

MANSELL CONSTRUCTION

USING KEY SURVEY TO DELIVER
EFFECTIVE TRAINING

Focusing on constructing sustainable communities, Mansell Construction has around 1,800 management and administration staff plus 3-400 operatives at various locations around the UK. So, providing effective training for the employees is essential, as Head of Employment Lynne Sykes explains:



We are primarily a building company and our training, in the pure sense, is health and safety training. It's very practical, hands on, doing something.

MANSELL CONSTRUCT

CONSTANTLY IMPROVING **HEALTH & SAFETY** **TRAINING**

The importance placed on health and safety training is illustrated by Mansell winning the Health and Safety (Major Contractor) Award in 2010. It has also gained seven RoSPA Gold Awards plus three Gold Medals, one President's Award and five Orders of Distinction.

To make sure the training is effective, the company conducts surveys at the end of each course to get feedback from those who took part. Lynne says:



When people go on a training course,
we survey them to learn how they found it.

The problem with the old survey method was that everything was paper-based. Course attendees manually completed a training questionnaire, which was generally looked at in isolation and then placed on the employee's file. Any larger survey, including comparing and evaluating all responses from the same course, meant transcribing the questionnaire details in order to be able to analyse them.

CHOOSING A BETTER OPTION

To try to overcome the problem and find a better solution, Lynne researched the cost of the alternatives. In the end, the choice of survey tool was fairly straightforward because the decision was taken to use Key Survey, the same application that was successfully employed by world-class infrastructure services business Balfour Beatty, Mansell's parent company. Lynne explains:



We were aware that Balfour Beatty used it and we are part of the group. So, rather than scouring the market to see what's available, we decided to use what our parent company has.



We originally used it for a specific training course in order to trial the system. On completion of the course, we sent out the questionnaires by email and asked the attendees to complete it. We started on a small scale to get feedback from people.

The general process is that training evaluation questions are devised for each course in order to find out how people rated it and if it met their objectives. Once everything is set up, the survey is opened and the questionnaires are generated. Lynne comments:



We send them out by importing all the attendees' email addresses and we set up an automatic reminder to chase responses or we send reminders manually. On completion, we close the survey, then I export the data and present it in a way I want to see it.

Customising

CUSTOMISING INPUT AND OUTPUT

Survey results are exported as CSV format so they can be imported into Excel.



I start creating my graphs out of that. I then share the data with other people to show how successful the course has been.

Although each survey is different, the templates available for Key Survey have been used to simplify the process. Lynne explains:



We try to compare like with like, so we started off with an overall template and now we've got a few different ones. But we've only taken the one baseline and then amended it from there. When we first set up the package, we managed to get all our Mansell branding and logos into it.

So when it lands on the recipient's desk, it looks all nice and standardised to us rather than to Key Survey. I use that template and keep amending it as I need to do. I keep using it and saving it as something else if I want to make changes.

Key Survey continues to be used by the Human Resources team to improve employee development. Although utilised mainly to assess the effectiveness of training courses, it has also been used for a larger project that surveyed some 200 employees to obtain their thoughts on a specific subject.



The application will be open to people if they want to do that again next time around this year. We may also extend its use within time but only for the right programmes.

Online Data

ONLINE DATA COLLECTION BENEFITS

Many of the surveys are now conducted online but the nature of the business means that this isn't always practicable. Lynne says:



We only do this for people who have got an email address. A lot of our staff, because we're a construction company, are out on site. They won't necessarily have time when they're back in their day job and are on site trying to put up a building. They may have problems due to customer concerns or with a sub-contractor and they may not be able to go online to the system.

Key Survey's flexibility means that surveys can be conducted by a mixture of methods, which in Mansell's case means that some questionnaires go out by email while others are completed at the end of the course.



When we have people along to health and safety training, they don't leave the room until they've filled in their evaluation. Also, we're such a large company that we have to restrict the types of course for which we use the application. We generally use it for the higher level development of courses where we want to pull lots of data together.

Mansell has taken advantage of Key Survey's wide range of methods for distributing surveys and collecting responses. It uses it as an online data collection tool where possible and reverts to paper-based collection in other cases. WorldAPP does provide the facility to scan paper questionnaires and combine their content in electronic form, avoiding the need to key in the data.

TRAINING AND SUPPORT

Key Survey's ease of use means that Lynne has not required any formal training. She says:



I spoke to the account manager at some point, who showed me how to use the system.

She has also used the online chat facility a couple of times to obtain help. Lynne remarks:



On one occasion, I couldn't remember how to do something. I lost my way and they guided me through it. It's quite effective and it's immediate.

Having benefited from using Key Survey in the first year, Mansell had no hesitation in renewing its subscription for a further year. The product's comprehensive features and flexibility mean it offers the possibility for additional surveys and research. The company intends to continue to use the application to measure and improve the effectiveness of its training, helping it to obtain further health and safety awards in the future.