Lexmark training gets faster, better, smarter

The Lexmark Juarez manufacturing team saw an opportunity to improve processes around training and certifying workers. Turning to their own enterprise software experts, they collaborated on a new solution that improves processes, supports compliance, reduces costs and improves visibility by providing immediate insight into employee performance. Not only has Lexmark seen immediate results, it's used real-world experience to develop a better solution for the manufacturing industry.

Challenge

To work in certain positions on the manufacturing floor, employees at Lexmark Juarez need to complete proper levels of certification. With more than 2,700 employees and 50 different kinds of certifications, manually administering, grading and recording certification activities took up a lot of time and resources and didn't provide timely feedback on employee performance.

In addition to recording general certification results, Lexmark Juarez is also faced with Mexico's Labor Law, stating that the progress of every employee has to be tracked. To adhere to that requirement, two tests are administered: One before the training and one after. Between employee volume and having to administer two tests for each person, the Juarez team has to manually administer, grade and record more than 4,000 training and certification tests every month.

Solution

Lexmark Juarez leaders saw a real opportunity to save time and resources when it came to testing and qualifying workers. To improve operations and support compliance, it turned to its very own enterprise software team.

In higher education, Lexmark has a solution for testing and grading. But training employees in a manufacturing facility is different and doesn't follow the same model of a set roster, curriculum and record keeping. A team of software experts joined together with the training experts from Lexmark Juarez to adapt the testing and grading solution for use in a manufacturing environment.

Leea Haarz, general manager of the Lexmark Juarez campus, was optimistic. "We knew that if we could address the pain points in our own operation, we could help develop a solution relevant to other manufacturers. Our goal was to create a solution that could become a model of best practice for our customers."

The result? The Lexmark Training and Certification solution: A fully automated software and hardware solution for planning, printing, grading and recording tests.

Lexmark's First Customer Program

First Customer is a Lexmark initiative that supports the implementation of our own products and solutions internally. Using our own solutions, we gain the enhanced productivity and cost savings that our products provide, as well as, real-world insights into product usage so that we may continually improve our solutions for our customers.

Products in use: Lexmark Training and Certification, Lexmark Printers & Multifunction Devices

Lexmark

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Human Resources Manager
Lexmark Juarez

Results

Automated solution, automatic savings

The Lexmark Training and Certification solution is being used across all five areas of the Juarez campus. Since implementation, the administrative work to support training activities has gone from hours of manual labor to minutes.

According to Monica Estrada, human resources manager at Lexmark Juarez, "We're saving about 70% of our time for evaluating and filing results. Before, we had to check every test one by one. Now, it's automatic and immediate. In just two-to-three minutes, we can grade 100 tests. Before, that took hours."

In four easy steps, certification tests are created, printed, graded and recorded:

1. **Creating the roster**
   To create a roster, instructors simply scan the employee's Lexmark badge. The roster is created automatically and the system links each employee's participation and results to their central electronic employee file in the human resource system. Streamlining the creation of the roster and linking of employee participation and results provides instant access to the training status of individual employees as well as the team.

2. **Administering the test**
   All of the exams for that particular test are printed and pre-populated with information, including: Course name, instructor's name, employee's name and a unique barcode to catalogue that particular answer sheet. Lexmark Juarez relies on 13 Lexmark multifunction products (MFP) to run the solution. To prepare for the training, the facilitator accesses the roster and exams using the MFP touch screen and prints the materials for that day.

3. **Grading: From hours to minutes**
   Once the tests are completed, the instructor fills out the answer key, places it on top of the employee answer sheets and scans the pages into the Lexmark MFP. The tests are automatically graded and a record sheet of results can be printed immediately or viewed from a desktop computer as a PDF. Test results can also be emailed or saved to a network file location.

4. **Recording and tracking progress**
   Each employee is required to take two tests before and after the training to track progress. As the tests are graded, the unique barcodes on each test link to the respective employee files. Test results are available in each file as a record for employee progress.

An easier way to support compliance

According to Mexico's Labor Law, employers are required to track employee progress. With Lexmark Training and Certification, documenting progress is much simpler with an automated solution. For each training activity, employees are required to take two exams: One before the training and one after. Upon completion, both tests are recorded in the employee file, and employee progress is catalogued automatically.

And, there's an added benefit: Lexmark Juarez gains concise insight into the effectiveness of the training activities based on aggregated employee data.

Running the line more efficiently

The team facilitates several kinds of training across its campus, including on-the-job training, regulatory training that focuses on health and safety and developmental training—totaling more than 50 different kinds of exams.

With the training and certification solution, it's simpler and easier to understand training activities across the operation, as well as the individual level. Being able to better understand the status of employees and larger training initiatives enables Lexmark Juarez to improve operations and ensure employees are prepared and supported within their role.

In terms of facilitating and planning, Estrada says, "Our team has been able to dedicate more time to strategical planning, rather than tactical. This is helping us ensure our employees are adequately prepared to do their job well."

Haarz adds, "With the solution, we are able to reduce administrative time by 40%. That's huge."

Less paper management, fewer delays

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Building a better solution for the industry

Perhaps the biggest takeaway of the implementation of Lexmark's Training and Certification solution at Lexmark Juarez is what was learned in the process.

Haarz says, "Because we were involved in the design and testing of the solution, we were able to tailor it to the manufacturing industry. And, as a by-product, the team in Juarez was able to understand and contribute to the bigger Lexmark strategy of being an end-to-end solutions provider."

She goes on to add, "Through our own experience, we're continually improving how this solution can help manufacturers eliminate waste, reduce costs and improve productivity. It's a solution designed by a manufacturer, for a manufacturer."

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