



Standardizing Training & Creating Community Across 750+ Locations

Since 1979, Sylvan Learning has been changing the lives of children by delivering personalized learning and tutoring. As a global franchise organization, Sylvan helps hundreds of thousands of children build critical skills and confidence. Yet a geographically dispersed franchise business model also made it difficult to standardize staff training and certification, as well as create a sense of community, across 750+ locations.

"We wanted to provide a consistent learning experience," said Sherri Vaughn, director, Sylvan University. "Everyone was doing something a little different, through no fault of their own. Our LMS was very basic and cumbersome. Many directors didn't want much to do with it."

Creating connection between centers was also a priority. "Our directors felt alone in our centers," said Matthew Honaker, Senior Customer Experience Manager. "We wanted to give them a stronger sense of community."

Why Cornerstone

Sylvan began the search for a new learning management system (LMS), one that would enable the company to deliver collaborative, interactive, community-based learning across all franchises. Vaughn's previous experience led the company to take a closer look at Cornerstone. "I knew it was a good product. Cornerstone could do what we wanted it to do."

Sylvan implemented Cornerstone Learning, Cornerstone Connect and Cornerstone Extended Enterprise to host "Sylvan University Now (SUN)."

- Connect
- Learning
- Extended Enterprise

Industry: Education
Region: Global
Users: 8,000+
Live Since: 2012
Business Impact: Created community across franchises, increased effectiveness of training, boosted customer conversion rates, standardized training, saved resources



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- Sherri Vaughn, Director, Sylvan University

The solutions work in tandem to accommodate the unique training needs of Sylvan’s franchise structure, from enabling directors to assign training directly to creating learning cohorts, small collaborative learning groups that drive engagement and interaction.

Since rollout, Sylvan Franchisees, Directors and Teachers have completed over 28,000 certifications. In January 2016 a blended learning sales certification was introduced. Over 500 people from 394 franchise centers have completed training, and response to Cornerstone and the collaborative learning opportunities has been overwhelmingly positive. “Everyone enjoys the different aspects of the curriculum and the blended learning,” said Erica Ford, LMS/WebEx specialist. “At our annual conference, franchisees and directors told us how much happier they were with Cornerstone. They love how they can just log in and find what they need.”

The Results

Created community across 750+ locations. With Cornerstone, franchises are connected via learning communities, discussion boards and other tools. “When you’re a global franchise organization, it’s nice to get people from different areas talking,” said Matthew Honaker. “For our directors especially, Cornerstone has made a difference. They appreciate being able to reach out to their peers.”

Added Ford, “People used to feel isolated. Now we’ve created a sense of togetherness. That’s been one of the greatest benefits of Cornerstone.”

Increased the effectiveness of training. Delivering training with Cornerstone Connect and Extended Enterprise via cohorts has increased the efficacy of training. “Participants have told us that stretching a course over weeks, instead of spending 48 hours in a classroom, is far more beneficial,” said Honaker. “With Cornerstone, we can reach them twice a week, give them information and then let them practice those new skills. They can discuss their experience the following week.”

Increased customer conversion rates. With the launch of the Sales Certification, Sylvan has seen an uptick in customer conversions and has increased revenue to support continued initiatives. “Our conversion rates have increased because of this training,” said Vaughn. “We’re seeing significant increases for centers who have taken the training versus those who haven’t.”

Saved time and money. When a three-day, onsite sales workshop failed to meet approval for budgetary reasons, the team delivered the entire workshop via Cornerstone instead. “We realized we could create a cohort in Cornerstone and deliver training, discussion opportunities and a virtual classroom experience,” said Vaughn.

Standardized training. Sylvan’s previous LMS couldn’t sufficiently facilitate the standardization of training across franchises. “Directors used to have to assign 20 different courses. If an employee missed one or two, they weren’t having the same experience,” said Vaughn. “With Cornerstone, everyone is getting the same certification training and learning opportunities.”



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