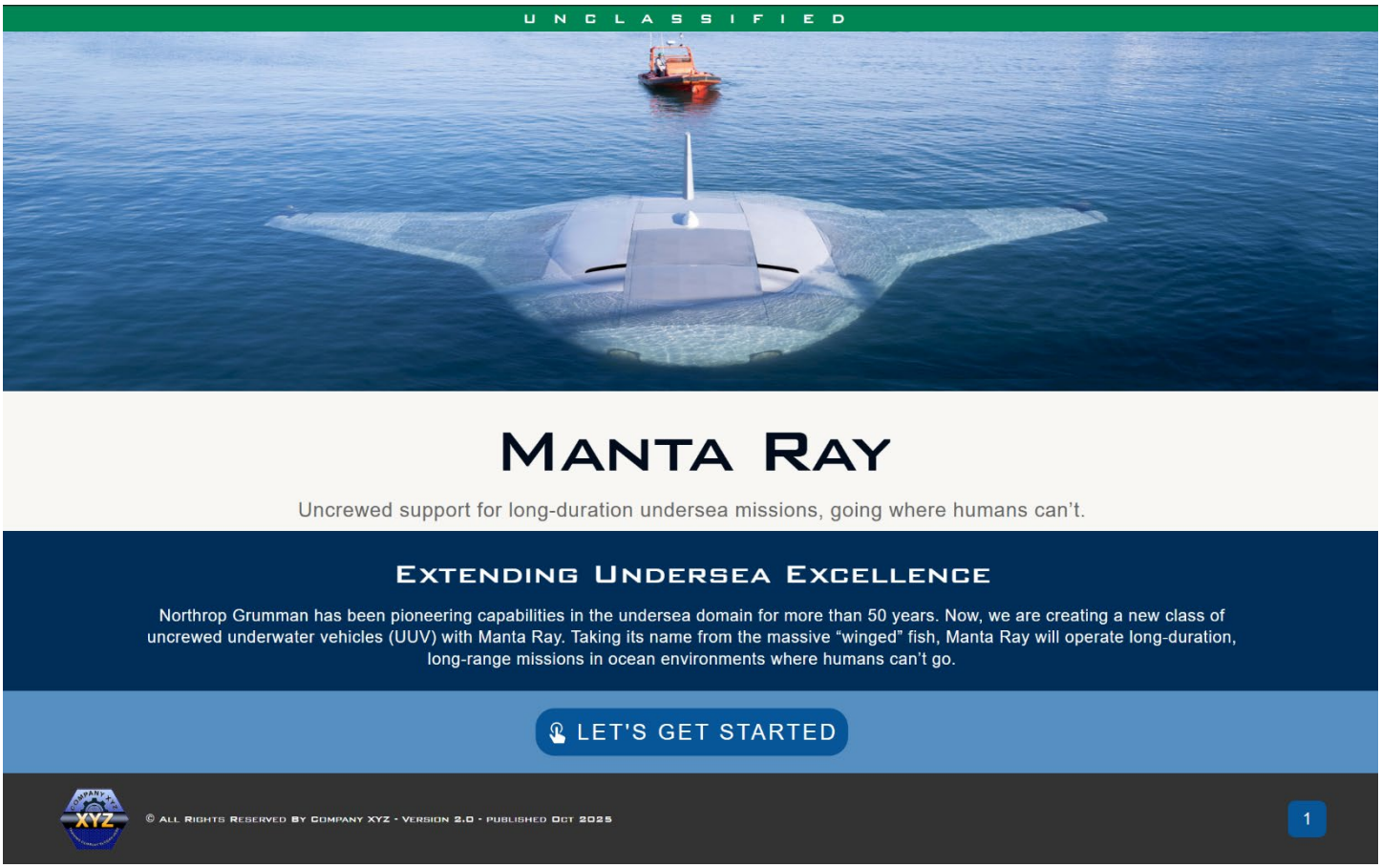
Course Design & Development

Using the NEW Adobe Captivate



This document represents a capture of knowledge during the creation of a standardized e-learning course development. Throughout the document you will find information about the implications and decision making processes required to create a well-formed and easy to use training course. While this document does include a lot of information it is not all inclusive and can be revised with additional information in the future to enhance and expand the knowledge required to efficiently and effectively create training material.

The processes and procedures described in this document represent the Adobe captivate 12.4 release. It is anticipated that Adobe will be releasing version 13.0 of captivate in the near future. This latest version will include additional features and capabilities of the Adobe captivate platform including the importation of Microsoft PowerPoint projects directly into Adobe captivate. Also included in the 13.0 version of Adobe captivate will be significant artificial intelligence capabilities and features.

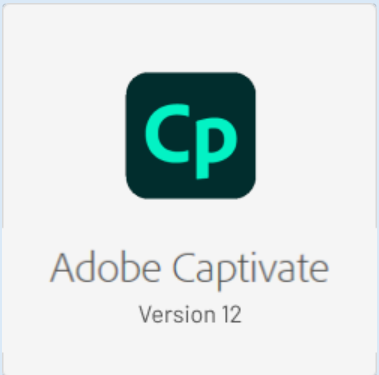
Introduction

The new version of Adobe Captivate represents a major redesign from the 2019 Classic version, particularly in how it handles layout and responsiveness. Unlike Captivate 2019, which relied on fixed-size slides or limited fluid boxes for responsive projects, the new Captivate introduces a variable-height page design that behaves more like modern web pages. This means the height of a slide automatically adjusts to fit the amount of content on it, allowing for smoother scrolling experiences and more flexibility across devices. As a result, designers no longer need to manually balance slide proportions for different screen sizes — the content naturally reflows, offering a truly responsive design that adapts seamlessly to desktops, tablets, and mobile devices.

