Rentokil Creates Blended Learning Across 64 Countries, 31 Languages

Rentokil Initial
Best Advance in Learning Technology Implementation
November 2017

Company Background

Company At-a-Glance	
Headquarters	United Kingdom
Year Founded	1925
Revenue	$1.1 billion to $5 billion
Employees	25,000 – 49,000
Global Scale	Europe, North America, South America, Africa, Middle East, Asia & Pacific
Customers/Output, etc.	Business Services
Industry	Business Services
Stock Symbol	rto.l
Website	www.rentokil-initial.com

Budget and Timeframe

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Overall budget	£215.k
Number of employees involved with the implementation?	9
Number of Operations or Subject Matter Expert	5

employees involved with the implementation?	
Timeframe to implement	12 weeks
Start date of the program	06/10/2014

Business Conditions & Business Needs

In 2014, Rentokil Initial embarked on a journey to transform learning by creating a new brand and strategy around professional development. The intention was to move away from classroom training to blended learning, allowing employees to develop at their own pace using digital resources.

Rentokil Initial is a multinational business services company focused on three main business lines, pest control, hygiene, and workwear, and it has a range of other smaller specialist services, including plants, medical services, property care and specialist hygiene. All services are route-based, which means that approximately 90% of Rentokil employees operate in the field with limited access to technology – some have no company email address!

In total, the company serves more than a million customers from the largest multinational pharmaceutical, industrial, and food production companies to local shops, restaurants, and homes. Each customer has unique and often vastly differing requirements, so the need to operate in each country in a localized and decentralized way is critical. This localization provides massive complexity when it comes to contributing efficient and effective learning. Learning that happens in a "one size fits all" approach doesn't work practically or culturally.

Approximately 90% of Rentokil employees are front-line technicians whose literacy is often poor and access to technology is limited. Rentokil operates in more than 60 countries, and the smallest team has 20 employees. The company can't afford to take them off the road for classroom training, so learning and development activities are cascaded by managers with limited training experience. There is no consistent technology platform; each country has its own and often devices are shared among employees. Finally, Rentokil employees speak >31 different languages and >70% of them do not speak English as their first language.

At the start of 2013, only 43% of the organization's employees had a training record and >85% of learning was still conducted in a classroom. Monthly engagement (content

consumed) via the LMS stood at 500 items of learning. There was no ROI – and worse still was the failure of a complex, over administered, "top down" LMS that not only had alienated the learning community but had alienated business leaders as well.

Overview

Before building a new training program, using a blended-learning approach, the project team needed to find a technology that suited company culture and put the power of learning into the hands of business sectors and employees.

The team set key criteria for a new learning platform:

- Is easy to use, yet complex enough to deal with Rentokil's decentralized operating model.

- Admin light.

- Gives line managers the ability to manage the day-to-day deployment of learning.

- Used by different countries and teams in the way that benefits them most.

- Uses the 70:20:10 theory, allowing employees to learn when they want while encouraging formal learning.

- Allows users to generate their own content. In particular, it is vital for subject matter experts to share their expertise.

- Provides gamification that makes it possible to combine the fun of learning with the competitiveness of the company's workforce.

- Helps break down the company's siloed culture.

- Covers the company's 31 different languages and be device agnostic so content can be delivered efficiently in remote locations.

Design of the Program

The new employee training initiative would link to Rentokil's business strategy to increase organic growth.

The project team first had to select a learning management system that would meet the needs of Rentokil, which operates in localized and decentralized manner in 64 countries. Such localization brings massive complexity when it comes to contributing efficient and effective learning offerings.

In assessing the LMS market, the project team found vendors whose solutions dealt with some of the challenges faced by Rentokil but weren't agile enough to deal with the company's complexities.

When the team found the U+ system, stakeholders from across the organization were invited to provide feedback on it. Reviews made it evident that the user interface was intuitive.

The project team identified four U+ elements that would exceed requirements:

1. Advocates bite-sized content broken down into learning objects flexible enough to be structured and restructured around topics and learning plans. That ability enables the team to blend learning delivery by repackaging content in different ways for ONclass, Online, or ONjob learning. It also makes it possible to reuse existing content for the multi-lingual business.

2. Allows individuals to upload their own content (e.g., PowerPoints) and incorporates a video tool that allows anyone to capture screencasts without installing or learning new software.

