



Customer story



PGA TOUR
SUPERSTORE

Robert Popilock Manager of Learning and Development

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On the green:

PGA TOUR Superstore saves money and improves learning experiences with Absorb

[PGA TOUR Superstore](#) is the world's leading retailer of golf, tennis, and pickleball equipment, apparel, and accessories. Founded in Myrtle Beach, SC in the late '60s as Martin's Golf & Tennis Superstore, it serves pros and fans alike from a brick-and-mortar footprint that covers more than half of the U.S., and a strong eCommerce site that ships globally.

The first off-course specialty golf retailer, PGA TOUR Superstore is today the largest of its kind and was the first to achieve revenues of more than \$500 million. Following an acquisition in 2010 by Arthur M. Blank, co-founder of The Home Depot, the company's growth trajectory accelerated rapidly.



Maintaining its breakneck pace of growth and keeping its 2,500 associates well-trained and up to speed required out-of-the-box thinking. What the company came up with was a unique learning solution that also allowed it to achieve its goals and bring its annual summit in-house — all powered by advanced features of Absorb LMS that allow it to easily integrate staff and vendor product training courses and videos.

“Improving the learning and development ecosystem is very much in line with our ambitious plan of becoming the first golf specialty retailer to generate a billion-dollar revenue,” says Robert Popilock, Manager of Learning and Development at PGA TOUR Superstore.

The company recognized the crucial need for a new, more sophisticated but also intuitive Learning Management System (LMS) to meet the fast-paced delivery of learning experiences it required.

With an average of 40 to 50 associates per location and more than 15 unique roles within the organization, PGA TOUR Superstore needed a learning solution that would scale to meet its growing demands and could handle the specificity of several career paths.

An ace in the hole: a new LMS

“In addition, we wanted a solution that could incorporate a checklist feature, allowing us to implement a current learning checklist for specific roles,” Popilock says. “This feature would guide new associates through the knowledge and skills needed for the role they were acquiring, supporting any e-learning content they received.”

“With this, associates and their leaders could ensure they were always prepared and understood what was expected of them.” He adds, “Learning paths are crucial in the retail industry, where associates need to have a specific path to prepare for their roles.”

Its existing LMS limited the sports retailer’s ability to meet its desired scale and goals around learning experiences. It provided only basic capabilities such as hosting videos or PDFs, eliminating the possibility of instructor-led courses. Limited enrollment rules made it challenging for the company to offer mandatory courses or learning initiatives.

The company also needed a new learning program that would give better capabilities around accurately monitoring and verifying vendor-generated content.

PGA TOUR Superstore selected Absorb LMS as the platform for its new learning program, Learning Central LMS, allowing the company to adopt a more learner-centric approach.

The new program provides associates with advanced training on the finer details of their work — such as product technical information or the physics behind golf equipment — in a more modern and engaging way.

Learning Central LMS was designed with a golf theme, including four main categories: the clubhouse, the leaderboard, the course, and the practice range, into which all the learnings were categorized. It allows PGA TOUR Superstore to provide associates with specific learning paths for their organization and roles. Importantly, managers can track performance metrics and can now assign courses based on job roles and responsibilities.

A new LMS cont...

The move to Absorb took approximately four weeks and provided several immediate benefits. Powered by Absorb, Learning Central LMS can offer a variety of sales, product, customer service, and safety courses over a wide variety of media. Learners can access interactive modules, videos, quizzes, and learning aids, while tracking progress.

The flexibility of Absorb lets learners access training materials at their convenience from any location. Absorb's reporting capabilities let PGA TOUR Superstore managers track learner progress and performance to identify additional training required. The program boosts employee and vendor development, subsequently enhancing the customer experience at PGA TOUR Superstore.

The company must ensure content accuracy since Learning Central LMS includes outside vendor-generated content. The new Absorb-based platform allows for better tracking and completion of vendor-submitted quiz questions, helping measure knowledge transfer and identify where vendors might have inaccurately described their products or technologies.



A master stroke: rolling its summit in-house

Importantly, the Learning Central LMS was implemented and able to be launched in time for the retailer's annual Game Changers Summit. Its landing page was redesigned to prioritize content related to the event.

Associates could see the individually specific tracks they needed to start with and then proceed through summit-related content. Each track provided approximately 20 hours of content.



Through its learning platform, PGA TOUR Superstore also released instructional videos focused on accessing the training courses and resources related to the summit.

The retailer's new program was a success and was rewarded with exceptional results.

By tracking completion rates and evaluating vendor and learner performance, the company was able to identify areas and vendors performing better. This helped them assess and improve content efficiency. By tracking the average time taken per course, the sports retailing giant improved employee productivity through better content scheduling.

Driving success

Importantly, PGA TOUR Superstore was able to share performance reports with vendors that included enrollment, completion rates, average time spent on courses, course evaluations, and quiz performance. This allowed vendors to see how their content was performing and make necessary improvements. This also aided in receiving co-sponsorships from participating vendors, and ultimately led to a more refined learner experience.

By bringing its summit in-house, **the company saved \$200,000** and saw other remarkable improvements.

Associates consuming content increased from 61.6% in January 2022 to a **whopping 99.8%** in the same period the following year.

Attendees spent an average of more than **16 hours at the summit** in 2023 versus only approximately 10 hours in 2022.

Overall experience rating by summit attendees was scored **4.12 out of 5**.

A **50% increase in revenue** (to a total of ~\$300K) through saving and vendor sponsorship.

A **30% increase in employee retention** among those who consumed summit course content.

An impressive **26% increase in sales** in the month following the summit (Feb. '24 to Mar. '24).



Year-over-year, PGA TOUR Superstore has seen remarkable engagement with its new LMS. Between 2023 and 2024, it saw an increase of 15% in associates who consumed content from the LMS, and associates spent on average 15 hours with that content.

With its Absorb-powered Learning Central LMS, PGA TOUR Superstore is poised for continued success and innovation, notes Popilock. "The PGA TOUR Superstore has found success with its Absorb-based LMS and will continue to innovate towards providing a world-class experience for our learners."



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