Another major shift is the introduction of components and widgets as the building blocks of eLearning content. Instead of relying heavily on manually configured objects and advanced actions, the new Captivate uses pre-built, customizable components such as quizzes, buttons, and interactions that can be easily inserted and configured. Widgets enhance interactivity and streamline development, allowing users to add dynamic behaviors without complex scripting. This component-based structure, combined with the new responsive framework, makes Captivate much more accessible to new users while giving experienced designers greater control over both aesthetics and functionality. Overall, the new Captivate moves closer to a web-based authoring tool model, focusing on simplicity, flexibility, and modern design practices.

Adobe Captivate User Guide

The most reliable and comprehensive resource for learning how to use **Adobe Captivate** is the official **Adobe Captivate User Guide**, available at https://helpx.adobe.com/captivate/user-guide.html. This guide is maintained directly by Adobe, ensuring that all information is accurate, up to date, and aligned with the latest version of the software. It provides step-by-step instructions, detailed explanations of features, troubleshooting tips, and best practices for creating engaging eLearning content. By using the official user guide, learners can avoid outdated or incorrect information often found in unofficial sources and gain a deeper, more efficient understanding of Captivate's capabilities straight from the experts who built it.



OVERALL DESIGN DECISIONS

- Branding
  Creating a unique visual brand is essential for establishing a strong and memorable identity that differentiates your published training materials from competitors and builds trust with your audience. Thoughtfully chosen colors, fonts, and logos work together to communicate your brand's personality, values, and tone at a glance, ensuring consistency across all materials — from eLearning courses and websites to presentations and marketing assets. Customizing these visual elements reinforces recognition and professionalism, helping learners or customers instantly associate the design with your organization. A cohesive, well-defined visual brand not

only enhances engagement and credibility but also strengthens emotional connections, making your content more impactful and aligned with your overall brand experience.

- Colors - Color selection usually involves pulling colors from a logo or previously developed marketing material. A standard practice in selecting colors for any training design, is to use three hues of the same color in addition to black white and a single action or emphasis color.

- Fonts - Fonts should be consistent throughout your training material and resist the urge to utilize more than two or three font faces on any single presentation. In most cases the standard fonts like Arial and Times New Roman are the best choices. A standout or customized font for large headers or design emphasis can be used consistently and strategically for enhanced visual engagement.

  Adobe Fonts integration in Adobe Captivate allows course creators to easily apply high-quality, web-safe typography across their eLearning projects for a polished and consistent visual style. By connecting Captivate to the Adobe Fonts library through Creative Cloud, designers can choose from thousands of professionally curated typefaces that automatically sync and render correctly across devices and browsers. This ensures that text elements—such as titles, body content, and buttons—maintain their intended appearance, enhancing readability and reinforcing brand identity. Using Adobe Fonts also simplifies font management, eliminating issues with missing or unsupported fonts when sharing projects or publishing courses, and helping authors deliver a visually cohesive and professional learning experience.

- Logos - In many instances the logo of the organization requesting the training development will be 1 of few graphics supplied. Be sure to get as clean a copy of the logo as possible and use it in branding, demonstrating who the training is presented by. Often the logo will be used in the header or footer sections for branding of all pages using a template.

Organization Branding Guides

A branding guide serves as a foundational reference that defines how an organization visually and stylistically presents itself across all forms of communication, including training materials. It outlines the approved visual elements—such as logos, color palettes, typography, imagery styles, and tone of voice—to ensure a unified identity. By documenting these standards, a branding guide enables content creators, designers, and instructional developers to produce materials that accurately reflect the organization's character and values. This consistency strengthens recognition and credibility, helping learners immediately identify the source and trust the material presented.

Adhering to a branding guide is especially important when developing training content, as training materials are often distributed widely within and outside the organization. Consistent application of branding not only reinforces the organization's professional image but also improves user experience by providing familiarity and visual harmony across modules, slides, documents, and

job aids. When all training assets look and feel cohesive, learners can focus more effectively on the content rather than being distracted by mismatched styles, colors, or fonts. Maintaining this consistency also protects the organization from brand dilution by ensuring every training product aligns with official standards.

Most branding guides include specifications for core design elements such as approved fonts and font pairings, official brand colors with exact hex/RGB/CMYK values, and proper logo usage guidelines. These often detail clear-space requirements around logos, minimum sizing rules to maintain legibility, and prohibited variations such as unauthorized color changes or distortions. Additionally, branding guides frequently define layout principles—such as spacing ratios, hierarchy rules, and the relative size of branding elements—to maintain visual balance. When instructional designers follow these specifications, the resulting training materials uphold the organization's professional identity and ensure every learner encounters a polished, consistent visual experience.

