



CASE STUDY

TRANSFORMING COMMUNICATION AND TRAINING AT PLUMBING & HEATING WHOLESAL, INC. WITH ENGAGE BY CELL

COMPANY OVERVIEW

Plumbing & Heating Wholesale, Inc. (PHW) was founded in Sioux Center, Iowa, in 1979. Over the years, the company has expanded to 10 locations across Iowa, South Dakota, and Nebraska. With over 100 employees spread across these locations, PHW is a prominent distributor of HVAC and plumbing products.

CHALLENGES FACED

PHW faced the challenge of maintaining effective communication and training across its diverse employee base, including those who were constantly on the move, or didn't have regular access to computers. Engage by Cell sat down with Kelsey Meinders, HR Manager, who oversees all HR functions for the 10 locations.

Meinders began exploring her options after leadership expressed the need for a centralized platform that would facilitate HR, onboarding, and training information distribution. Meinders explains, "The buzzword that they kept using for me was intranet, intranet, intranet. Microsoft SharePoint could have been a solution, but it still didn't help us for some of those bigger factors. Not every individual at our 10 locations is sitting in front of a computer at any given point during the day." These pain points led PHW to Engage by Cell.

SOLUTIONS

During her exploration, Meinders came across Engage by Cell solutions during a presentation by partner and Learning Rebels founder Shannon Tipton. Engage by Cell is the country's top provider of mobile communication platforms including mobile web apps and text messaging. The solution resonated with her, as it could reach employees via the smartphones most employees have on their person at all the time.

Text Messaging

Engage Cell's Text Messaging Platform provides a way to broadcast messages to unlimited subscribers, and monitor responses for two-way communication. Meinders explains, "We needed something that could give that push notification rather than just having to log into an email to find. The text messaging absolutely did that for us." Meinder continues, "It's hard to argue that everybody has a phone on them at some given point in time, and even if it's not a smartphone you can receive a text message. That was a really easy buy-in from a leadership standpoint."

PHW utilized text alerts for several reasons to alert employees about newsletter, W-2 status updates, upcoming events, urgent issues, and more. The platform allows you to segment your subscribers for targeted messaging.

Meinders reveals, "I have a PHW opt-in option for company-wide notifications, but then I also broke it down by both location and job description." This allows Meinders and her team to reach warehouse employees, drivers, inside sales, counter sales, territory managers and more with alerts that are relevant to them.

To access your 2022 W2, view the steps sent in your PHW email. Reach out to Kelsey/HR with any questions.

The next PHW newsletter is out! Read it on our app here: <https://bycell.co/0b40>

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KELSEY MEINDERS
HR Manager, P&H Wholesale



Mobile Web App

Engage by Cell's Mobile Web App provides a drag-and-drop platform allowing organizations to upload and build content on a live mobile friendly website with the look and feel of a native app. Utilizing a website like this allows users

to access content via a QR code or link, Meinders shares, "The biggest plus is not having to physically download an app because it's web-based, and that instantaneous update is huge."

Kelsey created a comprehensive mobile hub for all things HR, where she included the employee handbook, training resources, leadership information, industry-specific training sites, time clocks, and vendor information. The platform also allows for interactive training modules and quizzes, helping ensure employees understood important company information. Meinders asked herself, "In any given position in the company, what are the most visited sites? What do people need to access throughout their day? Can we put it all into one spot? and I have. I have successfully put everything into one spot."

Meinders impressively integrated a recognition program called "P&H High Fives," which allowed employees to nominate their peers for outstanding contributions based on the company's core values. "The high fives are a little play on words, we have five core values. If they see somebody doing something great for P&H, they can nominate them, attach it to a core value, and tell us a little bit about them. The nominees get a shout out in their weekly meeting, and if you earn five high fives you get a \$25 gift card."

IMPLEMENTATION

Kelsey initiated a process to implement Engage by Cell within PHW. She began by presenting the platform's benefits, including the mobile app and text messaging features, during the company's annual state-of-the-company meeting. Meinders also markets the tool across common spaces, "I even have these little posters in every single break room and lunchroom in all of our locations."

The growth in usage after the initial roll out is greatly due to word of mouth, "It's easy to see other people enjoying it, and it kind of spreads organically from that,".

RESULTS AND IMPACT

- 1. Increased Engagement:** Employees found the mobile app and text messaging easy to use and more accessible than traditional methods, resulting in increased engagement. The web app has had over 3,400 pageviews among about 100 employees since its launch.
- 2. Timely Communication:** Push notifications ensured that time-sensitive information, such as open enrollment deadlines, was received and acted upon promptly. So far, text messaging has had a 40% adoption rate among employees.
- 3. Efficient Resource Access:** The centralized mobile hub streamlined access to important resources, reducing time wasted searching for information.
- 4. Reduced Tedious Inquiries:** The platform minimized routine inquiries, freeing up HR's time for more strategic tasks.
- 5. Positive Feedback:** Employees appreciated the convenience of the app, leading to overwhelmingly positive feedback. "I haven't had a single person tell me it's not something that they find valuable or useful. How many times do you implement something and you don't hear negative feedback? I think that that's pretty rare," says Meinders.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of Engage by Cell has proven to be a transformative solution for Plumbing & Heating Wholesale, Inc., addressing their communication and training challenges with an accessible and user-friendly mobile platform. Kelsey Meinders' proactive approach to exploring innovative solutions has resulted in increased engagement, improved communication, and streamlined processes for the organization's diverse workforce across multiple locations.

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