



New Horizons Training Success Case Study

SharePoint training focuses on team collaboration resulting in rapid deployment, employee commitment and improved productivity.

Solution Overview

Country: United States
Industry: Consumer packaged goods

Customer Profile

Mary Kay Inc., headquartered in Dallas, Texas, is one of the largest direct sellers of skin care and color cosmetics, with more than 1.5 million independent sales consultants worldwide.

Solution Description

To improve collaboration and effectively manage change, Mary Kay sought a training solution to help its employees learn to use a solution based on Microsoft® SharePoint® Products and Technologies and portray its benefits so employees would become advocates for the use of the new technology.

Several Mary Kay employees took Team Collaboration Using Microsoft Windows® SharePoint Services delivered by New Horizons. This business-focused class went far beyond feature-based training to provide the following benefits:

- Learned to use new SharePoint site in just hours
- Gained commitment to collaboration and change
- Cut meeting time in half
- Improved productivity by 5 to 10 percent

Business-Focused Training Speeds Learning, Commitment to Change for Cosmetics Firm

Situation

With over 4,000 employees and approximately 1.5 Independent Beauty Consultants in more than 30 markets worldwide, Mary Kay needed to improve its ability to share information as it continued to grow. As one of the world's largest direct sellers of skin care and color cosmetics, Mary Kay operates in highly competitive environment and sought to improve the efficiency of new project launches with better collaboration. To accomplish this, the company intended to deploy a new, easily accessible intranet site where employees could share documents and schedules. This new intranet site and server software was to be based on Microsoft Windows® SharePoint® Services, a collaborative platform that helps improve collaboration, increase productivity, and make team-based projects more successful.

In addition, as an organization Mary Kay places a strong emphasis on effective change management, recognizing that to make lasting and productive change employees need to understand the rationale for the change and see how it will benefit them. To provide a smooth deployment and promote the use of a SharePoint site, Mary Kay looked at how it could efficiently manage this change in workplace collaboration. "We had to overcome two basic barriers," says Project Leader Kristi Maynor. "We had to teach the use of the intranet site for managing a team workspace, and we had to show our employees why they might choose that instead of sending 20 e-mail messages a day or calling more meetings."

Solution

To support its deployment of SharePoint Products and Technologies, Mary Kay turned to New Horizons. Among other courses, New Horizons offers Microsoft Official Course 4001: Team Collaboration Using Microsoft Windows SharePoint Services, one of the Business Skills Series classes from Microsoft Learning.

New Horizons set up a half-day, instructor-led class for Mary Kay. Like other courses in the Business Skills Series, the team collaboration course for SharePoint Services offers hands on experience in a simulated work environment, discussions, and lecture material. Additional courses help employees create effective presentations, forecast and analyze trends, and manage critical business operations by integrating Microsoft Office System software and Windows XP tools.

Twenty Mary Kay employees participated in the training. They were preparing for an initial limited deployment before Mary Kay implemented its SharePoint solution enterprisewide. "What I liked about the class is how it focused on why you would want to use the technology," says Maynor. "We considered scenarios and objectives and spent a large amount of time exploring how the system would work and its relevance to our jobs." The attendees came from several departments, including IT, supply chain management, program management functions, and human resources.

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Mary Kay

Benefits

Mary Kay found that the training exceeded the company's goals. Not only did key employees learn how to use the featured technology and products to perform more effectively, but they also understood why the solution was important and they committed to using it. In addition, the training helped to generate ideas for new uses of the solution.

Learned New Product and Technology Quickly

The company quickly achieved its goal of giving individuals an experience with the technology--and exposure to its advantages- before deployment. "The business people saw that with a SharePoint site and Microsoft Office, they had collaborative tools that were easy to use. They were able to create tasks and manage documents within four hours," says Maynor.

Gained Commitment to Collaboration and Change

Although some software may require more feature-based training, Maynor felt that the Microsoft training was more relevant and useful for setting up a collaborative process. "When something is brand-new to the company and represents a change in the way people work, it's important to start a dialogue, so employees want to make that change," Maynor says. "It's much more effective to have key employees engage in conversation about why they would want to do this than to simply tell them 'click here and there.' "

As a result of the business-focused course, the trainees from Mary Kay became more committed to the change. The group even began to share ideas during the training and to explore more ways that they could use a SharePoint site. Maynor says, "We planned to use the site to manage aspects of our product launches-such as when we introduce a new lipstick-so that our engineering and marketing departments can communicate better."

The training actually changed some minds. One group that had been interested in using another solution became enthusiastic about using a SharePoint site through the demonstrations and role-playing. "And after one human resources specialist saw how easy it was to use the solution, she said that she was no longer worried about employee resistance to the change," says Maynor.

Cut Meeting Time in Half

Even before the SharePoint solutions was fully deployed across the company, it was already having a positive impact in the IT group and other team areas where it is being used. According to Maynor, many groups have been able to move away from a one-hour team meeting each week to two 15-minute meetings.

Improved Productivity

From its time savings and enhanced collaboration, Mary Kay expects to see an increase in productivity once the collaboration solution is fully deployed.. "Even a 5 percent increase could be enormous for a company of our size," says Maynor. She expects the company will complete projects faster in several areas.

For More Information

New Horizons Computer Learning Centers is the world leader in computer training and the largest network of Microsoft Certified Partners for Learning Solutions and Gold Partners for Learning Solutions in the world. For more information about the Microsoft Business Skills Series delivered by New Horizons, visit us online at www.newhorizons.com.