GENERAL COURSE VISUAL DESIGN

Effective eLearning course visual design relies on creating a clear, cohesive layout that enhances both usability and learner engagement. Incorporating well-defined header and footer elements helps structure each screen, providing a consistent framework for key information such as course titles, progress indicators, navigation controls, and branding elements. A consistent visual style — including color schemes, typography, and iconography — ensures that learners can easily recognize patterns and focus on content rather than figuring out how to move through the course. Equally important is intuitive navigation, which should be simple, predictable, and accessible across devices. When learners can move smoothly between sections, always knowing where they are and what to do next, they stay more focused and confident, resulting in a more effective and engaging learning experience.

- Navigation Elements
  Consistent and well-formed navigation elements help users easily find information, improving overall usability and reduce eLearning frustration. They also enhance a course's credibility and ensure a seamless experience across different pages and devices.

  - Course auxiliary buttons - There are often pages of content that are not specifically tied to lessons or the hierarchy of information within the course. These navigation elements need to be accessible from every page using a consistent navigation element button in the header or footer. Examples of pages that meet this requirement include: universal resources, glossary, help, table of content action and a consistent home page or start over action.

  - Forced navigation buttons - Forced navigation refers to the creation of buttons and link tools that are tied to specific actions. These buttons include things like moving between content pages using next or previous button links as well as links to specific parts of the course. As an example, you might have a resources page that links to specific starting points of content

within your course using buttons or hyperlinks.

- Play bar / Navigation buttons - There is a built in play bar and navigation tool set that can be enabled or disabled for the entire project. The controls and settings for the play bar and navigation system can be found by clicking on the small icon in the bottom right corner labeled TOC and play bar. When you start a project from scratch this play bar and navigation system is active by default. It is recommended that you not use both the play bar system and forced navigation as this will cause confusion with the learner's taking your course.

- Table of Contents (TOC) - the table of contents is a course wide navigation element that can be utilized to allow viewers to skip or move between sections of content within your course. The TOC will need to be linked and accessible either using the play bar solution or a specifically designated and placed forced navigation element.

  In most instances, the table of contents will display the lesson announcement pages along with any auxiliary course pages like the glossary or help page. This table of contents is built using the slide names throughout your course, so it is important that you have a good naming convention and be consistent.

  You do have the ability to turn off or not show individual slides or pages within your course. This feature is specifically useful when you have a course that is maybe 50 or more slides long and you only want to allow users to go between lessons which might be only four or five available links within the table of contents display.

  Adobe Captivate User Guide – Table of Contents (TOC)

  You can create and modify a Table of Contents (TOC) in Adobe Captivate by enabling the Show TOC toggle under the TOC & Playbar panel — this automatically populates the TOC with slide titles and group headings in the same order as your project. Once created, you can reorganize entries (move up, down, indent, outdent), hide or delete slide entries, create grouping folders up to five levels deep, and customize settings via the TOC Settings dialog. **For full step-by-step details:** see the user guide at https://helpx.adobe.com/captivate/help/table-of-contents-adobe-captivate.html.

- Header

  A consistent eLearning course header that includes the course title, page or lesson subtitle, classification, and navigation elements provides learners with clear context and orientation, helping them understand where they are within the course structure. This uniformity enhances usability, reduces cognitive load, and supports a more efficient and focused learning experience.

- Classification banner - The green unclassified banner across the top of every page defines the classification for this training. This section would change colors depending on the classification, for example CUI would be purple. For non DoD content, you might use this classification banner as an announcement bar or a welcome message that is presented on lesson announcement pages for a specific course.

- Course title / sub-title - The header element that includes the course title and subtitle is one of the most important branding and visualization areas of your eLearning course. The course title should be displayed on all pages or slides of the course and provide context for the learner as well as the subtext section which acts as a method of displaying where you're at in the course. This header element should define the color scheme for the entire course presentation.

- Auxiliary button bar - There are numerous instances where content needs to be shared and linked together beyond just lessons and the subpages within those lessons. The best place to display buttons that need to be available throughout the course on every slide, is just below the course title and sub-title section, allowing these tools to be always accessible. Providing auxiliary buttons that access course wide resources and links is a great way to empower the eLearner, especially when using the forced navigation method. This navigation element can be equally as powerful when the playbar navigation solution is enabled.

- Footer
  A consistent eLearning course footer that includes the logo, copyright, version number, pagination, and relevant production dates reinforces brand identity and ensures transparency about the course's timely relevance and version. This standardized information element helps instinctively progress through the eLearning content while also providing essential reference details for updates, support, or accreditation purposes.

  - Forced navigation - This type of navigation is created by the eLearning developer and constitutes a series of buttons that provide forward and backward progression through the training material, as well as links to other sections, files or external web links. Forced navigation replaces the built in play bar tools and navigation elements allowing the developer to create a more customized look and feel and directly control what options are displayed and available to the learner.

  - Footer bar - The bar across the bottom of each page of the training course should be consistent and incorporate some branding elements. A typical footer will include the logo of the organization producing the training as well as copyright, version number, and page numbering elements.

    - Logo - A small logo can be added to the footer section, and if necessary multiple logos can be added if they are combined into a single graphic that fits in the space. In many instances, there are logos representing different commands or levels within an organization

that need to be included in the course presentation.

