



CASE STUDY

A photograph of industrial machinery in a paper mill, overlaid with a semi-transparent orange filter. The machinery includes large rollers and structural frames.

Boise Inc. - Wallula Paper Mill
Rapid Online Custom Training for Safety Audit

The Story

Problem

Safety is a way of life at Boise, and that fact is reflected in the company's emphasis on workforce safety training. Facing a deep set of tough regulatory requirements, Boise manages risk by working through a demanding, 'step by step' process—the company has a whole department focused on complying with federal law. To ensure that the company remains in balance with environmental, health, and safety laws, Boise's audit department developed an audit plan to counter risk and liability, which, if ignored, combine to jeopardize profitability. Training is a big part of that plan. So is accountability.

Each facility includes a safety committee of junior and senior employees, with different responsibilities to cover the experience mix. Boise facilities measure safety efforts and creates specific action plans to mitigate new hazards introduced by the growth of the company, or by changes to production, like new equipment.

Boise's Wallula Paper Mill underwent a series of audits related to employee access of safety program documents, from standard procedures and troubleshooting guides, to checklists. The audit revealed that not only did very few employees know where to find the documents, but that most were unaware of their right to this information. And there are very good reasons why employees should be familiar with safety program documents. First, it is the law. Second, employees who know this material will develop a better understanding of safety programs, which promotes engagement and raises safety awareness, leading to better outcomes. Having an understanding of safety program goals related to Boise's unique, high-risk work environments, helps employees achieve the objectives. This information is essential to accountability.



Client Focus

As a result of the audits, Mill management realized it needed to improve workforce training to satisfy the audit, and build a stronger safety culture. The lack of understanding uncovered by the audit signaled that while Boise's commitment to safety was strong, there was room for improvement. Regulations require that employees demonstrate the ability to find these documents—they have to know where the material is located and how to get to it. Boise decided to provide additional training to its workers to fix the problem. But how?.

Solution

Boise's safety program documents were all accessible online, via the company's intranet. While most folks working in administration, including the audit department, used the intranet frequently, valued the system as a resource, and could quickly tell you how to find the material, the workers on the safety committee could not. That's because most of those employees were on the ground, directly involved in the manufacturing process, and had little exposure to the intranet or need to use it. The workers that needed this critical information the most, were distanced from it because of the way the information was managed.

The safety committee at the Mill in Wallula believed that developing a custom, online training experience would solve the problem. Based on past experience developing custom courses, Boise looked to Vivid for the solution. Vivid started the discovery process to figure out the challenges employees faced when accessing and navigating the organization's intranet.

The audit concerned employees across the Mill, from five different departments. To meet the audit requirements, or face penalties, Boise needed to develop six courses in 30 days.

To meet Boise's aggressive deadline and train employees on how to navigate the intranet and get to the documents, each department needed to have its own course. To make the situation a little more complex, the Paper Machines department, for example, faced the additional challenge of having three employee subgroups, each with specific needs based on the type of machines involved. Vivid recommended an additional course for this group.



Vivid’s instructional designers suggested going with short, visually engaging content to walk the workers through navigation of the organization’s intranet and straight to safety program documentation. Using short film and animation, Vivid created interactive courses with a realtime simulation of the process for accessing the documents. Each course included a set of activities designed to test the workers on the training, and create measureable accountability for the audit department, so the team would be able to evaluate the collective understanding of each division, and administer training as needed.

Running through Vivid’s Safety Training System, the company delivered six custom, online courses for Boise—in less than 30 days.

Results

Return on investment? By rolling out the new safety training and avoiding the penalty tied to the audit, Boise’s new investment in its safety program saved a considerable amount of money, while eliminating an area of risk and liability. For the audit department, having the courses live and on demand, accessible for new hires or periodic refresher training on the material, meant having another tool for mitigating regulatory requirements. The six courses covered an important gap in Boise’s safety program and increased safety awareness.

Boise’s commitment to an incident-free workforce, has never been stronger.



Vivid Learning Systems

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