

Customer Success Story

Selecting the right LMS for Compliance at Centra Health



CENTRA

THE ROLE OF LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT AT CENTRA HEALTH

Not surprisingly, learning and development is key to all areas of Centra's organization; in fact, continuous learning and improvement is one of the organization's core values.

Such focus on ongoing education is needed in order to:

- Ensure staff keeps current with frequent regulatory, legal, pharmaceutical, and medical updates,
- Communicate effectively to the whole workforce information around operational changes and new professional obligations, and
- Enhance and expand existing knowledge and skill sets that directly correlate with improved job satisfaction among professional staff.

To assist in the delivery of quality training for 6,200 employees (including 490 medical personnel), Centra had been using a Learning Management System (LMS) for the scheduling of both online and live classes.

But over time Centra's needs expanded significantly. In addition to health care instruction, demand for training in other areas grew dramatically, especially around regulatory compliance. Staff would now need, for example, to be kept current on updates to ICD-10 — the World Health Organization's scheme for the International Classification of Diseases — and Magnet certification.

Obtaining and maintaining Magnet Certification is no easy undertaking. On initial application, a hospital must pass 88 required operating standards that cover Transformational Leadership, Structural Empowerment, Exemplary Professional Practice and New Knowledge, Innovations, and Improvements¹. The learning requirements for Magnet Certification are so stringent that less than one percent of hospitals in the US meet them.

Top-tier health care providers such as Centra Health, an award-winning, nonprofit Virginia, US-based health care provider, know that quality of service and care are absolutely critical in order to become a community's preeminent choice for health-related services.

Centra quickly recognized that it needed an LMS which was not only up to the task of helping the organization meet Magnet-related and various other new regulatory demands, but it could also grow to meet future business needs — so, they began looking for a replacement.

A STRINGENT LIST OF LMS REQUIREMENTS

Drawing on its past experience, Centra drew up an extensive list of requirements for the new LMS. Centra wanted a hosted solution with proven stability that offered them:

- The ability to directly import custom content or manage third-party content
- AICC/SCORM compliance
- Role-based permissions
- Integration with its Human Resource management systems
- Growth potential
- User friendliness
- Email support
- Strong reporting capabilities
- Virtual classroom support

Centra also scrutinized the vendors' track records as well as their technical and help desk support and made it clear that Centra wanted the freedom to choose its own authoring tools, i.e., neither the LMS nor any content vendor could mandate the installation of specific authoring applications.

NARROWING FROM 100 VENDORS DOWN TO 3

Starting with a preliminary examination of approximately 100 LMS vendors, Centra whittled the list of potential candidates down to 20 and then to three.

In the end, Centra was most impressed with NetDimensions Learning and the overall compliance solution offered by NetDimensions Healthcare, a division of NetDimensions.

NetDimensions Learning met Centra's requirements, in particular around two things it wanted most — a robust reporting structure and a strong, reliable platform for regulatory compliance.

SMOOTH TRANSITION FROM OLD TO NEW

By taking advantage of the new system's inherent flexibility and by planning proactively (e.g. mandating that the new LMS' user interface match the look and feel of its predecessor to aid users in the transition to the new system), Centra's implementation of NetDimensions Learning went smoothly and took less than 90 days. Centra transferred historical data from its previous LMS to NetDimensions Learning and set up an integration of the new system to Centra's Lawson HR system that went live without a single incident.

Furthermore, Centra provided abundant advance promotion about the new system as well as training and ongoing support.

MORE THAN JUST AN LMS

Centra was quick to begin using NetDimensions Learning for online instruction, registration of live classroom education as well as other types of synchronous and asynchronous training. Within two years nearly 2,000 classroom and e-learning modules were entered and administered on the system.

Centra also used the new system's automated alert, scheduling, and delivery functions for onboarding, i.e. to automatically assign training and other orientation-related activities to new employees. Additionally, the new system's support for video-based content meant that employees no longer had to physically pass training videos or DVDs around (resulting in frequent losses of these physical assets); instead they could now access instructional videos on the system any time.

Betty Mills, Learning & Development Manager for Centra Health, said: "Conservative estimates indicate that the new system has already yielded cost savings of US\$850,000, and that does not include costs saved from facility expenses or scheduling and administrative expenses."

SYNERGISTIC BENEFITS

NetDimensions Learning integrated so well with Centra's HR, web conferencing, and email systems, that Centra has confidently expanded the system's role beyond traditional LMS functions, using it for disseminating and centrally storing newsletters as well as conducting surveys, assessments, and evaluations of live training and live meeting events.

Centra now records online events such as monthly staff meetings and makes these available on NetDimensions Learning to enable those who missed a particular meeting to review what had transpired and provide sign off if needed. Centra even provides access to its system to other third-party providers.

NetDimensions Learning's seamless integration with other systems has produced noticeable employee productivity benefits as well, for instance for managers who once had to access two systems to get information and can now only log into a single location for consolidated access to everything they need.

CENTRA AND MAGNET CERTIFICATION

Best of all, NetDimensions Healthcare's solutions and services helped Centra enter into the rarified strata of Magnet Certified hospitals.

In 2010, American Nurses Credentialing Center recognized Centra with Magnet Certification for the second time — a recognition with tangible meaning for both patients and nurses. Studies have demonstrated that patients in Magnet hospitals experience fewer complications, lower mortality rates, and higher satisfaction, while nurses in Magnet organizations enjoy greater job satisfaction in part because of better professional development opportunities². With the current national shortage of nurses³ and the intense competition to attract and retain such professionals, this is no small consideration.

Health care organizations such as Centra who appreciate the benefits of superior service quality not only to attract patients but also top quality health care professionals, recognize the importance of ongoing education.

"Centra is honored that its hospitals consistently rank among the best in the United States, and is also proud to be recognized by the ANCC as Magnet Certified provider which is an important validation of our ability to provide our employees with timely and targeted training," noted Mills.

1 UNC Hospitals Magnet Initiative Frequently Asked Questions, <http://www.unchealthcare.org/site/Nursing/magnet/UNC%20Hospitals%20Magnet%20Program%20FAQs.pdf>

2 American Association of Colleges of Nursing, 'Nursing Shortage', <http://www.aacn.nche.edu/media-relations/fact-sheets/nursing-shortage>

Will Dunham, 'U.S. healthcare system pinched by nursing shortage' March 8 2009 <http://www.reuters.com/article/2009/03/08/us-usa-nurses-idUSTRE5270VC20090308>

3 UNC Hospitals Magnet Initiative Frequently Asked Questions.