

Absorbie 2025 **winner**

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Customer story



Industry

Oil & gas

Use case

Employee onboarding, employee upskilling, compliance training, frontline training

Solution

[Absorb LMS](#), [Absorb Engage](#),
[Absorb Create](#)

Challenge

- Training content library in need of refresh.
- Building greater flexibility and scale for training program.
- A diverse, distributed workforce.

Solution

- Absorb LMS selected as training delivery platform.
- Absorb LMS solution aligned with business operations.
- Gamified courses that simulate real-world challenges.

Results

- Over 300% increase in course completions (since launch).
- Improved staff satisfaction and skills retention.
- Reduced costs from in-house training development.

Summary

Canadian integrated oil and gas leader Suncor Energy is a global powerhouse in the energy sector. To elevate compliance, safety, and workforce capabilities across its nationwide network of Petro-Canada gas stations, the company built a new training ecosystem from the ground up. The results: dramatically high course completions, exceptional employee satisfaction and measurable improvements in staff performance.



Tobias Ma

Learning Advisor

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Even a small, agile team can deliver outsized impact when equipped with the right tools — like Absorb LMS — and a mindset rooted in creativity, stakeholder engagement, and continuous improvement. Absorb helped us reimagine training for our front-line workforce, making learning more accessible, engaging, and aligned with real-world challenges.



Modernizing learning for Petro- Canada's front- line workforce

Canada's [Suncor Energy](#) is one of the largest independent, publicly traded energy companies in the world and a pioneer in oil sands mining, extraction and upgrading.

The Calgary, Alberta-based company boasts a vertical integration model spanning oil extraction to downstream refining, logistics and sales. After its 2009 merger with Petro-Canada, Suncor gained access to a network of retail and wholesale fuel stations across Canada.

Technology, sustainability, and efficiency are at the heart of the organization, with constant investments in innovations such as Steam Assisted Gravity Drainage (SAGD) and carbon capture. It's all to meet Suncor's vision to be Canada's leading energy provider, respected for its people, performance, sustainability, and relationships that together create value for society, communities, customers, and shareholders.

Today, Suncor has diversified to include low-emission and renewable energy sources and commands an impressive presence nation-wide. It operates 1,800 Petro-Canada retail and wholesale locations across its home country and works with over 5,200 vendors in its national supply chain.

Inheriting legacy training challenges

Suncor's learning team saw an opportunity to improve the legacy training library used by Petro-Canada to better meet the evolving needs of its tens of thousands of diverse, geographically distributed front-line staff and managers — many of whom may work without direct supervision.

The varied and sometimes remote locations of Petro-Canada sites mean their safe and effective operation demands **robust training that is flexible and readily available**. The team conducted a needs assessment and chose Absorb as the platform to host a new learning program at the scale it required. "When we joined the Petro-Canada Learning team, we seized the opportunity to improve on the existing training foundation and build a **more engaging course library for our front-line staff**," says Tobias Ma, Learning Advisor at Suncor Energy. "Despite our small team, we wanted to bring a fresh approach to supporting our associates and set an ambitious goal: to reimagine safety and operational training as a **dynamic, engaging, and accessible experience** for a diverse, mobile, and often unsupervised workforce across Canada."



A digital training transformation for a new era of eLearning

The small-sized team sought to have outsized impact on the breadth and depth of their training content by **gamifying safety training** and streamlining Petro-Canada's onboarding process.

The learning team drew on its members' backgrounds in teaching, research, and gamification to build and promote a new training system that delivered essential knowledge, engaged learners, improved skills, and reflected the Petro-Canada brand.

"Our aim was to **boost engagement** and results by creating learning content that our staff would genuinely look forward to, empowering them to succeed and, most importantly, stay safe in their roles," Ma says.

In 2023, Suncor implemented Absorb as the foundation for a front-line workforce LMS to upskill its guest service attendants (GSAs) and site managers. The team rebuilt Petro-Canada's entire training ecosystem, creating a **scalable, mobile-friendly platform** for Petro-Canada staff.

The new training platform was marketed internally like a product launch, using lottery-based incentives, displays, town halls, and feedback surveys to generate enthusiastic champions for the initiative. To increase awareness, the team led cross-functional collaboration, such as co-producing live video content and strategic video communications.

The company adopted a number of Absorb features to improve its learning system, including **structured learning paths and automation for bilingual employee training** (English and French), and to host **accessible, engaging, role-specific microlearning content**. For on-the-go mobile workers, the team delivered content in short, five- to 15-minute, focused segments that account for their busy front-line schedules.

