



# **Optimist International Boosts its Training Rate 2,000% with Tovuti**



## Summary

Non-profit organization, Optimist International, is on a mission to “bring out the best in youth, community, and ourselves” through scholarship contests, oratorical competitions, golf programs, and community activities. To aid their mission, Optimist International relies on almost 50,000 volunteers and 3,000 clubs around the world.

Optimist International traditionally used in-person conferences and conventions to train its club officers as well as a mail-in paper “passport” system for two other large-scale training programs focused on personal growth and professional development.

As a result, only 2% of its officers were trained, leading to disjointed and inconsistent training across its global clubs.

With the help of Tovuti, Optimist International:

- Increased its officer training rate 2,000% – from 210 trained officers to almost 2,205
- Created uniform training across its global volunteer base
- Boosted productivity with Dizi, an AI-generation content tool
- Expanded into new training programs with a total of 235+courses
- Plans to add two new audiences, including one for a new revenue stream

# About Optimist International

Established in 1919, Optimist International is a non-profit global service club organization dedicated to “bringing out the best in youth, community, and ourselves.”

With their upbeat attitude, Optimist International Club members help empower young people to be the best they can be through scholarship contests, oratorical competitions, golf programs, and community activities.

The non-profit organization has almost 3,000 clubs and over 50,000 volunteers in more than 20 countries. Optimists conduct 65,000 service projects and serve six million young people every year.





## The challenge

Serving millions of youth per year is no simple task. Optimist International relies on over 50,000 adult volunteers and 3,000 clubs worldwide to bring their mission to life.

Traditionally, Optimist International used in-person conferences and conventions to train its club officers such as presidents, secretaries, and treasurers on club roles, bylaws, and procedures.

The conferences and conventions were costly for members. Since they required travel, lodging, and food costs, few officers could attend.

As a result, training was disjointed and lacking across the global service organization. Optimist International estimates that only 2% of their officers received training. And, with thousands of clubs around the world, Optimist International couldn't verify if they were all being operated according to the standards they had outlined and envisioned at headquarters.

What's more, Optimist International had two other large-scale training programs to keep track of: the Personal Growth and Involvement Plan and the Professional Development Plan. Both programs offered members courses on leadership and personal development training.

To track these programs, Optimist International relied on a paper "passport" system where members would complete activities, sign off on them, and mail them back to headquarters. However, it was difficult to tell if a volunteer had truly completed training – or just signed off without finishing it – and how much information they comprehended during each exercise.

Not only that but the back-end admin work was a hassle. Once a passport was received at headquarters, a paper certificate had to be printed and mailed to the volunteer, amounting to half a week's worth of work or more per month on just printing and mailing alone.

## Ease of use welcome surprise for admins and older adult users



To increase training uniformity across clubs, Optimist International implemented Tovuti LMS. They began by rebranding the Tovuti platform as the Optimist Institute, employing their organizational colors and adding a unique mascot, to help create a fun experience for their users.

Next, Optimist International added interactive courses for annual officer training, new club training, and both their Personal Growth and Involvement and Professional Development plans.

They also included an “inspiration section,” using embedded YouTube videos, to showcase inspirational youth stories. And they added a quick reference guide section with PDFs on how to use Optimist International’s new member system.

*“This is the ninth LMS I’ve worked with and the seventh I’ve started from the ground up,” said Heather Myers, Optimist Institute Director. “I’ve never had it this easy. With previous LMSs, I couldn’t upload anything that wasn’t a SCORM file. Content creation took forever. And then there was the tech side.”*

Myers, a seasoned corporate trainer with a background in adult learning, was used to LMS systems that required coding for basic functions.

*“On other systems, just to even format a picture, I’d have to go in and figure out which piece of the code to change,” said Myers. “Having a user-friendly LMS is such a breath of fresh air. I tell everybody this – Tovuti is so easy to use.”*

User-friendliness was also a welcome surprise for Optimist International’s users who are largely older adults and may struggle with technology or complex systems.

