

Case Study: Columbia Sportswear



Driving Adoption by Pairing Training and Communications

Key Takeaways

- Used single tool to pair communications and training content for one-stop rollout resource
- Trained large, dispersed retail staff while in-store and on-the-job
- Used analytics to measure comprehension and confirm readiness
- Achieved 97% training completion prior to rollout
- Program rated as effective by 87% of employees

When New Software Meets Employee Paychecks

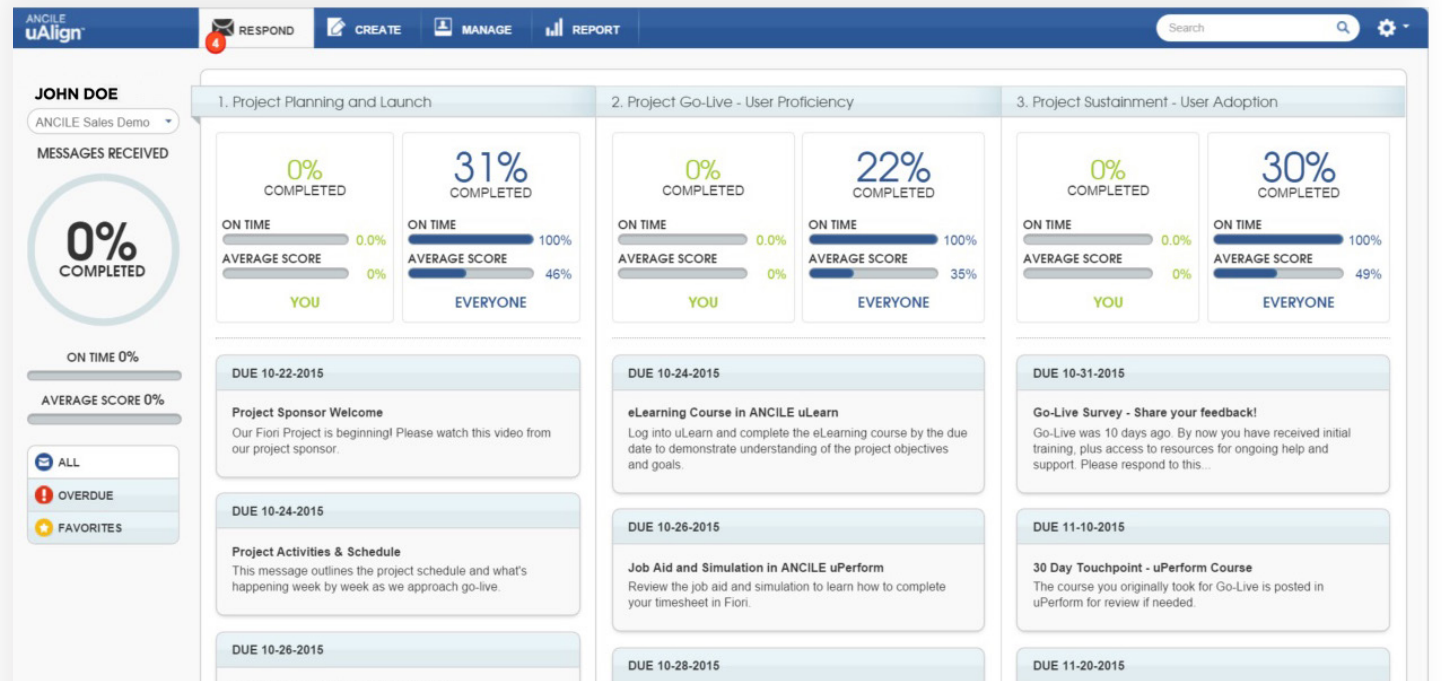
Here's a challenging scenario. You're responsible for ensuring successful change initiatives for thousands of your retail store staff. Your organization's latest initiative is to implement Kronos, a time and attendance management software application. Your store staff has limited time

available for training, they can't gather at the same time for a training session, and it's prohibitively expensive to send trainers to the stores. Any issues with team readiness and adoption have the potential to affect staff paychecks. How do you tackle this scenario?

