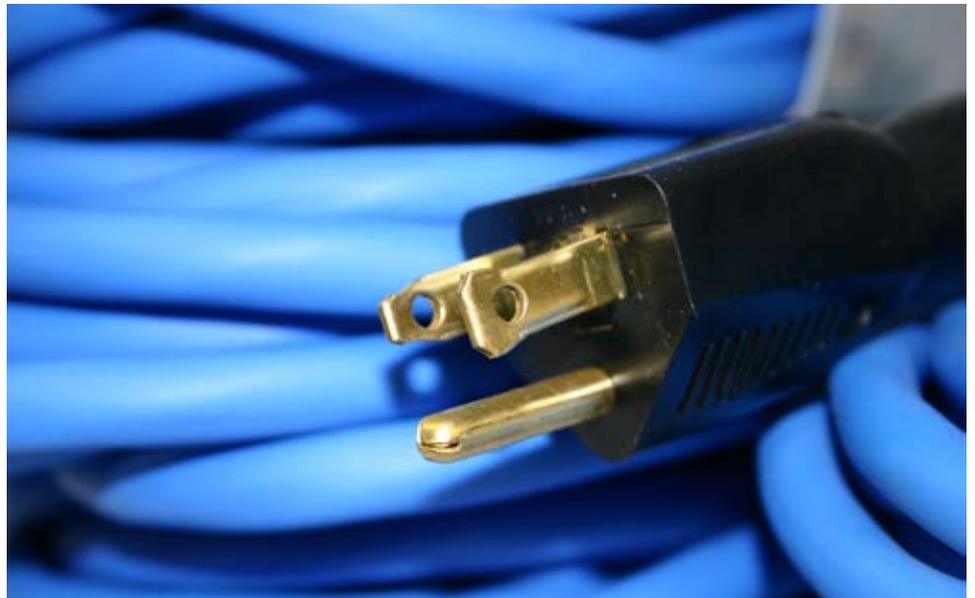


Electrical Distributor Builds A Strong Learning Culture With Epicor Resources



Company Facts

Overview

- ▶ Location—Council Bluffs, Iowa
- ▶ Industry—Distribution
- ▶ Number of Locations—14
- ▶ Website—www.echogroupinc.com

Success Highlights

Challenges

- ▶ Provide learning support to help employees embrace new technology

Solution

- ▶ Epicor® Eclipse™ with Learning Management System and Learning Center

Benefits

- ▶ Provided a cost-effective employee training platform
- ▶ Saved time on training of new hires
- ▶ Ensured learning resources were easily accessible to all employees

Echo Group Inc.—headquartered in Council Bluffs, Iowa—has 14 distribution centers located in Iowa, Nebraska, Minnesota, and South Dakota. The company provides sales and support for the wholesale electric supply markets—including lighting and industrial and home automation.

Formerly Echo Electric Supply, Echo Group Inc. was formed when Interstate Electric Supply Company and JESCO Wholesale Electrical Supplies Inc. joined their operations in 2000. Parts of the company have been on the Epicor Eclipse enterprise resource planning (ERP) solution since 1994. To gain the full benefits of the system, the company is using the Epicor Learning Management System (LMS), the Epicor Learning Center, and other resources from Epicor University.

Cost-Effective, Time-Saving Online Training

According to Kris Hopkins, vice president of information technology at Echo Group Inc., “We originally introduced the LMS to move from Eclipse Eterm to Eclipse Solar. After the first year, we saw that our users were taking a lot of online classes. Based on the high utilization, we calculated an average cost per class per user of \$15. It was a no-brainer to continue with the LMS—we couldn’t get that training value anywhere else!”

She added, “The LMS is very easy to use—we assign employees to a class, and they get trained. This saves us a lot of time, because there’s no need for us to do one-on-one training on basic business activities. User Job Queues is the class that more people have taken than any other—many employees have taken it several times to really get a grasp on the topic.”

“Based on the high utilization, it was a no-brainer to continue with the LMS—we couldn’t get that training value anywhere else!”

—Kris Hopkins, Vice President of Information Technology | Echo Group Inc.

The company also developed a template for new-hire training based on the Learning Management System. A new user form offers suggested training agendas based on the user’s role—for example, accounting, purchasing, or order management. Echo Group has uploaded many of its own internal company documents to the LMS library to make everything accessible to employees in one place.

Hopkins noted, “We offer a variety of different incentives to the employees to engage with the LMS on an ongoing basis. For example, if they

complete three classes, they receive a credit to their company account—we also do periodic drawings for a gift card, etc. We list online training sessions on their calendars so they can register easily, and we publish an ‘Eclipse Tip of the Week’ with a link to a related class they can take.”

Integrated and Embedded Resources

In addition to the Learning Management System, Echo Group Inc. relies on other Epicor Learning Center resources to increase the value of its Eclipse solution. “We have

sent some employees to live classes for Eclipse Job Management,” said Hopkins. “Epicor University training videos have been very beneficial to let users take advantage of new features available in the most recent Eclipse releases. We drive our users to access Online Help regularly, as this reduces calls to our IT support team. It’s become pretty robust.”

Hopkins continues to discover how to get even more out of the LMS. “There are always new ways to use it,” she observed. “And the more people that take the classes, the more the cost of the subscription goes down—I highly recommend it!”

About Epicor

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