- Copyright / Version # / Dates - Copyright and course version numbering as well as relevant dates should be included in a very concise format. This indicates who is presenting the training material, when the current version being displayed was created as well as providing version numbering for eLearner information.

- Page numbering - Page numbering is a very important visual tool which allows the eLearner to know where they are at within the content overall. Page numbering can be single numbers indicating the sequential number pages. Including page numbering that displays both page number and total number of pages, gives the eLearner an idea of how far they have progressed within the overall course structure.

> **Adobe Captivate User Guide – Create a Footer branding block**
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> To learn how to add a footer block to your project in Adobe Captivate, please visit the **official documentation** at https://helpx.adobe.com/captivate/help/add-a-footer-to-a-project.html. The guide walks you through inserting, formatting, and customizing footers across slides for consistent branding and layout.

- New design paradigm shift - The new version of Adobe Captivate represents a major paradigm shift in how learning content is designed and presented, moving from a slide-based authoring model to a responsive, web-like experience. Unlike the 2019 version, which constrained designers to fixed-width and fixed-height slides reminiscent of Microsoft PowerPoint, the latest Captivate embraces a fluid, scrolling layout. Content is now created using stacked content blocks that form pages of virtually infinite length, much like modern web pages. This approach allows instructional designers to build experiences that feel more natural on a variety of devices and screen sizes, ensuring that eLearning courses are not only visually engaging but also highly adaptive to different viewing contexts.

  This transition also changes how designers conceptualize learning flow and interactivity. In the 2019 version, lessons were often segmented into discrete “slides,” each serving as a self-contained unit of instruction, requiring learners to click or advance through one screen at a time. The new version encourages a more narrative, continuous learning experience, where information can be grouped logically into vertically stacked sections that learners scroll through at their own pace. This web-inspired design promotes modern instructional approaches such as microlearning and long-form storytelling, while reducing development complexity associated with responsive design. Overall, the shift reflects a broader trend in eLearning—moving from presentation-based content toward fluid, user-centered learning experiences that mirror how people consume information online today.

- Slides - In Adobe Captivate, the slide is the foundational unit of content creation—each slide functions as a self-contained screen that presents part of a learning experience, such as instruction, interaction, or assessment. Slides define the sequence and structure of a course, much like scenes in a video or pages in a presentation. Captivate allows authors to create various slide types, including content slides (for text, images, and multimedia), interactive slides (for activities like drag-and-drop or click-to-reveal interactions), quiz and knowledge check slides, and system slides such as title, menu, or results screens. These can be customized to match the instructional flow, providing a mix of engagement and assessment throughout the learner journey.

  Within each slide, content is built using content blocks, design components, and widgets, which together define both structure and interactivity. Content blocks serve as modular containers that hold text, media, buttons, and interactive elements, making it easy to rearrange or repurpose content across multiple slides. Design components—such as pre-styled text boxes, image frames, or interactive layouts—ensure visual consistency and save time by applying uniform formatting and behavior. Widgets, on the other hand, extend functionality by adding advanced interactions, animations, or integrations beyond standard Captivate features (for example, timers, custom navigation, or scenario-based interactions). The relationship among these elements is hierarchical and modular: slides contain content blocks; blocks use design components; and widgets enhance interactivity. Together, they form a flexible, scalable framework that allows designers to build visually cohesive and highly interactive eLearning experiences efficiently in Captivate.

  Adobe Captivate User Guide – Create a Slide

  To learn how to add a new slide to your project in Adobe Captivate, please visit the **official documentation** https://helpx.adobe.com/captivate/help/slide-navigator-adobe-captivate.html. The guide walks you through inserting, formatting, and customizing slides for consistent design and layout.

- Content Blocks - In Adobe Captivate, content blocks are the building units used to create and organize material within a slide. Each content block serves a specific purpose—whether it's to present text, display media, or reinforce branding—and they work together to form a cohesive layout that aligns with the overall course design. Content blocks provide a structured, modular approach to authoring, allowing course creators to combine and customize different types of elements while maintaining visual consistency and responsiveness across devices.

  There are several main types of content blocks:
  - Text blocks include titles, subtitles, paragraphs, and bullet lists that communicate instructional information or learning objectives. These blocks can be styled with predefined or custom fonts, colors, and alignments, ensuring consistency with the course's visual identity.

- Media blocks hold images, videos, audio clips, and animations, allowing designers to incorporate visuals and narration that enhance understanding and engagement. These blocks can be resized, layered, or paired with captions and overlays for accessibility.

- Branding blocks are used for logos, banners, color accents, and header or footer elements that reinforce institutional or organizational identity throughout the course. They help maintain a polished, professional look across all slides.

  The relationship between content blocks and design components is both structural and stylistic. Content blocks define *what* type of information or media appears on a slide, while design components define *how* those elements look and behave. For instance, a text block might use a specific design component that dictates font size, alignment, and background styling; or a media block might use a component that determines border style and animation behavior. By combining these layers, Captivate enables authors to focus on instructional flow while ensuring that every slide maintains a cohesive, branded, and learner-friendly design.Design Components – Design components are the visual and functional building elements that define how content is presented within each slide or content block. They determine the layout, appearance, and interactive behavior of on-screen elements such as text, images, buttons, and media. Essentially, design components act as styling templates that bring consistency, flexibility, and efficiency to the authoring process. Instead of designing each element from scratch, creators can apply prebuilt components—like text frames, image placeholders, buttons, progress indicators, or interaction panels—that automatically align with the project's overall theme and responsive layout.

