



Pal's and podTraining Business Case Summary

Pal's Overview

Pal's is a 20-unit quick-service chain comprised mainly of 1,100 square foot drive-thru only restaurants that feature face-to-face ordering and pickup. They are the only restaurant chain to ever win the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award. Unit volumes average \$1.6 million on a \$4.20 check average. Their 'at-the-window' time AVERAGES 18 seconds during peak hours (200 cars per hour) and they average 1 mistake per 3,600 orders. Additionally, they have employee turnover rates of 56% and manager turnover rates of 2% - far below industry norms.

There are numerous typical job functions in a Pal's – order taker, cashier, grill, hot dogs, sandwich maker, fries, bagger, drink station, breakfast, etc and other basic modules employees were trained on – speed, hospitality, selling, HAACP, etc. totaling about 20 different modules.



podTraining Overview

podTraining was founded by TJ Schier, a leading speaker and consultant in the restaurant industry. The company offers seminars and consulting on improving sales, speed, service and training in the quick-service and casual dining restaurant segment. podTraining assists companies in creating the 'critical path' of training success for each job position and creating the video, print and audio content in a variety of methods, primarily portable handheld video devices such as iPods.





Pal's Training Success Story

Prior to January 2006, the company had employees learn the knowledge portion of their training on a PC and reading of a total of approximately 10-20 pages of text per position, followed by hands-on training with a manager or trainer. For an employee to learn each of the positions to a 'productive' level took 10 weeks total.

In January 2006, podTraining partnered with Pal's to help them create the 'critical path of training success' for each position – boiling down the myriad of content to key items. Text and PC files were reviewed and scripts were created and organized for the most effective delivery of the learning. Those items were then filmed and placed into short video clips, grouped into 'playlists' of similar items (i.e. the 20 modules).

Clips provide direction at various points to practice the skill (i.e. make 'hamburger A') so the employee sees a short burst of content-rich video (how to do 1 item or task) and then must practice the actual skill. The videos were organized and delivered via a portable video device in each location so the employees could watch the clip right in their workstation versus in the office or kitchen.

The video clips (185 total clips organized into 20 playlists; nearly 2 hours of total video time) were then incorporated into the employee training program replacing the PC and text portion of the training.





The Results

The approach of short knowledge via video followed immediately by practice supervised by a trainer dramatically shortens the training time and allows the employee to be productive much quicker. ***This new approach has shortened the time to get an employee 'productive' by 33%.*** To learn every position and be productive is now a total time of 6 ½ weeks versus the 10 weeks from the previous method – a huge time savings for the company.

Summary

The magic of podTraining as demonstrated by Pal's and others is in the process and approach, not the device. The scripting of key, critical elements focused on incorporating skill building after each video allows people to learn a little, practice a lot and then move on.

Additionally, the portability of the device allows the learner to see the video right in the work station and allows the manager to use the clips as a reference/refresher during pre-shift meetings and as a re-training tool on-the-shift when employees are not doing the proper procedures.

The content is easily updatable by the corporate office, thereby eliminating costly duplication and shipping of print materials and DVDs, as well as allowing 'speed-to-market' when introducing new procedures, items, changes, etc – communication can be instantly sent to the store for managers to review with the employees.

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Reference Articles About Pal's & podTraining's Success

http://www.fooddrink-magazine.com/content_archives/SeptOct06/04.html

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