Computers improve training at Emmi

New computer systems are helping Swiss dairy-processor Emmi to recruit, manage and train its employees more efficiently.

The project involves: the introduction of a centralized HR database; the standardization of HR and advanced training processes; the administration of training courses in a learning-management system (LMS); and the transfer of the technological infrastructure into the cloud.

Training processes are now more transparent and performance can be better managed. Comprehensive reporting simplifies analysis.

In the past, there was no group-wide system for the recording, administration and analysis of employee data. Given that Emmi has experienced strong international expansion, this individualized mode of operation was no longer desirable. The company therefore decided to implement the information-technology solution SAP Success Factors. Emmi can now recruit, manage and train its employees quickly, cost-effectively and sustainably.

The project applies to the company’s 3,000 employees in Switzerland. By 2017 all 5,300 employees in 13 countries are to be integrated into the system, which Emmi will make available in German, English, French, Italian and Spanish.

“The international coverage is important for us, which is why we selected SuccessFactors and talent-management and corporate-learning specialist tts,” explained Michael Lötsher, Head of HR excellence and development, Emmi Group, Lucerne. “Although the software offers many new functionalities, its operation has become significantly easier for end-users.”

Royal Caribbean ties up with Chester University

The cruise line Royal Caribbean International has teamed up with the University of Chester on an internship program.

Four second-year students studying tourism management and business management at Chester Business School and one from the university’s partner college in the Isle of Man studying events management and marketing were selected to take part in the program based on their performance throughout the academic year and in a series of interviews set by the university and Royal Caribbean.

The successful students joined the Royal Caribbean UK sales team for six weeks, during which they had the chance to:

- learn about the brand through sessions with divisions across the business, including the marketing and loyalty-membership teams;
- take part in ship visits and cruise-industry events such as the Cruise Lines International Association conference;
- meet travel agents alongside Royal Caribbean’s regional sales team, to learn about the brand and products;
- take part in the launch of Harmony of the Seas in both Southampton and Barcelona, helping the sales and events team; and
- receive mentoring sessions from Royal Caribbean’s senior-leadership team.

During the program, each student was also responsible for managing and executing his or her own project which was assigned at the start of the placement, with the support of the Royal Caribbean sales team.
Students who performed well were given the opportunity to extend their internship.

Ben Bouldin, Sales Director, Royal Caribbean International, UK and Ireland, commented: “The University of Chester has an excellent reputation for offering its students a world-class introduction to tourism management so it was an ideal opportunity to introduce them to the world of Royal Caribbean to extend that education with on-the-job experience”.

“From playing crucial roles in the launch of our newest ship, Harmony of the Seas, to acting as an extension of our sales team, we have welcomed this group of exceptional students and given them the chance to learn first-hand about the cruise industry. We look forward to strengthening our ties with the university and hope to be able to offer the experience to more students over the years to come.”

Dr Maeve Marmion, Program Leader for international tourism management, University of Chester, said: “Our internship program with Royal Caribbean offers an insight into the travel industry working with a leading travel brand. We are thrilled to be able to offer our students such a dynamic experience and the opportunity to bolster their credentials and enhance their overall employability”.

“This internship program allows students the perfect opportunity to put into practice what they have been studying while at the university.”

Meanwhile, four MSc students in entrepreneurial management at Anglia Ruskin University spent 10 weeks learning the ropes at St Peter’s Brewery, South Elmham, Suffolk, UK.

The students worked with the St Peter’s Brewery team to develop their ideas and confidence in industry.

“This was a great opportunity to not only help them to gain insight in a business environment, but also for us to speak to them about their ideas and thoughts,” explained the St Peter’s Brewery Chief Executive, Steve Magnall.

Ainscough launches engineering apprenticeship

Training and engineering apprenticeship provider TXM Academy has launched an apprenticeship program with Ainscough Industrial Services (AIS), which supports clients in manufacturing and other sectors with both capital-driven projects and ongoing maintenance and repair.

