

technology



In and out

By switching to computer-based training, Marten Transport drivers move faster, more effectively through orientation

Whether your newly hired drivers come in for orientation one at a time or by the dozen, how can you be sure any of them are paying attention? Contrary to popular belief, instructor-led training can cause more daydreaming than learning.

When you consider the high cost of recruiting and the risk of putting new drivers behind the wheel, face time is critical – but attention span is short. By using computer-based training that is tailored specifically for adult learning, drivers can move faster and more effectively through orientation.

Marten Transport holds its new driver orientation at six locations across the country. Until recently, the company's program was two full days of training. Each department was responsible for sending a representative to train drivers on specific policies and procedures. The downtime between the rotations was about 15 minutes.

Marten now uses a uniform computer-based training

Marten Transport uses a uniform computer-based training system that compresses the time of its orientation process and focuses on the individual needs of each driver.

system that compresses the time of its orientation process and focuses on the individual needs of each driver, says Tim Norlin, director of recruiting for the Mondovi, Wis.-based fleet.

“Each driver has to pay attention and take a knowledge test to show he is learning and comprehending what he is watching,” Norlin says. “It has been a tremendous help. When it is

- ➔ **ATTENTION, PLEASE:**
Computer-based training enhances adult learning.
- ➔ **PERSONAL EXPERIENCE:**
Drivers learn at their own paces.
- ➔ **CHEAPER AND BETTER:**
Shorter orientation costs less and is more effective.

MAKING THE LATEST TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENTS WORK FOR YOUR FLEET

BY AARON HUFF

over, drivers know they received the proper orientation to be successful.”

Marten Transport contracted with ACS to customize a Web-based driver orientation program with

“To me, this is the next evolution of learning.”

— STEVE SICHTERMAN, ACS VICE PRESIDENT OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, SAFETY AND COMPLIANCE

ACS’ Command Solutions offering. The 2,400-truck refrigerated carrier now uses the same consistent orientation training program at all six locations.

“To me, this is the next evolution of learning,” says Steve Sichterman, ACS vice president of business development, safety and compliance.

For all of Marten’s training modules – currently at 17 – ACS filmed the same actress who presents scripts using content that is managed by each Marten department. Each presentation is filmed against a green screen so that graphical and visual cues can be added to draw drivers’ attention to key points in the presentations. The videos are interspersed with footage of Marten equipment and facilities.

“We can add, subtract or change content easily,” Norlin says. “If we decide to do orientation at another location, it is very easy to do. All it



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takes is a PC or laptop, and we’re in business.”

Each module is followed by a knowledge test. If drivers do not pass the test, they can review the video at

any point and retake the test; this method allows drivers to work at their own pace. The technology also allows more astute drivers to speed up the process and identifies those who may need additional time

and attention from instructors.

“Guys want to push through,” Norlin says. “We have shaved a half-day off orientation. Drivers want to get out there and get in a truck.” Even though Marten has shortened its orientation program, the time drivers are spending with people is much more productive, he says.

The system also keeps records for each driver, which helps answer the most common question in litigation: What type of training do you provide to drivers?

“It is much easier to share training videos with attorneys than a driver’s manual,” Norlin says.

Feedback from drivers concurs with Marten’s decision to implement computer-based training. Drivers regularly say that the orientation is the most unique they have experienced. They also say they feel better prepared because of the amount of interaction they have with the training modules.

“Drivers do a better job of grasping information,” Norlin says. ccj

INBRIEF

- **Zonar’s** latest patent-pending technology adds fuel to its GPS reporting. Zonar says its telematics platforms will determine sample rates based not just on geographical data – latitude, longitude, time and odometer – but also on fuel usage so that customers easily can identify routes and lanes over which their vehicles are most and least efficient.
- **Telogis** says its Driver Scorecard, now part of the Telogis Fleet Software-as-a-Service fleet management system, enables the system to more easily manage and communicate behaviors that directly influence driver and asset safety.
- **Con-way Truckload** is installing Maptuit NaviGo technology in all company trucks and Qualcomm-equipped owner-operator tractors. The in-cab navigation upgrade follows a pilot study that was launched in September 2011.
- **Rand McNally** unveiled Rand McNally Connect, a software platform designed to integrate the company’s FleetWatcher Web portal with third-party applications. Combined with its mobile communications systems, TruckPC and TND760 Fleet Edition, Rand McNally Connect allows transportation management software to pull through vehicle diagnostics, driver behavior, hours-of-service status and e-mail.
- **Xata Corp.**, a provider of fleet optimization software, and **ALK Technologies**, a provider of geologistics and navigation software, integrated ALK’s CoPilot Truck 8 Professional with XataNet to provide users with updated PC Miler 25 routing and availability on a wider range of hardware platforms.
- **QuikQ**, provider of a cardless direct fuel connection between truckstop point-of-sale and motor carrier enterprise systems, is collaborating on a product to allow internal vehicle data to be written to and/or read from RFID tags while a vehicle is at a fuel dispenser.