Figure 1: Review Recordings
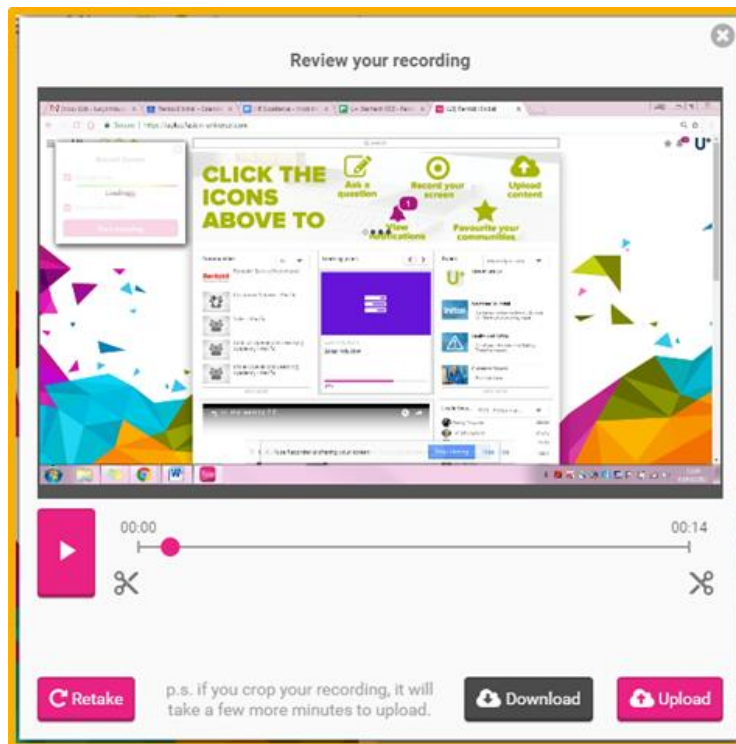
Source: Rentokil Initial 2017

3. The U+ mobile app allows for content (SCORM, video, documents) to be consumed away from the office – critical functionality for a field-based workforce. In addition to consuming content, it allows colleagues to ask questions of technical experts within the system – a new and innovative way for a virtual workforce to collaborate.
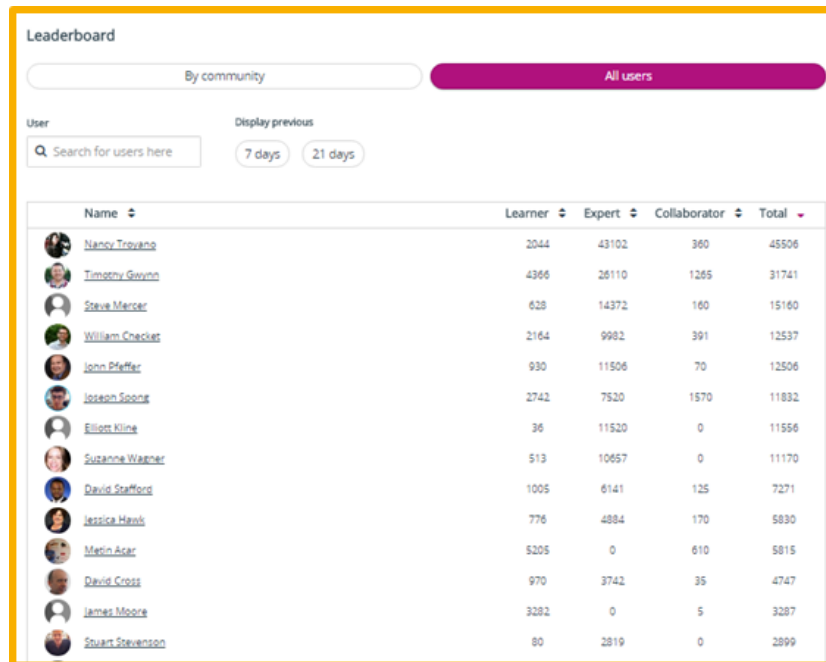
Figure 2: Mobile App Platform

Source: Rentokil Initial 2017

4. A leaderboard provides a gamification element, which encourages healthy competition and, in turn, drives usage. Users score points for learning, collaborating (commenting, sharing, liking), and contributing.

Figure 3: Leaderboard

Source: Rentokil Initial 2017

Delivery of the Program

With the new learning initiative, gone was the hierarchy-based system of the past. The community-based functionality allowed the flexibility needed locally in Rentokil's different business segments.

Previously, only senior levels had access to an LMS. The T&D team needed to engage with the rest of the workforce. The new platform was rolled out first to all employees in Rentokil's top 25 markets and used the Compliance and Health & Safety training as a tool to drive engagement. Effective communication plans targeted local users, and gamification was used to incentivize employees and provide targeted competitions. Active users were rewarded with small prizes and public recognition.

With the new initiative, courses added to the platform are split into easy-to-digest modules that are interactive, using facts, infographics and videos to educate the user in an engaging way. Mini quizzes are used to validate learning throughout the training process, and completion of each module generates a personalized certificate that can be used to prove due diligence and training.

Change Management Efforts

Having tried and failed to successfully implement an LMS in the past, the project team knew it was important to get it right this time. It became apparent quickly that the community-based initiative required significant communication with key stakeholders.

The team created a three-step plan for communication.

1. **Roadshows.** Created a set of materials that could be used locally within countries to do face2face training sessions for end users. For Rentokil Initial, where users do not interact often with technology, these sessions were critical.

