Management Sciences for Health

New Compliance Certification System Increases Global Employee Participation and Accuracy to 100% — Lowers Cost and Audit Risk

ESSENTIALS

Challenges
- Low Employee Response Rates
- Internal and Federal Compliance Audit Risk
- Frequent Errors and Missed Deadlines
- Inefficient, Expensive Labor-Intensive Process

Solution
- Custom Smart Client solution + Web Portal
- Multi-lingual Capable
- Integration with ePath Training System

Key Benefits
- From 70% to 100% Employee Compliance
- Eliminated Audit Risk
- Substantially Lower Costs

MSH BUSINESS NEEDS AND CHALLENGES

MSH receives 98% of its funding from the federal government, and is required to undergo a rigorous compliance and employee certification process. Conducted annually, the employee certification process requires all 2,000 employees to certify that they have read, understand and will comply with federal government policies regarding Business Ethics and Conduct. Managed by MSH Corporate Contracts Office, the existing certification process was slow, labor intensive, and put the entire organization at risk from internal and external compliance audits.

The existing email/excel/paper-based employee certification system presented a variety of challenges to MSH management:

- Employees are widely distributed throughout 33 different countries, are multi-lingual, and may or may not have regular access to email or computers

- Minimal coordination was available by the various regional and departmental managers

- The current system was fragmented, labor-intensive and error prone, involving email, fax, postal mail and MS Excel

- Paper-based questionnaires were manually collected, compiled, and results stored in Excel spreadsheets

- Lack of centralized management, controls, and enforcement left departmental managers with little to no insight into certification progress or status

- The MSH Corporate Contracts office and entire compliance process was managed by only a few people

MSH ASSESSMENT

Following an intensive search for a packaged software solution capable of meeting their needs, MSH was convinced that a custom solution was their only alternative.

A new system — where admin, managers, and employees could effectively collaborate, track, and report on the certification process — was expected to reduce compliance audit risk, improve visibility and control over the compliance process, and save lots of time and expense vs. the current manual process.

A search for a development partner was initiated by Laura Nerney, MSH Director of Contract Policy. Laura and her team evaluated 4 prospective firms, and selected PCA based on its 20-year track record of developing custom database solutions, their responsiveness to MSH questions and concerns, and good references from PCA Clients.

MSH was uncertain how an optimal compliance solution should function, or what it would cost, so PCA's ability to get solid answers to these key questions fast and inexpensively through their Rapid Application Prototyping methodology was also a key factor in their decision.

THE PCA SOLUTION

Within two weeks of engaging PCA, MSH was providing PCA feedback on an initial Prototype design. Seven weeks into the project, the MSH team approved a final Prototype design, and following budget and schedule planning, PCA proceeded onto the Development phase.

Five months into the project, PCA installed the new "Certification Central" system at MSH, and following 3 – 4 weeks of testing and refinements, the new system was deployed globally to all 33 countries.

The new Compliance Certification System designed by PCA is a powerful, easy-to-use Internet database built on the Microsoft platform: SQL Server + .NET Smart Client (Back-office App) + ASP.NET (Employee Portal) + SQL Server Reporting Services (SSRS). Key capabilities of the PCA-designed "Certification Central" solution included:

- Fast and easy online certification — no training required
- Centralized management control and visibility over the entire end-to-end employee certification process
- Customized certification templates, which enabled easy changes to the certification survey
- Automated email notifications, with accurate tracking and reporting of completed certification survey questionnaires
- Secure role-based access and application privilege management, enabling personalized dashboard views and reporting capabilities for administrators and supervisors
- Real-time reporting for accurate, in-progress status reports
- Multi-lingual support for English, French, and Spanish-speaking employees and managers
- Paper-based output capability for respondents without regular PC or Internet access

"PCA understood exactly what we were looking for. Within two weeks after our initial meeting with the PCA team, we were evaluating a well-conceived prototype of our new Compliance Certification System. We measured PCA's productivity in days, not weeks."

"Working with PCA was like night and day compared to other vendors we have used in the software or technology sector. In the past, it wasn't uncommon to wait 4 to 6 months to see what PCA delivered in 3 to 4 weeks. Their Rapid Prototyping approach to application development worked phenomenally well, and helped us visualize our future state quickly and cost effectively.

PCA eliminated the mystery around what we were getting, how much it would cost, and when the solution would be ready for our business."

LAURA NERNEY, DIRECTOR

MSH CONTRACT POLICY AND INTERNATIONAL CONTRACTING

MSH BUSINESS BENEFITS

The new system considerably improved levels of efficiency and compliance, and automated many of the routine manual tasks necessary to achieve compliance in a broadly geographically distributed organization like MSH.

The new system provided wholesale improvements to how MSH manages, collects and delivers annual compliance certifications.

In addition to eliminating paper certifications for administrators and staff, compliance visibility and reporting capabilities were significantly improved, and exposure to internal and external audit risk was largely reduced.

Key economic and business benefits to MSH included:

- Faster, more efficient compliance reporting using fewer MSH resources (cost savings)

- Centralized process and data management (improved consistency, fewer errors, more secure)

- Bona fide tracking of in-progress reporting and auditing (lower risk)

- Improved visibility by managers and supervisors (improved accountability)

ABOUT MSH

Management Sciences for Health (MSH) is an international nonprofit health organization composed of more than 2,000 people from 73 nations. Their mission is to save lives and improve the health of the world's poorest and most vulnerable people by closing the gap between knowledge and action in public health.