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How SPS Commerce Uses Northpass to Deliver Training to More Than 70,000 Members of Its Retail Network

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Executive Summary

SPS Commerce, Inc (Nasdaq: SPSC) is a leading provider of cloud-based, supply chain software services. The SPS Commerce Retail Network is one of the world's largest trading communities with over 65,000 customers across 60 countries, including brands like Fruit of the Loom, Under Armour and Kate Spade. SPS needed a learning management system (LMS) that would empower the company to reduce support contacts by equipping its customers with the right information, at the right time. It was also critical that the LMS enable SPS to deliver training materials that were designed creatively, easy for its learners to find and access, and presented via a simple and intuitive learning interface.

After extensive market research, SPS chose Northpass as its customer training LMS. SPS' reasons: Northpass' user-friendly interface, powerful customization capabilities, and the white-glove service we provide to our customers.

As soon as the decision was made, SPS' Training and Education team got to work. On Northpass, the team designed and implemented a customer academy called Training Center. As they worked, they were able to streamline their content development process by leveraging our efficient bulk asset uploading tool, designing custom reusable course templates, developing custom interactive courses directly on the platform, and inviting and managing learners quickly with our API. They were also able to bolster engagement in their training materials by delivering a highly contextual learning experience that meets their customers' needs.

Within the first year of using Northpass, SPS enrolled over 26,000 users. Looking forward, SPS plans to deploy training to even

more customers, integrate more deeply with CRM systems, and measure how training improves customer satisfaction, reduces churn and lowers overall support costs.

About SPS Commerce

SPS Commerce offers cloud-based, supply chain management software for suppliers, retailers, third-party logistics providers and partners.

As part of the SPS Customer Training and Education strategy, SPS engages with stakeholders about the company's training capabilities and conducts one-on-one sessions to ensure the company has the training it needs to succeed. The SPS Customer Success team took the lead in finding an LMS equipped to manage an external training initiative and implementing the LMS for SPS.

Under the SPS Customer Success department, the Training and Education team works together to train and educate SPS' customers on its products. The team consists of training leads, analytics specialists, designers and training administrators, who regularly work to implement, launch and maintain Training Center.

The Challenges Prior to Northpass

Given the nature of its business, SPS needed to deliver diverse content tailored to the relationship between retail partners and vendors/suppliers. The training SPS provides is an essential mechanism for driving value for its customers.

Before choosing Northpass, the company's training materials were delivered through its public-facing support center and forum where customers asked questions, shared ideas and discussed various industry-related topics.

SPS was determined to find a solution that would allow it to provide content that was relevant to its customers, based on the SPS product the customer purchased. The content would be highly contextual, delivered at the right time and within a user-friendly interface. The company's goal was to meet the training demands of its customers by creating and delivering training materials and driving usage of Training Center.

Choosing the Right LMS

In its search for the right LMS, SPS encountered solutions that were either user-friendly but allowed only limited customization or the other way around. SPS was not willing to sacrifice usability or customization—it wanted both.

Once Northpass entered the picture, it was quickly evident that the platform excelled in several areas. First, Northpass is highly focused on delivering an exceptional user interface (UI) for learners. As a result, the learner's transition from accessing the platform to engaging with the content is seamless. For SPS, it was important that navigating through the learning experience entails as few steps as possible, so UI efficiency was critical.

Second, Northpass is a growing company, and SPS recognized the opportunity to collaborate with Northpass as Training Center scales and the LMS platform advances. SPS was confident that Northpass' leadership team would field its requests and ensure they were taken seriously. Additionally, Northpass' customer-training focus gave SPS peace of mind that the company's feature roadmap would always be aligned with its program's needs.

How Northpass Helped

Upon implementing Northpass, SPS overcame the two most important training challenges the company had previously encountered. The first problem solved was the inability to make training materials personalized to each customer's needs.

With Northpass' API, SPS was able not only to grant access to thousands of users at once but also to segment the users into groups, so they only receive content relevant to them.

Northpass also offered SPS a central place for its training content and an easy-to-use learner interface designed for optimized engagement. SPS is pleased that with Northpass, its training content is now highly accessible and available to its users. Whether the customer is from the U.S. or Australia, SPS now has a

> Now that SPS can create a complete learning experience and have full control over the content delivery, the company is empowered to create content that is more relevant, contextual and purposeful.

support structure to accommodate users in any time zone. Users can log into the courses on their own time and schedule and return to it when they please, without having to bookmark pages or take any additional steps.

Northpass has enabled SPS to leverage a consistent approach to its training delivery method. Now that SPS can create a complete learning experience and have full control over the content delivery, the company is empowered to create content that is more relevant, contextual and purposeful.

SPS' Training and Education team has also gained additional insight both on the quantitative and qualitative levels. Northpass' reporting tools and Google Analytics integration have opened windows into SPS' learners' engagement with its content, equipping them with data points the team never had access to before. Indeed, the data collected since implementing Northpass has revealed that learners are spending over 30 minutes in Training Center on average. Considering the team's goal of promoting adoption and usage of the training content, these metrics, combined with the positive feedback collected via surveys in Northpass, tell the team that SPS' customers are willing to engage in the courses provided.

Moreover, the team sees each engagement with Training Center as a support call that was avoided. That perception is based on the premise that as they train and educate customers, customers become more knowledgeable and find greater value in the platform

and, in turn, become more self-sufficient in using the product.

From an operational standpoint, Northpass has made designing content a breeze. Plus, since Northpass enables the team to design course activity templates for reuse, they're saving a tremendous amount of time.

Now that the team is using Northpass, they can also take advantage of different content formats such as videos, slideshows, rich text and more. SPS has found Northpass' rich text editor to be particularly useful. It allows them to author content directly within the platform, customize the rich text to fit the company brand and lay out their curriculum in a manner that is optimized for the type of training they're delivering. For example, while some content is best demonstrated through video, the SPS team has found that it makes more sense to communicate product information through a user guide. User guides afford customers the opportunity to more easily read through the content at their own pace, skip to areas that are most relevant and return to where they left off.

The degree of flexibility and functionalities Northpass offers has given the SPS Customer Training and Education team the power to create and deliver training materials that are accessible, entertaining and meaningful.

The Future of Training Center

2016 was an opportune year for SPS' Training and Education team to determine the best curriculum for SPS' customers, assess how users engage with their content and pinpoint baseline metrics that the team will strive to impact moving forward.

Over the past year, SPS enrolled 26,000 learners into Training Center and saw substantial engagement from the learners who accessed the content. That allowed the team to reach their first goal of driving customer adoption and usage.

As the initiative continues into 2017, the team plans to expand their tracking of Training Center's impact on greater business metrics, including customer retention and support costs.

Start your free trial to learn how Northpass' modern learning management system can help you reach your business goals.

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