*“There hasn’t been a learning curve with our users,” said Myers. “From the time they log in, our learners know where to go and what to do.”*



# Institute success leads to multi-program expansion

In just one year, usage of the Tovuti system grew rapidly. Active accounts on the Tovuti platform more than doubled. And after seeing a growing interest in the desire to learn more than just officer training, Myers began expanding into courses on social media, technical skills, and DEI training.

She also expanded a pilot program called “The Optimist Leadership Academy.” The Optimist Leadership Academy was originally a one-day program for members who showed potential to move beyond club-level roles and into district, regional, or international leadership roles.

With Tovuti, the Leadership Academy now takes place over nine months and has ten gated stages that learners progress through. The invite-only academy learning path includes self-paced learning modules and live webinars with outside experts.

*“To bring in the number of guest speakers we host in our webinars to our convention would cost thousands of dollars,” said Myers. “With Tovuti, we can bring in as many speakers as we’d like and people can revisit recordings later – at no additional cost.”*



**Professional  
development**



**Leadership  
training**



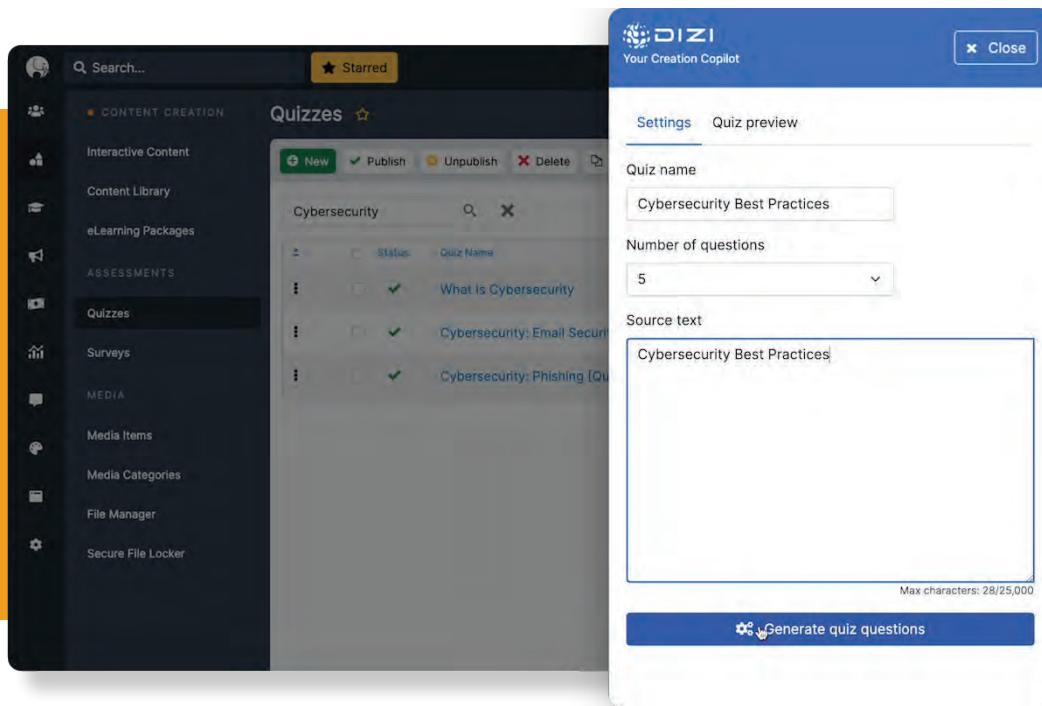
**Technical  
skills**

# Dizi increases productivity for new course demand

Interest in courses has exploded with more and more users requesting new training in the Optimist Institute. To keep up with demand, Myers – a team of one – relies on Dizi, Tovuti's AI-powered content creation tool.

