



HCC Industries, Inc.

Epicor Knowledge Mentor Provides HCC Industries with Scalable and Repeatable Training Processes and Tools

Company Facts

- Location: Cincinnati, OH
- Industry: Electronic Component Manufacturing
- Number of Locations: 6 business units
- Web site: www.hccindustries.com



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Gary Marshall, IT director | HCC Industries

Success Highlights

Challenges

- HCC employs 1,000 staff across six different business units. To maintain quality and ensure rapid user adoption of new technologies, the company required repeatable and scalable end-user training and supporting materials.

Solution

- Epicor ERP
- Epicor Knowledge Mentor

Benefits

- Achieve information consistency across the organization
- Scalable and repeatable training resources and tools
- Variety of training outlets to tailor to different learning styles
- On-demand education content
- Ability to author and publish content in different languages

An industry leader since 1945, HCC Industries, Inc. manufactures electronic components and interconnect solutions for harsh environments.

HCC employs a staff of 1,000 across six business units composed of 360,000 sq. ft. including 130,000 sq. ft. of machining. HCC factories are located across the United States in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Jersey, Ohio, and two near Los Angeles, California. HCC is ISO 9001:2008 certified, and has \$120 million in revenue.

The Situation

HCC has been an Epicor customer for more than 10 years, and has over 300 users interfacing with their Epicor enterprise resource planning (ERP) solution. HCC continues to add new functionality to their Epicor ERP solution to support the company's different business needs.

As such, HCC purchased MITS Report for Epicor—an operational reporting tool that is web-based and provides users with an interactive reporting experience. Like most software deployments, user adoption has its challenges. With plans to roll out the new reporting tool across its six factories, HCC knew that ongoing training and support would be essential to success.

“Before we went down the path of deploying MITS Report for Epicor we knew we needed repeatable training processes in place, especially if we want to successfully scale up to 100 users accessing the reporting tool,” says Gary Marshall, IT director, HCC Industries.

Having experienced ineffective training in the past, HCC required training processes and tools that are scalable and repeatable in order to guarantee quality and ensure user adoption.

HCC uses Epicor Knowledge Mentor to develop and deliver training material and documentation to enable its employees with the learning resources and reference materials they need.

Consistent, Quality Training with Epicor Knowledge Mentor

Knowledge Mentor is an education solution that enables user adoption and effective utilization of enterprise applications to drive successful software implementation projects. Knowledge Mentor is comprised of learning components that work together seamlessly to simplify the development, deployment, and on-going management of end-user training and supporting materials.

HCC uses a good cross section of Knowledge Mentor outputs to train their employees, including test assessments, quizzes, online help, as well as demo and hands-on practicing simulations. In particular, HCC is focused on the Global, Author and Collaborator components—all of which provide consistent, high-quality training resources for HCC’s dispersed workforce.

“Epicor Knowledge Mentor is a great tool that delivers a variety of training outlets to tailor to different learning styles,” says Marshall. Using the Knowledge Mentor Global module, HCC can author and publish content in different languages so employees can train in their native language. This is helpful to HCC who has employees that speak a range of different languages including Spanish,

Portuguese and Russian, to name a few. Plus, localized instructions are instrumental in speeding up user adoption.

Among some of the main end-user requirements that led HCC to use Knowledge Mentor is driving productivity. With Knowledge Mentor Author, HCC can create educational content such as demonstrations, simulations, online help resources and more, and deploy it in multiple ways.

One example is a demo video recorded with HCC’s data. During a typical demo, the sales person knows the product and how best to present the data. Unfortunately, users often have difficulty relating the demo data to their own job. So HCC first built the data so that the content looked familiar. Then HCC recorded the original sales person giving a demonstration of MITS Report for Epicor with HCC’s data. End users are given a hyperlink to view the content on their local sites with their initial login, along with custom simulations.

As Marshall puts it, “We live in an on-demand world. Epicor Knowledge Mentor delivers on-demand support the moment we need it—we can watch it when we want it.” Such tools like video content and instructional screen shots also minimize the need for costly in-person training sessions that require time and travel expenses.

One analogy that Marshall uses is the equivalence of the Knowledge Mentor Author tool to CAD software. In the past, engineers would markup drawings and hand them to the draftsman to develop the content in CAD software. Now, engineers are trained to use CAD software so it eliminates the need for a draftsman.

“Training employees to use Epicor Knowledge Mentor Author and Collaborator is like putting CAD software in the hands of the engineers,” says Marshall. “Training materials in the past were so labor intensive. Using technology to develop content is much more efficient, and people who are trained to develop the content are so excited.”



Maximizing the Value of Epicor Knowledge Mentor

Marshall explains that maximizing the value of Knowledge Mentor bears the responsibility of managing priorities.

“There are so many applications, and so many opportunities for training, but deciding which one gets the most return on investment is difficult,” he explains.

In order to be successful, HCC established a set of criteria to determine when to use Knowledge Mentor. One method they use is identifying how many employees at each factory require training. HCC decided that they would use Knowledge Mentor when there are more than 10 employees at one location, or a single employee at each dispersed location. Setting up parameters helped HCC to discover that prioritizing resources is fundamental to getting the most value out of Knowledge Mentor.

Another learning curve was the concept of a “curriculum.” Historically, Human Resources manages training records, and keeps the company on track with compliance requirements, including ISO standards for ongoing training, as well as the more difficult challenge of documenting competence.

Within Knowledge Mentor Collaborator, an integrated project management tool, pictures are presented to inspectors and they are asked to pass/fail the inspection and identify the reason for failure. Results are tracked and paper-based processes to document competence are eliminated.

While cross functional training existed in the organization, operations personnel found it difficult to know who could help out where. With Knowledge Mentor Collaborator, managing the curriculum is easier, and helps HCC to report on the learner’s performance by user, by lesson, and by role.

Why Consider Epicor Knowledge Mentor?

Multiple business sites are inherently inconsistent. According to Marshall, one of the hardest parts about his job as IT director is providing consistency across the organization. Each factory has developed their own excel spreadsheets to manage issue after issue, even though in many cases there is a more effective way to handle such problems inside the Epicor ERP system.

However, employees aren’t properly trained on the system, or inconsistent data entry habits have made the standard approach not applicable. Creating a centralized server is the key to eliminating inconsistent data entry habits.

Further, HCC observed the problem of turnover. New employees that receive “hand-me-down” training are typically weakly trained compared to the first round of trainees. Knowledge Mentor provides HCC with an ongoing learning program to effectively train new users. New employees, or employees who were absent on the day of the original training, are exposed to the same content, increasing the likelihood of consistent data quality.

Another tip Marshall adds is to use Knowledge Mentor to develop training content when a company is trying to document processes that are unique to its own organization. Knowledge Mentor provides a set of on-demand tools and resources that enable your end users to rapidly adopt best practices that are unique to your company.

Training your employees to do best what your company does best is important to driving competitive advantage.



Key Value Proposition

One of HCC’s goals is to make better use of technology for training purposes, and Knowledge Mentor is helping them to do just that. Today, 20 employees are trained to use MITS Report for Epicor with 30 more in the pipeline and a plan to scale up to 100 users.

Knowledge Mentor was the ultimate path to getting MITS Report for Epicor successfully deployed, and it will continue to be the training tool they use for future software deployments.

About Epicor

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