  Each design component in Captivate can be customized through its design options, allowing authors to tailor its look and behavior to fit the specific context of a lesson. These options typically include color schemes, typography, spacing, alignment, shapes, animations, and interaction settings. For example, a text component might allow customization of font style, background color, and entrance effects, while a button component could be adjusted for shape, hover state, and action behavior (e.g., navigating to another slide or triggering feedback). Design components also inherit global style properties from the selected theme, ensuring consistent branding across all slides while still giving designers room to fine-tune individual elements as needed.

  By combining and customizing design components, authors can create polished, professional-looking content displays that align instructional goals with aesthetic coherence. This modular approach not only speeds up production but also ensures that all slides adapt seamlessly to different screen sizes and devices—making design components central to creating modern, responsive eLearning experiences in Captivate.

- Widgets – Widgets are pre-built interactive elements that you simply insert onto a slide and then configure: they save you from having to build custom scripting from scratch. You choose

a widget via the Widget panel (or the interactive Insert menu) and then set properties such as appearance, behavior, timing, etc. Because widgets live on slides, the relationship is: you decide which slide needs which interaction/visual component → you add the appropriate widget to that slide → you configure its settings, timing, and appearance within that slide.

Widgets therefore expand what a slide can do: beyond static text or media, you can have interactive tabs, carousels, hotspots, drag-and-drop games, etc. They enhance learner engagement and interactivity. Slides remain the containers; widgets are powerful tools inside those containers.

Common Widget Types and What They Display

Here are several of the major widget types available in Captivate with a brief description of each and what kind of information or interaction they're suited for:

Widget Type	Description & Use Case
Cards (Flip Cards)	Learners click or tap a card to "flip" it and reveal information on the reverse side. Great for definitions, paired facts (front/back), vocabulary, quick check-points.
Tabs	Content organized under tab headings: learners click a tab to reveal associated content. Useful for grouping related topics, showing alternatives/options, making efficient use of screen space
Carousel / Image Carousel	A horizontal (or sometimes vertical) scroll of pages/images that learners navigate through (via arrows, gesture, etc). Good for image-led storytelling, step-by-step processes, or sequential visuals.
Timeline	Displays events or steps along a visual timeline: learners can click nodes to explore each event/step. Useful for historical sequences, project milestones, process flows with chronology.
Hotspot	A static image or graphic with "hot" areas (clickable regions) that reveal call-outs, pop-ups, or additional detail when the learner interacts. Useful for diagrams, annotated maps/charts, interactive exploration.
Click-to-Reveal	The learner clicks (or taps) an element (e.g., image, box) to reveal hidden content (text-overlay, explanation, deeper detail). Good for discovery-based learning or layered reveal of information.
Drag and Drop	Learners drag items and drop them into target zones: good for categorization, matching, sequencing, or assembly tasks. This widget supports more game-style interactive learning.
Certificate	A widget that generates a completion certificate (often customizable with learner name, course title, date, signature). Useful at the end of a module or course to acknowledge achievement.

- Widget Tips & Notes
  - When you insert a widget, you'll often have properties to configure: number of items/pages, design style (layout/skins), appearance (colors, borders, backgrounds),

behavior (auto-play, transitions), what components to show/hide (titles, images, captions) etc.

- Because widgets are inside slides, think of each slide as hosting a main “experience” — it could just display text/media, or it could host a widget for interaction.
- Some widgets (especially interactive ones like drag & drop) can be used for assessments (or at least knowledge checks) and may allow you to report data (depending on configuration).
- Keep in mind accessibility and responsiveness: some widgets require careful setup to work well on mobile or with screen readers.
- Even though the widget gallery makes it easier, you’ll still need to pick the right widget for your instructional needs (rather than picking a widget just because it looks cool).

- Continous Scroll Project - The Continuous Scroll project type in Adobe Captivate introduces a modern, web-style approach to eLearning course design by replacing traditional slide-to-slide navigation with a seamless vertical flow of content. Instead of progressing through a series of discrete slides, learners scroll continuously down a single, extended slide that automatically adjusts its height to accommodate all included elements. Authors build these projects by stacking content blocks—such as text, images, videos, interactive widgets, and assessments—one beneath the other, creating a cohesive learning journey that feels more like browsing a webpage than navigating a presentation. This design style supports responsive layouts and ensures that learners on mobile devices experience smooth transitions without frequent page changes.

  One of the biggest advantages of the continuous scroll format is its engaging and intuitive user experience. Scrolling is second nature to most learners, particularly those accessing content on smartphones or tablets, making this project type highly accessible and user-friendly. It lends itself well to storytelling, scenario-based learning, and courses where information flows naturally from one topic to the next. The continuous structure reduces navigation friction—learners can stay immersed in the content without repeatedly clicking “Next.” From a design standpoint, this approach also allows for rich media integration, smooth visual transitions, and a modern, cohesive look that aligns with contemporary digital experiences.

