



Case Study: CZECH RAILWAYS (CD)

By the eLearning method Czech Railways (CD) provided compulsory training for more than 15000 employees. Thanks to this method the participants were actively involved to the program, travel costs have been reduced, the computer literacy of the employees increased and their self-confidence grows as they are able to accept changes and new systems.

Wide e-Learning implementation and large number of involved employees pushed CD up to the top position among the European railways and Czech companies in total.

Customer Charakteristic

CD is the largest national railway transporter and operate the significant majority of the railway network in the Czech Republic. Their output brought them to the 4th place in Europe. Daily they dispatch 1900 freight trains, with 250 000 tons of cargo and 7000 passenger trains transporting around 500 000 people. The CD goal is to transform itself to a business company, which will in the frame of the future European network become one of the biggest European railway companies. CD employs more than 80 000 employees with a relatively high average age. Among the primary objectives in this sphere belong the labour productivity increase, optimization of the number of employees and their training.

Specific Situation in Training Field

Regular training and checking of the professional abilities of the CD workers is the responsibility of the Company Training Institute. This Institute operates more than 90 training centers with more than 220 classrooms and 80 lecturers. The institute gives each year more than 1 million training hours, more than 60% of that are compulsory trainings applied to more than 45000 employees. There are several problems related to the standard training pattern:

- Employees have to travel to the training centers from more than 800 service points.
- The obligation regards only to take part in the training and not to change attitudes.
- Majority of the trainings is compulsory, it decreases the motivation of participants.
- Training lessons are being prepared by one lecturer, which can lead to a subjective concept of presented topics.
- Trainings are very general-purpose, not always bring new facts, because they are made known to the employee through decrees, orders and dispatches. Very often during the trainings known facts are being repeated.

- In the standard model there are many lectures, absence of training emergency situations and practical applications.
- The content is being put together to blocks, which saves travel costs, but the effectiveness decreases. Collocation of individual blocks during the year is not ideal, sometimes new products are being trained after their launching...

Based on the analysis of these facts the CD Company Training Institute came up to the conclusion, that it is necessary to motivate participants to actively involve the trainings, which are to be visual, individual, focused on the needs and capabilities of each participant. New technologies allow to train employees also in other spheres. CD decided to use e-Learning.

Different conditions for the eLearning implementation

After the decision has been made, CD faced several problems they had to solved:

- Only a small part of the employees regularly works with the computer, or they can refuse it for different reasons
- Some computers are technically old and only a small number of them is connected to the network. The quality of the network is not the best.
- The CD training content is specific and it is therefore impossible to purchase standard courses.
- Regarding these technical limitations (small number of computers, many not connected) eLearning offers very limited space for questions, discussion and contact with the lecturer.

Final Solution

The Company Training Institute has developed sophisticated solution, which meets all the above listed specific requirements and technical conditions.



Final solution presents a plan to establish a micro-classroom network (up to 300 places). This classroom is a suitable place equipped with a computer connected to the network. Alongside there is a plan for on-line training on one computer with other functions related to the free computer capacity and the possible access of the employees to the training place.



From March 1, 2002 the on-line training will be available on the Internet. As the eLearning management system TUTOR2000 has been purchased, fully implemented and connected to the current organisational structure.

There was also a requirement of an off-line import of training results, which allows using computers not yet connected to the network.

Kontis further developed automatization processes to report regularly to the responsible employees about the participants' studies. This has reduced the number of system managers. Regarding the course development CD has purchased ToolBook II Instructor. Kontis company has also trained CD employees and after processing the opening course CD employees have already passed through hundreds of training lessons of compulsory training for dispatchers, engine drivers, general foremen and track foremen, freight cashiers, ... and many hours of dispatcher e-courses.

More than 15000 people use the eLearning method. For those employees they have refused the computer study, there has been organized a regular study course for the whole district.

We have to mention, that nobody has applied to the regular study and all participants preferred eLearning.

In all districts consultant centers have been established to support communication. These centers are open on the same day of the week at the same time.

The travel necessity of the employees decreases thanks to the growing number of micro-classrooms.

On March 1, 2002 the dispatcher checking course will be started. It contains lectures, recapitulation, tests and practical exercises and also simulation of actual situations.

Several discussion lessons with the lecturer will be a part of the course. Participants will have an opportunity to ask questions via email. Discussion panel will be made available to skilled participants. In further versions of the course there is a plan to provide the lessons with sound and enrich them visually and made them available on CD-ROM or on-line with CD-ROM support.

Experience and the Future

Actual eLearning experiences are positive. There is a growing pressure from the side of the employees to complete establishing of the micro-classrooms in all stations and the Internet availability of the training courses.

Elearning caused a growing computer literacy and supports self-confidence and ability to accept changes and new systems.

More than 25 000 employees are to be trained electronically.

Full knowledge database, recapitulation lessons and practices are to be created. This will substitute periodical testing.

The goal is to develop an integral training system according to the carrier paths.

This system should be enriched by other technical and economic layers necessary for the all-round training of CD employees including language courses. It will cover all spheres of CD business and will become a key instrument in the field of human resource management.

Company Training Institute Manager's Statement

Czech Railways are known for the complicated organisational structure. A big company like this always needs an on demand system. Kontis provides top solution adjusted to our needs.

Checking course for 2000 employees in 5 months and regular course for 15000 employees in another 11 months is a reference time for both parties.

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