*"With Dizi, I don't even have to be familiar with the subject," said Myers. "I can just type in a topic, and in a few minutes, I have a course. Dizi saves me weeks in just research alone."*

Recently, Myers was scheduled to complete 12 new courses in one month – an overwhelming task with her other responsibilities as a learning and development leader. With Dizi, she was able to complete all 12 and launch them within a few days.





# Bulk user groups boost organizational efficiency

As a team of one, overseeing thousands of learners can be challenging. However, features like bulk user groups make it effortless.

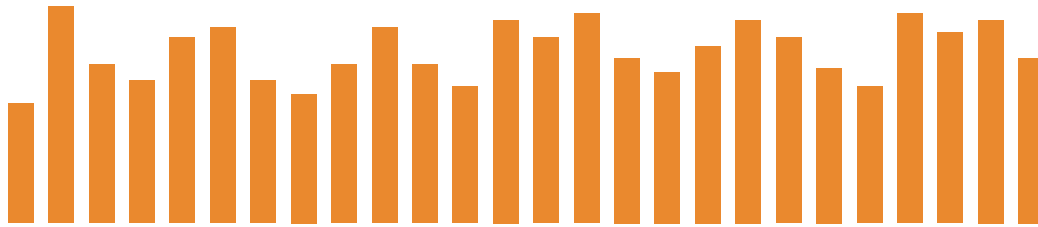
*“For me to go through 3,600 people on a regular basis would be extremely time-consuming,” said Myers. “Tovuti makes it so easy.”*

Using bulk user groups, Myers can send relevant training reminders to specific groups. And she can weed out non-active members by quickly scanning through and deleting people who are no longer members.

This helps prevent non-members from accessing organizational information and using Optimist International’s personal and professional training programs for free. And it helps Myers maintain an accurate list of members.

## Favorite features:

- ♥ Interactive content & assessments
- ♥ Dizi, AI-content creation tool
- ♥ Bulk user groups
- ♥ Webinars



## The results

With Tovuti, Optimist International can make training accessible to all club officers – something not possible with its former officer training program of in-person conferences and conventions. The non-profit organization now requires all club officers to complete annual training and withholds club awards until they do.

Since implementing Tovuti almost five years ago, the Optimist Institute has grown substantially and is more of a learning and development hub for its volunteers.

The Optimist Institute houses several large-scale training programs including the Leadership Academy, Personal Growth and Involvement Plan, and the Professional Development Plan. And Optimist International is constantly adding new courses to the institute to keep up with learner demand.

Today, the platform has triple the amount of users, multiple learning paths, and over 235 courses on everything from personal and professional development to DEI, and computer skills.

With Tovuti, Optimist International:

- Increased its officer training rate 2,000% – from 210 trained officers to almost 2,205
- Standardized training across its global volunteer base
- Eliminated its paper passport system and associated costs
- Boosted productivity with Dizi, an AI-generation content tool
- Reduced manual tasks with automation

*“It’s great to see this growth and how active our members are because that means they’re engaged with our mission,”* said Myers.

# Future plans: new revenue streams and more

Optimist International is currently drafting plans to create an Optimist Institute for the students it serves. Through this initiative, Optimist International would provide student-oriented leadership development and training – similar to those on the institute but geared towards a younger generation.

They plan to launch this student-focused program on the Tovuti platform using a separate, uniquely branded login. Working with students means that safety is priority above all else. Tovuti's secure platform ensures that both instances will remain entirely separate from the user perspective yet can be easily managed from one place.

