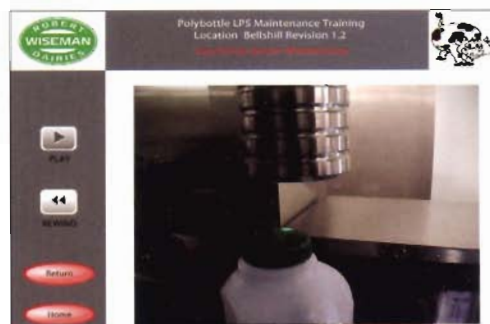


See it and do it



UK-based Wiseman's Dairies has chosen e-learning technology to improve training and understanding of the set-up and maintenance of its line production system at its Bellshill facility

Recognising that traditional training manuals were either not read or sufficiently understood, Wiseman Dairies approached Halo Training of the UK to develop a cost-effective e-learning programme to help familiarise new personnel with the line production system (LPS) at its Bellshill facility, and as a reference aid for existing engineers who only occasionally used the equipment.

The LPS is located in the dairy's filling hall and is a quality control procedure, which checks that the correct quantity of milk is filled into polybottles, together with the right labels and coloured caps.

The e-learning technology provided by Halo Training covers the functionality and maintenance of the LPS used in the dairy's filling halls and is designed to further improve training standards while increasing operating efficiencies.

"Wiseman was investing in a large amount of automation," says John Craig, founder of Halo. "The issues of dairy automation were clearly identified, and they were looking for people to help launch on-demand training (ODT) solutions."

At the centre of the LPS is a PC with a user interface which provides batch information and has several engineering and diagnostic screens. After completing the needs analysis, Halo split the ODT programme into several categories:

- overview of the dairy operation from milk procurement through to depot delivery
- how to operate the LPS computer
- how to fault find major components
- how to access information from the database, reference documentation
- fault finding charts.

"ODT offers a cost-effective means of delivering good quality training without the associated overheads of setting-up and running a separate department," comments Calum Robertson, automation training engineer, Robert Wiseman & Sons. "We recognised a need to strengthen the training of our engineering personnel. The ODT programme offered an easy-to-use, engaging and visually stimulating learning environment without the need for dedicated training staff. Its modular approach was

particularly appealing."


He continues: "Initial feedback from the workforce has been favourable. In fact, we recently conducted a formal trial utilising experienced and recently employed engineers as test students and both found the content useful and learning interface intuitive. Comments have been positive, and we're now in discussions with Halo about developing ODT for other processes at Bellshill as well as other Wiseman sites."

Craig also notes that the process of tailoring the ODT to Wiseman specifications included sending out a questionnaire to the engineers who would be working on-site. "We talked to all the shifts and on the basis of the answers to that questionnaire put together a proposal for future work."

Automation engineering works slightly differently to electrical engineering, says Craig, and so it was important to show the links between input into PLCs and the resulting output on the lines. As a result, the company is continuing to work with Wiseman on developing new training ideas, as a result of the needs analysis.

How it works

Provided on CD or high speed intranet/internet, each visual ODT solution incorporates animation, video and audio commentary to help clearly demonstrate plant processes and equipment operating functions and procedures.

"We take traditional software tools and illustrate the automation process via video. People find it much easier," Craig points out. "The majority of people like to see things, rather than have things described to them. I'm a great believer in visual technology for the basis of training." Halo's ODT modules may be provided via PCs, laptops, or web-based browsers. Help links can also keep operators in close contact with equipment suppliers, minimising downtime and improving profitability. 

Please see www.halotraining.co.uk for further information about e-learning.

contacts