



Case Study: Sleepmasters | May 2011

Sleepmasters improves staff retention and performance with Promethean

“At Sleepmasters we try to be different from most other bed retailers, providing our sales force with the right knowledge and tools to deliver exceptional customer service. The integration of Promethean’s interactive technologies within this strategy is paying dividends.”

Sleepmasters is one of the UK’s largest bed retailers, with a portfolio of over 150 stores supported by a network of four distribution centres. Believing that employees are the lifeblood of the company, Sleepmasters wants them to be dedicated, motivated and empowered – a vision that is realised through the delivery of an effective training and development programme underpinned by the latest Promethean interactive tools.



The Challenge

Every new sales employee at Sleepmasters must complete a four day residential course that is designed to equip them with the skills to effectively sell beds and provide advice to customers. With approximately 20 delegates participating in one session, and five written tests to complete within the induction period, the training team at Sleepmasters was faced with the challenge of maintaining delegate motivation while ensuring the efficient transfer of knowledge.

For Tony Warwick, National Learning and Development Manager, the administration of the courses was also proving a real time burden: “After each induction programme, it could take an additional two days to mark the tests, which delayed confirming whether individuals had successfully passed the course. What’s more, the age old ‘death by PowerPoint®’ was starting to prove counterproductive as it was increasingly hard to maintain the group’s attention.”

Moreover, improving staff retention was deemed a key objective for the learning and development team: “Every employee costs the company about £5,000 in the first three months, so it is critical to get them past this point to start delivering a return on the human capital investment. Employees that get past the three month period tend to stay with us for years.”

The Solution

Recognising that innovative collaborative technologies have a key role to play in the modern learning environment, Tony explored the various solutions available on the market, leading to the implementation of Promethean ActivBoards with multiple choice Learner Response System (LRS), ActiVote and alphanumeric LRS, ActivExpression.

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Starting with the adaptation of existing PowerPoint presentations into interactive Promethean ActiOffice flipcharts, Tony led the integration of Promethean's advanced technologies into training programme delivery: "The use of Promethean ActiOffice really changes the dynamics of the training session. Using the ActiPen, which acts like a mouse and electronic pen, you're able to work with content at the board in real-time. For example, a key part of our training is bed springs and support. Whereas previously we would all crowd round a spring unit, using the ActiBoard we're able to interact with a spring image in a large accessible format, allowing everyone to see the content clearly."



Promethean ActiOffice changes the dynamics of the session

While the ActiBoard has proven to be a powerful interactive presentation tool, the use of Learner Response Systems in conjunction with the board has helped make programme delivery and assessment more effective: "We use ActiVote or ActiExpression at the start of a session as an ice breaker. Using a combination of true/false and Likert scale questions, we are able to assess how the group is feeling. We do this in anonymous mode to encourage open participation and then save the original responses to compare how the group feels at the end of the training."

The Benefit

With all training now delivered using Promethean technologies as the platform, Sleepmasters is reaping the benefits across the board. The most notable of these is increased delegate motivation and performance: "There's a real buzz in the room when we use ActiExpression, it genuinely does keep motivation levels high – which is challenging during a four day course. The nature of the technology also appeals to all types of learner, which makes my life a lot easier as a trainer.

"Regarding assessment, as individuals respond using ActiExpression, the results have improved as we are testing understanding as opposed to completing a written test. The outcome of this has been a 22 percent improvement in pass rates, which we can celebrate at the end of the course rather than having to wait weeks to mark the tests."

From a staff retention perspective, Sleepmasters has recorded a 12 percent decrease in staff turnover in the initial three month period, representing a demonstrable benefit to the implementation of Promethean technology: "By increasing the effectiveness of our training, we have subsequently seen a positive impact on staff retention. The virtue of using such modern technology in the training environment also presents a more professional image of the company, giving employees confidence that we are serious about their training and development and are willing to invest in this."

To find out more about Promethean's business solutions, please contact LEB Partnership Ltd. , or learn more at www.prometheanworld.com/business



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