The program, developed alongside TXM Academy, will not only provide AIS with a flexible approach enabling apprentices to learn from the ground up but will also offer successful applicants the chance to develop into the next generation of engineering-based employees.

“TXM Academy has a reputation for finding candidates with the qualities required to embark on a successful engineering career,” said Martine Campbell, group HR manager, AIS. “Once we understood how the partnership with TXM Academy would work, it was a very simple decision for us to use its skills and high level of delivery when recruiting for our own apprenticeship program.”

Andrew Jarman, TXM Academy Director, commented: “This exciting opportunity will provide our apprentices with an exceptional platform to kick-start a career in engineering while learning in a well-known and successful business. AIS has a long and successful history in engineering and we look forward to supporting the next generation coming through the ranks.”

TXM Academy offers a range of engineering apprenticeship programs, ranging from composite engineering and machining and inspection to mechanical engineering, electrical and electronic engineering and engineering maintenance.

Barclays shares learning and development strategy

Barclays has outlined how it is working to develop a strategic learning and development approach that prepares it for the digital revolution.

A white paper co-written with e-learning provider Mind Click reveals how strategic gamification, social learning and the “humanization” of learning and development can fit into today’s corporate learning.
Strategic Gamification with Barclays, by Gary Spring, Head of Design at Barclays, and Dr Richard Hyde, Mind Click Chief Executive, sets out to inspire other organizations to use modern technologies and transform learning cultures by providing intuitive and stimulating learning for their workforce.

Gary Spring proposes a digital learning overhaul strategy which uses advanced techniques and technologies including social learning and gamification, enveloped in a blended approach to create a stimulating and nourishing environment for learners to take control of their development.

Commenting on his strategic approach, Gary Spring says: “The challenges that we face remain the same: how do we motivate people to want to learn and how do we make our learning engaging and immersive?”

“I believe this sophisticated blended approach will excite your entire organization and perhaps spark the creation of something which is ahead of the market and industry trends.”

The white paper explores: how to capture the hearts and minds of learners with deeper digital learning; how to better leverage the human “givens” in a learning strategy; and how to make the strategy work for your organization.

Speaking about Mind Click’s partnership with Barclays, Richard Hyde comments:

“Strategy in learning and development should, of course, be about fulfilling the needs of your learners now, but in order to continue on a trajectory of success you must consider the future learner, too.”

“Having worked closely with Gary Spring myself, it is so inspiring to see such an influential organization focus on the needs of its learners and how positive it is with adapting its strategy to embrace modern technologies.”

Platinum prize for sales training

Growth Engineering and LafargeHolcim won platinum at the LearnX Impact Awards, for a program that has delivered sales qualifications to almost 200 people.

The win was in the Best Learning Project – Certification category of the awards, which recognize individuals, teams and organizations who have used learning and supporting technologies to deliver value and significantly improve employee performance and business results.

LafargeHolcim is a global building materials and aggregates company which has been operating for more than a century. Its Australian and New Zealand operations employ 3,000 people.

Faced with changing market conditions, it needed to invest in a training program to stay ahead of the competition. It decided to implement a certified learning program to ensure the training was of a high standard.

In 2014 LafargeHolcim partnered Growth Engineering to use its gamified Academy LMS. This led to the launch of the Holcim Australia sales academy.

The company also licensed Growth Engineering’s library of sales training content, all accredited by the Institute of Sales and Marketing Management. Completing this earns learners internationally recognized sales qualifications.

The program is delivered through a five-stage blended approach:

1. Online learning – each online course takes roughly 90 minutes to complete.
2. Applying learning on-the-job – real-world application of learning is recorded as case studies.
3. Face-to-face workshop – work is prepared for the workshop, where learners share expertise and contextualize learning for on-the-job application.
4. Written assignment – this takes the form of a report or presentation written and uploaded to the academy.
5. Accreditation – if the assignment reaches ISMM standards, the learner passes the unit. Each completed unit earns an award, four units earn a certificate and eight units earn a diploma.
Since launching the program, LafargeHolcim has seen its sales performance improve all across its business. The 170 learners on the program have earned more than 350 ISMM awards as well as 60 full ISMM certificates in sales and marketing.