  However, the continuous scroll format also presents some challenges that instructional designers should consider. Long scrolling pages can lead to cognitive overload if too much information is presented without sufficient visual breaks or interactivity. Navigation and progress tracking can be more complex, especially when learners want to revisit specific sections or when the course is integrated with an LMS that relies on slide-based tracking. Assessments and knowledge checks must be carefully placed to ensure learners engage with them rather than simply scrolling past. Despite these considerations, when designed thoughtfully—with clear chunking, interactive pauses, and strong visual hierarchy—the continuous scroll project type can deliver an immersive, mobile-friendly eLearning experience that feels fresh, fluid, and engaging.

Adobe Captivate User Guide – Continuous Scroll Course Design

To learn how to design a long scroll project in Adobe Captivate, please visit the **official documentation** at https://helpx.adobe.com/captivate/help/create-long-scroll-captivate-project.html . The guide walks you through inserting, formatting, and customizing content on a single slide.

GENERAL COURSE CONTENT

The design of training materials built from universal content elements ensures consistency, clarity, and learner engagement across all modules. Each course is structured into well-defined sections or lessons that logically progress through key concepts, supported by knowledge checks that reinforce understanding at critical learning points. Comprehensive testing components are included to evaluate learner mastery and provide measurable outcomes. Additionally, visually appealing and stylized content blocks—such as highlighted tips, scenario callouts, and multimedia inserts—are used to enhance readability and maintain learner interest. This modular and cohesive design approach enables efficient content updates, scalability, and an engaging learning experience for all participants.

- Section Breaks
  The training design includes structured navigation and engagement features to guide learners effectively through the material. This structured approach promotes consistent learning and ensures mastery of essential content before progression.

  - Section announcement page - Each module begins with a Section Announcement Page, which introduces the topic, outlines learning objectives, and provides context for what will be covered within the current coarse section.

  - Sub-section content topic blocks - Sub-section Content Topic Blocks organize information into clear, digestible units—making it easier for learners to absorb and retain key concepts. Multiple main learning topics might be subdivided into digestible blocks using a combination of content presentation methods and general hierarchy tools like bullets or lists.

  - Forced content viewing for progress - To ensure full participation and comprehension, the course may include Forced Content Viewing for Progress, requiring users to view or interact with all designated materials before advancing to the next section or assessment. In many training courses you don't want the viewer to be able to bypass or randomly navigate through the material.

- Required course support pages
  These pages are integral components of the training environment that enhance the learner's overall experience, even though they do not directly address specific learning objectives. These pages provide navigation assistance, context, and supplemental information to support

successful course completion. Together, these support pages ensure a smooth, informed, and user-friendly learning experience.

- Home page - The Home Page serves as the first presentation that your learner sees. This page should communicate to the viewer the overall color scheme and aesthetic of your course design as well as presenting the title and other information letting the viewer know that they have arrived at the starting point of your course. Typically, from the home page there is only one or two links that take the viewer to either lesson number one or to some auxiliary pages that need to be seen before the course is initiated. Keep navigation options to a minimum on the home page to avoid distraction.

- FBI page - This page of information can be optional depending on the needs of your organization. Typically included on this page are references, material controls, ownership and copyright information as well as the point of contact information for who is responsible for this training of course.

- Resources page - The Resources Page provides links to reference materials and external guides. This page holds information relevant to the course but that is not actually a content page for the course. Here you can build sections for video content that supplement the course, provide links to additional resources or even give an overview of where in a series of courses this topic falls.

- Help page - The course help page is it good location to define the requirements further accessing and successfully completing the training material as well as presenting information that assists the viewer in navigating throughout the course.

- Glossary page - The Glossary Page defines and lists all the acronyms as well as key terms and concepts for quick reference. Typically, the glossary is built up as the course is developed with new acronyms being added as they are inserted into the content.

- Course Summary - the Course Summary page provides an overview of the material covered and outlines next steps or completion requirements. In most training courses, the course summary is presented before the evaluation component of a course and might include instructions on how to take the final exam and what to do if you pass or fail the evaluation.

- Testing

  Adobe Captivate offers a comprehensive suite of testing and assessment tools that allow course authors to measure learner performance, reinforce understanding, and report progress to a Learning Management System (LMS). Assessments can be created using graded question slides (tests that report scores) or knowledge check slides (ungraded self-checks). Both types share a consistent design and interaction model, enabling seamless integration within learning modules. Authors can insert question slides directly from the toolbar or via the “Add Slide” menu and can

choose from a wide range of pre-built question templates or customize their own.

- Question Types and Customization - Captivate includes multiple built-in question types to address diverse learning objectives. Common options include Multiple Choice (single or multiple correct answers), True/False, Fill-in-the-Blank, Short Answer, Matching, Hotspot, Sequence, and Rating Scale (Likert) questions. Each type can be customized for scoring weight, number of attempts, penalties, and feedback options. Question text, answer layout, and feedback captions are fully editable, and authors can apply consistent styling through themes and master slides. Random question slides can also be used to draw from a question pool, helping create dynamic quizzes that vary with each learner attempt.

- Knowledge Check Slides - For non-graded practice, Knowledge Check slides allow learners to test their understanding without impacting their final score or LMS report. These slides visually resemble graded question slides but are excluded from overall quiz scoring and completion criteria. They are ideal for use between content sections to reinforce learning or prepare the learner for a final quiz. Knowledge check questions can include feedback and explanations, encouraging reflection and remediation before learners proceed.

