



CASE STUDY Albany Fire Department



Fire Department Simplifies Training Management with Vector LMS

When you hear "Albany," you likely think of Albany, New York. However, in this article we would like to introduce you to the fine men and women of the [Albany Fire Department](#) in Albany, OR. The city is the county seat of Linn County and is located in the Willamette Valley, just northeast of Corvallis, OR and south of Salem, OR.

The department provides fire and emergency response to the Albany community of approximately 56,000 people and in 2019, the department celebrated its 150th anniversary. In addition to responding to fire incidents, the department also provides EMS services, hazardous materials response, water rescue, technical rescue, fire investigation services, community fire safety inspections, and public education.

Supporting Customers to Ensure Success

With a team of over 80, not including office staff, staying on top of training requirements and license renewals is no easy task. The department's Administrative Assistant, Kate Hennessy, who has been with the department for six years, said she relies on [Vector LMS](#), a training management platform, formerly known as TargetSolutions, to manage, assign, and track training for the entire department.

Before implementing Vector LMS, the department utilized pen and paper record keeping and then utilized a different digital training solution. However, the department found it was unreliable, not user-friendly, and did not offer the customer service they needed to be successful in their training initiatives.

"There were things that they had set up at the dawn of time that were becoming obsolete, and as a result, it was nearly impossible to go in and modernize them for our purposes," Kate said.

As a result, the department implemented Vector LMS in 2018 at the recommendation of other local departments.

Kate, who wears "many hats" in her role, is responsible for the training management system, on top of a host of other responsibilities, for not only the Albany Fire Department but also for the City Emergency Manager.

"I help with grant writing, I do training, I manage the time sheets. It's pretty much a little bit of everything," Kate said. "It's lots of hats, lots of bosses."

While she doesn't typically lead the training herself, she is responsible for administering the LMS, arranging for training, offering support to users at the department who have questions, and generating training-related reports, among other things.

In 2018, Kate was involved in the implementation of Vector LMS and has since found that the customer service experience has been much improved compared to their previous solution.

"On the whole, customer service has been very good, people have been very responsive. We're able to get the things that we need out of the system, so that's been working very well," she said.

Simplifying and Streamlining Training Through Vector LMS

In addition to annual required training hours, the department also utilizes Vector LMS to track and monitor training during the onboarding and hiring process.

“Our employees really appreciate how quick and easy it is to record and check the training they’ve completed,”

— Kate Hennessy **Albany Fire Department**

“We put them through a four-to-six week academy and then I go into the LMS afterwards and input it into the system,” Kate said.

By capturing training from the very beginning of employment, the department is able to build holistic training records for each employee.

“Our employees really appreciate how quick and easy it is to record and check the training they’ve completed,” Kate said.

On the EMS side, the department makes use of the more than 250 hours of Commission on Accreditation for Pre-Hospital Continuing Education (CAPCE) accredited courses offered by Vector Solutions.

“Come EMS recertification time, our employees have really appreciated the CAPCE courses,” she said.

The department also utilizes the LMS for policy reviews, both at the department and city levels. The credentials system, which allows administrators to build lesson plans to automate required training, onboarding, license renewals, and more, has also been beneficial for the department. Through the solution, the department offers training to their firefighters, paramedics, and EMTs, in addition to other employees including the Fire Marshal and Deputy Fire Marshal, allowing them to keep all training-related records in one place.

In regards to records management, the built-in reporting functionality makes putting together training reports much more efficient for Kate, saving her time and speeding the process along for the leadership who request the reports.

When comparing her current experience with Vector LMS to the way the department previously handled training, Kate said the amount of time she spends managing their training program has been drastically reduced.

“It’s helped me tremendously,” she said. “It makes things so much faster and it takes me almost no time at all.”

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