Columbia Sportswear, a leading innovator in the global apparel, footwear, accessories, and equipment markets since 1938, recently confronted this scenario. In implementing Kronos, the challenge was to quickly enable approximately 100 store managers and 2000 staff on the new solution - without expensive onsite training and without any hiccups that might affect staff pay.

Retail Presents Unique Adoption Challenges

Achieving user adoption of software is tricky in a retail environment. Columbia Sportswear stores are lean and agile machines, focused on serving customers and selling



product first. Training comes second when there is time. Store managers must be engaged and available, not on conference calls.

While the retailer has dedicated training managers who train staff during new store openings, site visits to all store locations are too costly and time-consuming. At each store, staff have varying shifts and cannot all come to one place for a single training session. Training has to happen over days, and training must be tracked to ensure all affected staff are prepared to adopt new or upgraded software.

In addition to these challenges, Columbia Sportswear also needed to address privacy concerns associated with storing personal information and change the processes that fed into employee paycheck processing. Privacy factors and people’s pay are highly sensitive: mistakes were not an option.

Half of the Adoption Solution

Myra Lavenue, Training Lead for Organizational Change Management at Columbia Sportswear, realized early on that the solution had to encompass both training and communications elements. “My focus is to deploy technology projects from the people side. This means using training, communications, and change management

principles to increase adoption and decrease resistance,” Myra shared.

Columbia Sportswear already had the training portion of the solution in place. They used ANCILE uPerform to create a blended learning solution of elearning courses, work instructions, and hands-on exercises for their SAP implementation. It was a natural next step to apply ANCILE uPerform capabilities to the Kronos implementation.

The communications portion of the implementation was missing, however. Existing tools – such as email – lacked needed features of a robust change management solution. Myra knew that email couldn’t deliver on the tracking, assessment, and reporting needs that she would have as she worked to confirm readiness. The team needed to find a better method for communicating key project information and learning content.

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Crafting a Complete Solution for Store Staff

Columbia Sportswear identified the missing half of the solution when they discovered ANCILE uAlign. ANCILE uAlign allows organizations to rapidly communicate key information and confirm receipt and comprehension. Stakeholders create messages with text, links, audio, video, images, attachments, read receipts, and knowledge checks. End users get “just-in-time” communications that support moments of understanding to drive software proficiency. To monitor readiness, project leaders analyze responses for compliance and comprehension.

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Columbia Sportswear needed to address some tricky timing, with a rolling schedule of go-live dates, district by district, across the United States. The availability of ANCILE uAlign in the cloud allowed the change team to quickly set up and master the application. The channel functionality in ANCILE uAlign made it possible to manage and track each go-live individually. Each channel included a series of four messages: the rollout schedule, links to training materials, a list of support resources and, finally, a post-go-live survey. For each go-live, the team was able to report on:

- Store manager engagement by message completion
- Staff comprehension as reflected in message assessment results

Myra used this reporting and analytics data to gauge the level of message consumption (and the level of engagement from each region) to determine who needed additional, individualized support during the rollout. This proved to be the gamechanger she needed because Myra was able to

focus her attention on the handful of store managers across the country who had not completed their training, rather than all 100 store managers.

Impressive Results Across Stores

The results were impressive. Wave upon wave, managers in each region received the training and real-time communications they needed to train their staff and adopt the Kronos solution. Myra had the data she needed to measure actual manager performance and satisfaction, and share key metrics with executives to provide insight into the overall success of the implementation.

“ANCILE uAlign was the communication tool that helped make trainers out of Store Managers. Our managers were equipped with concise, meaningful messages that delivered both key communications and training content, and they had this content available as needed in the cloud. From a stakeholder perspective, we used reporting data to determine who was not ready for go-live – making it easy to provide individual help,” Myra said. “This quick and easy delivery of key content – along with the insight we gained into team readiness – were key factors in our success.”

97% OF STORE MANAGERS INDICATED THEY AND THEIR STAFF HAD COMPLETED TRAINING PRIOR TO GO-LIVE

87% RATED THE TRAINING AS VERY EFFECTIVE OR EFFECTIVE

Love uAlign! Easy to navigate. I like that I can go back and know where everything is and re-read if needed.

—Columbia Sportswear Store Manager

uAlign is fantastic and I highly recommend that we continue using it going forward.

—Columbia Sportswear Training Manager