



Questionmark Case Study

Trucking firm takes assessment on the road

Background

With over 3500 drivers, more than 2600 trucks and six driving schools, Salt Lake City-based C.R. England must constantly train new drivers. The trucking industry faces a very high turnover rate – a whopping 140 percent per year on average. Using experienced drivers to train apprentices, the company constantly refreshes its staff of “over the road trainers” using a pool of 600. Each trainer takes an apprentice driver out for a period of 4-6 weeks of on-the-road training. But how do you evaluate how these apprentices are performing when the ‘classroom’ is on wheels?

Assessments on the Road

The company’s fleet of more than 2,600 tractors is equipped with a two-way satellite communications system. This enables dispatchers to have instantaneous contact with every driver and know the exact location of each tractor.

The CRE training management team realized that the company could use the same unit, which has a keypad with limited functions and small built-in screen, to administer their tests. While the drivers are gaining on-the-road experience, those tests ensure the apprentices also understand the rules and regulations for driving, docking protocols, company policies, and the proper handling of hazardous materials. All of this information, which they learn during their initial 4-6 week training period before becoming solo qualified, can be tested using basic multiple choice questions.

Using Perception

While the satellite system worked well as a communications device, C.R. England still needed an assessment management system to deploy the testing process in an effective manner. After evaluating and rejecting several learning management systems, which handled item analysis poorly and provided features she didn’t need, Price decided to use Questionmark™ Perception™ to create and then analyze the data from these tests.

Using middleware created by Questionmark partner company Alpine Media to make it possible for the communications system and Perception to talk to each other, C.R. England established a system in which sets of questions are created in Perception and then printed in hard copy format for distribution to the apprentice drivers.

Simplifying Delivery

Delivering the questions over the satellite network would have been prohibitively expensive. So drivers get one of five different quiz booklets. Randomizing the tests in this manner ensures better security. Drivers enter the answers into the satellite unit by selecting the appropriate letter choice on the small keyboard.

QMWISE Aids Administration

QMWISE acts as an application program interface (API) to create new users in C.R. England’s database and then assigns them the appropriate tests. Each student’s answers are transmitted via satellite, creating an SQL database entry. The middleware validates that the person sending the answers is indeed a registered user then scores the assessment and sends back a confirmation about whether the student passed or failed. All item choice distribution data along with the assessment score and number of attempts is then sent to the results tables in Perception.

Benefits

Perception’s ability to carry unlimited user records in the results table makes it possible for the company to train a large and ever changing pool of workers. The system’s item analysis tools have helped identify knowledge gaps, enabling trainers to target their work more effectively.

More information

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