- Scoring, Evaluation, and Feedback - Captivate's quiz preferences panel provides detailed control over scoring and evaluation behavior. Authors can set the pass/fail criteria either as a percentage score or as a total point threshold. The project can also define what happens when a learner passes or fails—such as proceeding to the next module, displaying a completion message, or redirecting to review content. Each question slide supports multiple attempts, feedback messages (for correct, incorrect, or incomplete responses), and optional penalties for incorrect answers. A built-in Results Slide automatically calculates and displays total scores, percentages, and pass/fail outcomes, and it can include buttons for reviewing the quiz or retaking it.

- Reporting and LMS Integration - Adobe Captivate integrates seamlessly with SCORM, AICC, and xAPI (Tin Can)-compliant LMS platforms. When reporting is enabled, Captivate tracks detailed quiz data, including learner name, attempt count, question responses, and overall score. These results are automatically sent to the LMS upon completion, allowing organizations to document compliance, measure proficiency, and generate certificates. For ungraded knowledge checks, reporting can be disabled so that those slides do not affect course completion metrics.

- Post-Test Navigation and Redirects - Upon completion of a quiz, authors can specify post-test actions in the Pass/Fail settings. Common options include continuing to the next slide, jumping to a specific slide (such as a review or feedback screen), or exiting the project. The same options can be configured for both pass and fail outcomes, providing flexible branching behavior. Learners who do not meet the passing criteria can be redirected to remediation slides, given another attempt, or instructed to review the material before retrying the test. This feature allows instructional designers to create adaptive learning flows that adjust dynamically

based on performance.

- Knowledge Check & Test Feature Summary - Overall, the testing capabilities in Adobe Captivate combine flexibility, analytics, and instructional control. Whether used for formal certification exams or informal self-checks, Captivate's assessment tools make it possible to create interactive, engaging, and data-driven eLearning experiences. With extensive customization, scoring options, responsive layouts, and LMS integration, Captivate supports both summative evaluation (for measuring learning outcomes) and formative feedback (for reinforcing key concepts) within a single cohesive environment.

> **Adobe Captivate User Guide – Create Quizzes**
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> To learn how to add a knowledge check and graded quizzes to your project in Adobe Captivate, please visit the **official documentation** at https://helpx.adobe.com/captivate/help/create-multiple-choice-question-slide.html . The guide walks you through inserting, formatting, and customizing quiz slides and question types.

- Lesson Sections

  Lessons within a training course are the foundational building blocks that organize learning content into manageable, focused segments. Each lesson typically addresses a specific topic, skill, or learning objective, allowing learners to progress through material in a logical and structured way. By breaking a larger curriculum into smaller, purposeful lessons, instructors can present information in a way that supports comprehension, retention, and engagement. Lessons often include a combination of instructional content, visuals, demonstrations, and interactive elements such as knowledge checks or simulations to reinforce understanding before learners move on to the next concept.

  Using a modular design approach, each lesson functions as a self-contained unit that can stand alone or integrate seamlessly within the broader course structure. This modularity allows for flexibility in course creation, updates, and delivery—individual lessons can be revised, reused, or rearranged without disrupting the entire program. Within each lesson, information is typically divided into clear segments—such as introductions, explanations, examples, and practice activities—to guide learners through a consistent flow of learning. This segmented approach ensures that complex information is presented in digestible portions, supporting a scalable and adaptive training design that meets diverse learning needs and styles.

  - Announcement page - A lesson announcement page serves as an essential guidepost within a training course, helping learners orient themselves and prepare for upcoming content. It clearly displays the lesson title, giving participants an immediate understanding of the topic or skill they are about to explore. Beneath the title, the learning objectives are presented in

concise, actionable terms—outlining what learners will know or be able to do by the end of the lesson. This transparency not only sets expectations but also helps learners focus on key outcomes. Additionally, the page highlights the lesson's position within the overall course structure, showing its connection to previous material and its role in the broader learning journey. This context fosters a sense of progress and purpose, motivating learners to stay engaged while ensuring they can easily track where they are and where they're headed next.

- Lesson navigation elements - Consistent and easy-to-identify universal navigation elements are vital to creating an effective and user-friendly learning experience. When learners can quickly recognize and rely on familiar navigation tools, they spend less time figuring out how to move through the course and more time engaging with the content. Clear navigation within lessons—such as next and previous buttons, section indicators, or progress bars—helps learners smoothly traverse material without confusion or frustration. Equally important are course-wide navigation tools like a table of contents, help resources, and a glossary, which provide quick access to key information and support independent exploration. By maintaining a consistent look, location, and behavior across all pages, these elements build learner confidence, reduce cognitive load, and promote a seamless, intuitive flow throughout the entire training experience.

- Knowledge checks - Including knowledge check questions at the end of each lesson in Adobe Captivate offers an interactive and low-pressure way for learners to confirm their understanding before moving on. These ungraded assessments provide immediate feedback, helping learners identify areas of strength and topics that may need review. By reinforcing key concepts right after they are introduced, knowledge checks improve long-term retention and promote active engagement with the material. They also serve as a self-assessment tool, allowing learners to reflect on their comprehension and adjust their learning pace as needed—an especially valuable feature in self-guided or asynchronous training environments.