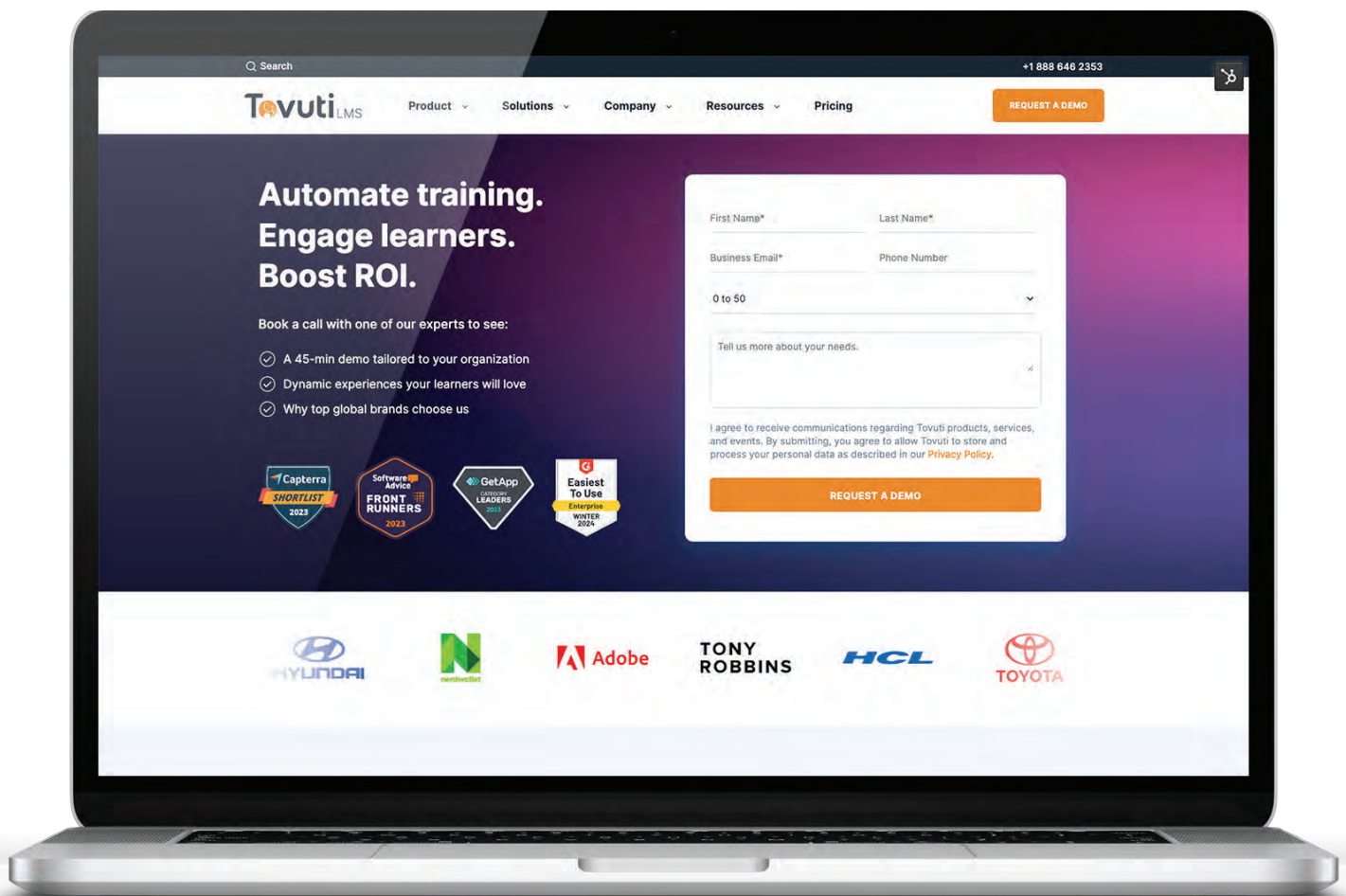
Due to its success, Optimist International is also considering opening the Optimist Institute to the public through a monetized subscription plan, creating another revenue stream for the non-profit. They would do so by creating a third instance within the Tovuti platform and duplicating content from the institute. Subscription funds would go towards supporting scholarships and club dues.

*"I've used a lot of LMS systems and Tovuti is hands down the best,"*  
said Myers.



# Discover why top brands choose Tovuti

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