2. **"Postcard comms."** Highlighted key features/functionality/courses and sent to end users every two weeks with targeted messages to different audiences based on local demands. The team tracked performance analytics that showed the postcard comms had an open rate of 72% and click rate of 12% in comparison to industry average rates of >50% and 3% respectively.

3. **Community owners.** Key to the success of implementing U+. They needed to know about the technology and understand their role and responsibilities. Ultimately, the team needed to up-skill them in the basics of L&D and allow them to share their knowledge with others. To do so, monthly vILT sessions were recorded and posted on the platform.

Measurable Benefits

Implementation of the new platform had a significant financial impact on the organization.

- £2m saved in the past 24 months and a further £250k over 5 years on license fees.

- 1,000+ pieces of user-generated content produced or shared, resulting in a yearly saving of £232k in comparison to the cost of creating/buying such content).

- £168k saved by using the platform for the SHE Golden Rules Training Program, a global compliance program that can now be delivered online. Compliance tracking has increased by 80%.

- $134k saved by reducing paper distribution of training and communication materials in the North American business with a further >$700k identified to be saved during the next 12 months.

- Reduced number of training hours for technical training in North America, Germany, Spain, Portugal, and Indonesia by an average of 2 hours per employee, saving c.£420k.

- $80K+ saved in North America moving Ambius Technical Training online, allowing for 30% of training to be delivered at point of need in the field via mobile agnostic training content.

The T&D team reports that the learning impact also has also been astounding. More than 2M learning interventions have been delivered since launch, 78% of employees say the new training program has helped them apply learning to their roles, and 84% find content relevant and engaging compared to <50% previously.

Systems and revenue analyses prove that active users have 18% greater product knowledge and create 4.2% higher revenues. The net promoter score has grown to 8.6 points, an increase of 5 points over the old program.

Figure 4: Learning Impact Results
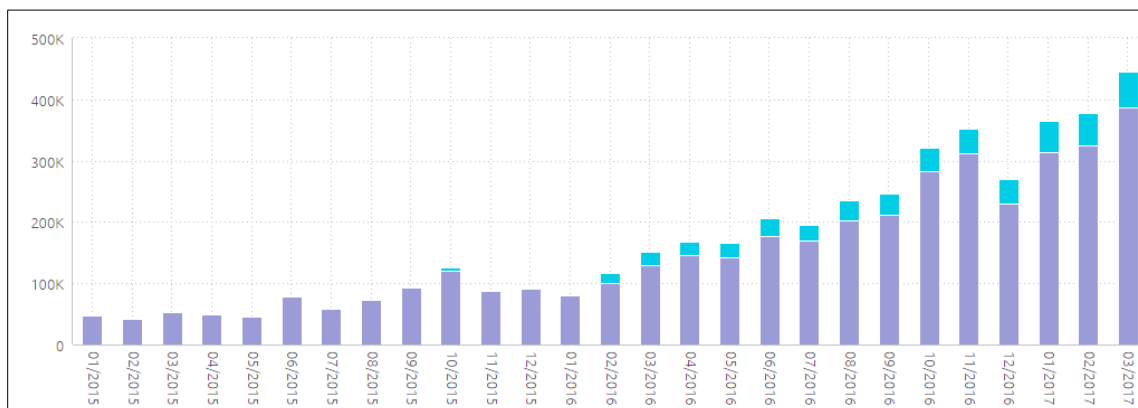
Source: Rentokil Initial 2017

There has been an increase of 7,223% in content views per month — more usage of the system in a day than the old system showed in month! In addition, 15% of content views are on the mobile app and, most notably, 16% of learning takes place outside of work hours.

Overall

It's not often that creating a new learning program has a truly transforming effect on both the function and the business as a whole. However, the project team reports that's

exactly what has happened. Learning has become embedded within the DNA of the organization, L&D is seen as a value-adding business partner, and, most importantly, employees are enjoying learning and collaborating.

Figure 5: Desktop Platform

Source: Rentokil Initial 2017

The biggest impact has been on how L&D is seen by all levels of the business. Prior to the learning initiative, L&D was seen as a cost center with little to no impact on business strategy. Since the amazing impact on internal employees, the CEO asked the project team to again collaborate with U+ to work with Rentokil's UK business to implement an external version of the training for customers.

Branded "myLearning," this recently-implemented initiative aims has to increase customer retention, provide another stream of revenue, and link to business strategy. Already, myLearning service has been sold to >2000 customers covering a range of CPD certified courses around bed bugs, pest identification, and medical and hygiene services.

Other parts of the organization have grown interested and want to roll out the platform to customers in India, Portugal, North America, and Sweden – another key differentiator in the services industry across the globe.

"The U+ team is an excellent example of the collaboration between a central function and our regional businesses – they continue to have a positive impact on our business strategy especially in relation to myLearning." – Andy Ransom, CEO

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