Juliette Denny, Growth Engineering Managing Director, said: “Being able to deliver sales qualifications on such an unprecedented scale, and on the other side of the planet, is such a joy. The staff at LafargeHolcim work incredibly hard, so this award is the perfect recognition for them.”

It is a wrap for Tortilla

Upskill People has wrapped up a course for Tortilla, a UK-based independent California burrito company.

Tortilla wanted to train its staff to ensure that customer service and product quality were the same at all its restaurants. A key requirement was to keep the training fun and interesting but still highlight important messages.

Tortilla representatives met Upskill People to discuss ideas and how to bring activities to life through an outline plan and script. “We knew we wanted to capture the real Tortilla experience, so headed off to the Cardiff location to film the action,” said Katy Stenning, Tortilla Head of HR.

Martyn Clover, Food-Quality Manager, commented: “Upskill People knew the sector inside out. They got what we needed to say – why food quality is important, not just telling people what to do. At the end of the day, that is what makes the difference to our teams.”

Katy Stenning continued: “Upskill People made it easy for us. They immediately understood what was important to us – great quality food – but they also got the way our employees think and learn. The course communicates everything really well. What is more, they kept on-brand while creating a great, engaging course for our new starters and in-house teams.”

School just a starting point for language training

Less than half of language learners feel the language skills they gained at school were adequate preparation for use in the workplace, a survey of more than 5,000 business learners from around the world reveals.

While 81 percent of respondents had language lessons before entering the workforce, the results show they require additional training to get to a level where they feel confident to use their language skills at work.

Employees located in Europe had the highest number of language course takers in school – 90 percent – but only 47 percent of them felt adequately prepared by those courses for the modern workplace. In North America, 80 percent of employees surveyed had received language education in school, yet only 31 percent felt prepared for putting their second language to use at work. In contrast, 70 percent of respondents from the Middle East and Africa and 68 percent from Asia-Pacific felt adequately prepared.

Panos Kraniotis, Regional Director, Europe, a Language-Teacher, Rosetta Stone, which carried out the survey, believes the results demonstrate that language learning should continue in the workplace to meet business needs.

“Businesses tell us that language skills help employee productivity, improve relationships with customers and increase sales opportunities,” he said. “These things directly affect the bottom line. We are hearing from employees who are using their second language at work that traditional schooling can only take things so far; to improve internal and external multicultural communication, businesses would do well to incorporate language training into learning and development programs.”

Traditional learning still key in the retail sector

The retail sector has yet to explore the benefits of social and informal learning despite its growing commitment to investing in learning technologies and building its internal learning team, according to a report.
Embracing Change in Retail Businesses shows high aspirations for learning and development among leaders in the retail sector, with 100 percent of respondents looking to increase productivity, improve the application of learning at work and reduce time to competency.

Almost half of retail organizations have increased their training budget in the last two years and predict a further increase in the next two. However, their current attention is focused on developing capabilities to deliver traditional learning modules, often at the expense of other learning approaches.

The report, from Towards Maturity, supported by Kallidus, highlights that retailers have not yet explored a broader mix of technology-driven learning techniques. Only 13 percent of retailers are investing in blended learning while the average across all sectors is double that figure. This may be because of a lack of required skills and knowledge, as the research indicates over half lack the confidence in incorporating new media in learning design and only 4 percent believe their learning and development teams have the skills for facilitating collaboration. More than 70 percent do not believe that their own staff lack skills to manage their own learning.

As a result, retailers are struggling to improve productivity and customer satisfaction through learning and development, both of which are key drivers for success in the retail industry. Just 13 percent are able to demonstrate productivity improvements and only 14 percent have seen an improvement in customer satisfaction, compared with a cross-industry average of 38 percent in both cases.