Structured learning paths were developed using Absorb's **course categories, banners, and automatic enrollment features** to create a consistent, clear, visually branded learning journey based on role, class of business (e.g. retail versus wholesale), and preferred language.

Meanwhile, the platform's reporting, enrollment keys, and Microsoft Teams integration were used to support administration and provide visibility for leaders and project teams. **Enrollment Keys and survey capabilities** facilitate efficient course distribution and feedback collection.

"Suncor used the Absorb role system to define accountabilities across their sites, with leaders having the appropriate level of access and insights to manage reporting and personnel," Ma notes. "It's **enrollment system allows learners to be automatically assigned the correct courses based on role, business type, and language** — reducing administrative overhead." The team developed simple video guides for new administrators and users to further enhance their self-sufficiency.

Importantly, to meet its goals of better engaging learners, boosting retention, and enhancing staff's real-world capabilities, the Petro-Canada Learning team designed **gamified, scenario-based courses** using live-action video, animation, and interactive simulations.

Creativity and innovation are the core of our program's transformation," Ma says.

"Drawing on research and teaching experiences, we designed scenario-based, gamified courses that simulate real-world challenges. The team developed animations and live-action videos, into **multimodal, interactive simulations to drive engagement and retention.**"

For instance, in a course on injury prevention, the learner controls a gas station attendant and can order them to move to different locations around the site to address various winter hazards. Selecting a hazard opens an inventory of various tools, prompting the learner to select the correct tool. In another training module, the learner manipulates a fire extinguisher using a sweeping motion to put out a fire perpetrated by animated personifications of the elements that cause fire: heat, fuel, and oxygen, who appear in different scenarios related to flammable risks around a gas station throughout the training.

The company's **innovative, learner-centric, branded training platform** closely aligns with Suncor's vision and operational and safety goals. "All course content is aligned to our organization-approved standard operating procedures and business needs, ensuring accuracy and impact," Ma notes.



Digging into the impact of business results

Suncor's training ecosystem has supported **engagement, improved compliance and safety, streamlined operational efficiency, and lowered risk**, while delivering brand-aligned clarity, simplicity, and focus to learning.

"By redesigning our training to be clear, concise, and directly relevant to front-line realities, we are not only making learning more accessible but also supporting the company's ongoing efforts to streamline operations," Ma says.

Since its launch, the company has recorded more than **33,000 course completions** in the last year, a massive **300% increase** since launching Absorb. Engagement rose by almost **50%** for the team's newly produced, highly engaging courses, earning an impressive **4.8 out of 5 average rating** from over 6,400 reviews, and a **97% positive comment ratio**.



The initiative, thanks to its strong internal communications strategy, fostered high levels of participation from learners and leaders alike. The team has since seen a significant uptick in requests for custom content, helping more groups than ever achieve their training and development goals.

The program has **elevated the learning team's role in the organization and has driven cross-functional collaboration** — all while **reducing costs** by producing content in-house and lowering the risks of costly injuries or site remediation.

More importantly, it helps keep Suncor's employees and partners safe by providing **consistent, high-quality training that reduces regulatory risk** and supports a safer workplace for more than 11,000 people across over 1,800 retail and wholesale locations.

Extracting insights for learning success

It's not surprising that an organization built on innovation and discovery would embrace continuous improvement in its training platform.

The learning team is currently using **AI tools** to streamline course development, clean up and restructure its user and department database in Absorb, and edit the extensive documentation required for learners and colleagues.

"Building guides, FAQs, and process documentation not only supports your team, but also enables others to replicate your success," Ma explains.

Ma says they've learned a great deal while implementing the program. First and foremost, he says, is to make learning real for users through narrative-driven scenarios, relatable characters, and situations grounded in real-world incidents.

For a mobile, sometimes remote workforce, **shorter, more interactive and visually engaging content is better**, he adds. "Shorter, high-quality videos and interactive activities are far more effective, especially for multilingual, mobile learners."

He says it's crucial to promote learning like a product — utilizing activities such as contests and presentations, and highlighting visible leadership buy-in, — to create buzz and drive adoption.

Finally, it's crucial to empower the learning team with the right tools, education philosophy, and support, Ma suggests.

"Even a small, agile team can deliver outsized impact with the right mix of creativity, willingness to pivot to high-priority projects, stakeholder engagement, and a continuous improvement mindset."

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