  Unlike graded testing at the end of an entire course, which evaluates overall mastery, lesson-level knowledge checks focus on reinforcement rather than measurement. They remove the pressure of scoring and instead emphasize learning as a process. This approach encourages exploration and confidence-building, as learners can make mistakes, review explanations, and retry questions without penalty. In Adobe Captivate, these knowledge checks can be seamlessly integrated with multimedia, branching scenarios, and interactive feedback, making the experience both educational and engaging. Ultimately, they bridge the gap between learning and assessment, ensuring learners are better prepared and more confident when they reach the final graded evaluation.

Interactive Videos

The interactive video feature in Adobe Captivate transforms traditional video content into an engaging, learner-driven experience by layering interactivity directly onto the video timeline. Instead of passively watching, learners can click, explore, and make decisions while the video plays—turning linear content into a dynamic learning activity. Captivate allows authors to import

standard MP4 videos or record demonstrations, then enhance them with interactive elements such as buttons, hotspots, bookmarks, and questions. These interactions can pause playback, reveal additional information, or branch the learner to different sections of the course, making video a powerful tool for both storytelling and assessment.

A key component of this functionality is the use of overlay slides, which serve as temporary layers of content that appear on top of the main video at specified points. Authors can assign existing content slides—such as quiz questions, informational pop-ups, or knowledge checks—as overlays directly within the video editor. These overlays are triggered by bookmarks or timeline markers, and when the learner reaches a designated time in the video, Captivate automatically pauses playback and displays the assigned slide. After interacting with the overlay content, learners can return to the video seamlessly, resuming from the paused point. This structure allows designers to reuse content slides across different videos and maintain a consistent learning experience throughout the course.

The timeline-based control is at the heart of interactive video design in Captivate. Authors manipulate and align elements along the slide timeline, placing interactions, overlays, and bookmarks precisely where learner engagement is desired. Each object—whether it's a clickable button, shape, or text caption—appears as a layer on the timeline, enabling fine-tuned synchronization between visual events and interactive triggers. This visual editing approach makes it easy to coordinate cues, manage pause points, and adjust timing without re-recording or re-editing the video. Together, the combination of timeline editing, overlay integration, and interactivity transforms static media into immersive, responsive learning experiences that both capture attention and reinforce understanding.

Adobe Captivate User Guide – Develop Interactive Videos

To learn how to create and sequence interactive video elements within your project in Adobe Captivate, please visit the **YouTube tutorial presented by Paul Wilson** at https://pie.yt/?v=https://youtu.be/oee7vm2O6Hg?si=Had1-vCeyKV82Wbc&pieshare=1 The guide walks you through creating, formatting, and overlaying additional on top of a video presentation.

Software Simulations

Adobe Captivate includes powerful software simulation features that enable instructional designers to capture, demonstrate, and teach software-based tasks in a realistic, interactive way. These simulations record user actions—such as mouse clicks, keyboard input, and screen changes—directly from a live application, automatically converting them into step-by-step slides. Each recorded step generates a screenshot, captions, and highlights, helping learners visually follow the process. This makes Captivate an ideal tool for creating software tutorials, IT training, and system onboarding content without requiring extensive manual editing.

Captivate offers several capture modes to suit different instructional goals: Demonstration Mode, Training Mode, Assessment Mode, and Custom Mode. In Demonstration Mode, the software automatically records user actions and generates explanatory captions to show how a process works—perfect for passive viewing. Training Mode captures the same actions but prompts learners to actively perform them, providing hints and feedback when needed. Assessment Mode tests learner performance by requiring them to complete steps without guidance, recording success or failure for scoring and tracking. Custom Mode allows authors to combine aspects of these modes, offering full flexibility in how learners experience and interact with the simulation.

Captivate's detailed recording settings give authors significant control over how simulations are captured and presented. Designers can specify the recording area (full screen, specific window, or custom region), adjust the frame rate for smoother playback, and include system audio or microphone narration for added context. Captivate automatically inserts smart shapes, text captions, and click boxes to replicate user input, but these can all be customized in terms of style, timing, and animation. Advanced users can fine-tune mouse paths, control the timing of click effects, and even replace individual screenshots to correct errors or improve clarity without re-recording the entire session.

Beyond basic capture, Captivate enhances simulations with interactive and visual design features. Authors can add highlight boxes, zoom areas, and rollover effects to emphasize key actions, as well as use variables and advanced actions to simulate realistic software behavior. Branching logic can direct learners to different scenarios based on their input, allowing for adaptive learning experiences. Additionally, Captivate simulations integrate smoothly with LMS platforms for tracking learner performance, including completion rates, scores, and time on task. Altogether, these features make Adobe Captivate a comprehensive tool for developing rich, engaging, and measurable software training that supports both self-paced and instructor-led learning environments.

Adobe Captivate User Guide – Create Software Simulation

To learn how to create and capture a software simulation within your project in Adobe Captivate, please visit the **official documentation** at https://helpx.adobe.com/captivate/help/record-software-simulations-adobe-captivate.html The guide walks you through recording, formatting, and customizing a software simulation.