Laura Overton, Towards Maturity Managing Director, said: “It is encouraging to see that the retail sector is increasing its investment in learning, but it also needs to invest in new approaches to learning and new skills for the learning and development team. Our research with employees in this sector shows that staff are more able to learn for themselves than learning and development specialists give them credit for. This report gives insight into the new approaches and tools being used by top learning companies to help learning and development leaders in the retail sector to explore new ways to connect with, support and engage their learners.”

Rob Caul, Chief Executive of Kallidus, which specializes in providing learning and talent solutions and has supported the report, added: “Retail is rapidly changing and so must learning. Just as the marriage of clicks and bricks brings together the best of online and offline shopping experiences for consumers, retailers able to blend formal learning with today’s modern approaches and tools stand to deliver far greater value to their learners and the business.”

The report provides details of how retail organizations can evolve their learning practices by working more closely with business leaders, motivating self-directed learners and building a learning and development team confident in incorporating the use of new media in learning design.

The report reveals that almost half of retail organizations have increased their training budget in the last two years and predict a further increase in the next two. Some 79 percent plan to increase the proportion of training budget spent on technology and 43 percent expect their learning and development team to grow.

Learning and development teams are skilled at content development in house (28 percent are developing content in-house), but lack skills for facilitating social media or supporting workplace performance, with only 4 and 22 percent possessing these skills, respectively.

Only 13 percent of retailers are investing in blended learning while the average across all sectors is double that figure and almost triple for top learning companies.

Only 14 of the 45 learning technologies tracked in the study are being used by over 50 percent of retail organizations compared to 18 across the sample as whole and 31 in use by top learning companies.

Sepsis Trust aims to save more lives through e-learning

Mobile-friendly e-learning is helping the UK Sepsis Trust (UKST) to achieve its aim of saving at least 13,500 lives a year in the UK.

UKST is committed to changing the way the National Health Service deals with sepsis, as well as increasing public awareness and supporting those affected by sepsis.
Georgina McNamara, UKST Executive Lead Nurse for education, conducts in-house training on recognizing the symptoms of sepsis. She explained: “The problem that I and my UKST colleagues face is that an increasing number of people want you to tell them about sepsis and how to combat it effectively, but we all have full-time jobs in the health service. We realized that we needed to produce e-learning materials that deal with sepsis and the issues that it raises.”

Knowing that e-learning materials need a platform – or a LMS – to contain, distribute and manage them, as well as monitor their usage, Georgina McNamara chose the Create e-Learning mobile-friendly e-learning portal that allows users to build, host, deliver and track e-learning, as well as unite all their online training and coaching.

“While it has taken us a while to produce the e-learning materials themselves, Carol-Ann Stevenson and her team at Create e-Learning have always been supportive,” said Georgina McNamara.

There is currently a major e-learning program on sepsis available for health workers and a series of short modules for both the public and health workers.

UKST plans to produce e-learning materials covering all medical aspects of sepsis – as it affects gynaecology, obstetrics, paediatrics, emergency medicine, critical care, community care, pre-hospital care, walk-in clinics, paramedics and general practitioners.

Georgina McNamara continued: “At the moment we have capacity to cater for 500 users on the Create e-Learning platform and these places are being rapidly taken up. Of course, these are very early days and, given the increasing demand for UKST’s services, especially from health-care workers around the country, we have already put in place options to raise that capacity in increments of 500 users.”

“We expect the demand for our online learning materials to grow – for example, from nurses […] who need to update their competency in such areas as sepsis. Ultimately we would like to see recognition of sepsis become part of mandatory training for all health workers.”

Sepsis is a life-threatening condition that arises when the body’s response to an infection injures its own tissues and organs. Sepsis can lead to shock, multiple organ failure and death, especially if it is not recognized early and treated promptly. Every year in the UK there are 150,000 cases of sepsis, resulting in some 44,000 deaths – more than from bowel, breast and prostate cancer combined.