

Sephora Eliminates 150 Help Desk Calls a Week with Learn iT! Training

Training users on Microsoft Office 2007 virtually eliminates procedure-related help desk calls

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– Dicko Shahvekilian, Lead Desktop Analyst, Sephora

Business Benefits Realized

- Decreased Microsoft Office 2007 procedure-related help desk calls by more than 150 calls per week – from nearly 40-percent of daily call volume to less than 10-percent.
- Frees up IT support team to focus on mission-critical tasks such as break fixes, system changes and process fixes.
- Increases the productivity of Sephora's Microsoft Office users through a greater knowledge of new and improved Office 2007 functionality.
- Significantly reduces the time spent by the IT team answering Office-related questions outside their area of expertise.

Top Retail Brand Seeks Office Training Solution

When beauty-retail giant Sephora began to roll out Microsoft Office 2007 to its 700 users, the IT team quickly understood the challenge they faced. "The look and feel of Office 2007 is very different from Office 2003," says Sephora USA Lead Desktop Analyst Dicko Shahvekilian. "The ribbon is not as visible and that can be really confusing for users. Plus, there is added functionality that would be very difficult for most people to learn on their own."

Almost immediately, those changes began causing problems for both the company's Office users and its IT team. "It was affecting the productivity of the employees –when they are up against deadlines and can't accomplish what they need to do, panic and chaos set in," says Shahvekilian. "As a result, we saw a dramatic increase in the number of Office procedure-related help desk calls."

At the peak, nearly 40-percent of help desk calls were questions from users about how to accomplish something in Office – more than 150 procedure-related calls per week. That was creating a time drain at the help desk, whose staff was better equipped to deal with break fixes and engineering problems than to walk Office users through Excel and Outlook "how-to" questions. They realized if a successful Office 2007 rollout was going to occur, it would need to be accompanied by user training.

Sephora Chooses Learn iT! for Office 2007 Training

Sephora had worked with San Francisco-based training company Learn iT! in the past, and on the recommendation of a manager Shahvekilian investigated its Office 2007 training. "We tried Learn iT! and had amazing feedback," he says. "Based on the success of those pilot classes we set up a full-scale training program."

In total, Learn iT! instructors spent seven months conducting nearly 20 days of training for Sephora's Office users. The sessions included custom-tailored programs for specific user groups and one-on-one sessions for company executives. "We worked with Learn iT! to put the focus of the training on areas where we were seeing the most help desk calls," says Shahvekilian.

Organization

Sephora USA, Inc.

Location

San Francisco, California

Industry

Retail

Organization Information

- Founded in France in 1970.
- Features a unique, open-sell environment with more than 200 classic and emerging brands.
- Operates more than 280 stores in the U.S. and Canada.
- Has more than 700 Microsoft Office users based in the company's East and West Coast offices.

Solution

Desktop Training

Learn iT! Partnership Produces Instant Results

Once the training classes started, the help desk noticed a rapid decline in Office-related help desk calls, freeing up the IT team to focus on mission-critical tasks such as break fixes and system changes. By the time the training was complete at the end of 2010, those calls had diminished even further. "Before our Learn iT! training 40-percent of our help desk calls were Office-related 'how to' questions," says Shahvekilian. "Now, those types of calls are less than 10-percent of our call volume."

Time and cost savings for the Sephora IT team weren't the only benefits resulting from the Learn iT! training. User productivity and satisfaction has also increased, and that has translated into an improvement in way the IT team is perceived by its internal customers. "A difficult rollout would have led to frustration and negativity towards IT as a whole – having training as part of the rollout really helped the way we were viewed," says Shahvekilian. "The user community was very pleased, and we received a lot of positive feedback."

With the success of Sephora's Office 2007 training, Shahvekilian has become an advocate for Learn iT! among the retail IT community. "I've contacted my colleagues to tell them about our positive experience," he says. "I've been in the business for more than ten years and difficult software rollouts are always an issue. Now we have an effective way to address those challenges with Learn iT!."