of turnover, the problem seemed intractable.

The Problem & the Vision

The PE fund approached Skapa with their vision to bring a modern, multi-modality, web-based approach to training and certifying CNA candidates.

An online learning platform would allow for multiple training modalities.

The current training consisted of old school, text-based learning. It yielded an impersonal learner experience and failed to adequately prepare candidates for the workplace. In contrast, an online learning platform would allow for multiple training modalities, including video and interactive content, that could be tailored to individual student needs. The PE fund believed that this approach would increase course completion rates and produce more qualified and prepared candidates, resulting in reduced attrition and better care.

The Product

With this vision and some initial designs, the Skapa team began collaboration with the PE fund's new startup. While we first served as an external development team, the partnership rapidly evolved into a collaborative one with our product team providing critical input and guidance in finalizing the design. Via a rapid iterative process, we worked to bring the startup's vision to life, guiding the product elaboration process to ensure delivery of the right program features and the most value for customers.

Over the course of three months, including several on-site design and review sessions, we built the training product. The initial launch of the fully Cloud-based solution included a Learning Management System that supported a full CNA training and certification experience. The product enabled delivery of a suite of multi-modal learning materials that immediately changed the learning experience for CNA candidates and improved their success.

Via a rapid iterative process, we worked to bring the vision to life.

The training platform quickly yielded results for its initial elder care center customers. It vastly improved certification exam pass rates to upwards of 80% from a dismally low prior pass rate of less than 50%. Customers also began seeing their retention rates improve as the learning facilitated by startup realized the PE fund's vision of better preparing CNAs for the workplace. Particularly effective was the blend of asynchronous and live education made possible by the "Classroom" feature developed by our team.

For three years, we continued our partnership with the startup to build out the product and provide even more value to their learners and customers.

Acquisition, Evolution & Legacy

After several successful years as a stand-alone product, the startup was acquired by another company within the PE fund's portfolio.

Over the next couple of years, the new company leveraged the core component and foundation of platform for a whole suite of health-care education products. As a result, Skapa's work on the original platform came to support a total of five product lines, with more being added.

There is no greater testament to the quality and value of a product than the adoption and incorporation to support a whole host of new products. Though the initial product is no longer active, the good news is the project expanded considerably, demonstrating the scalability of the planning, systems, and processes we use in building Learning Management Systems.■

The original platform came to support a total of five product lines, with more being added.
