

Case Study

SKY MESSAGING

South Africa's Largest Aerial Advertising Operator

Sky Messaging is an aerial advertising operator that employs patented banner-towing technology from bases in Cape Town and Johannesburg. While the organisation in itself is relatively small compared to mainstream aviation operators, Sky Messaging does comprise South Africa's largest fleet of commercially active PA18 Super Cub aircraft. The company employs and contracts a significant number of commercial fixed-wing flight and ground crew to execute all flight missions.

Both flight and ground crew are subjected to rigorous, recurrent and specialised training that is mandated by both Sky Messaging as well as the South African Civil Aviation Authority. Through Sky Messaging's thorough and qualitative approach, which extends deep into its training arena, Sky Messaging was awarded the South African Civil Aviation Authority's highest accolade in 2018, namely the "Aviation Safety Award".

Challenge:

With safety being the highest priority - as is commonplace in aviation - training costs can easily balloon and potentially encroach on commercial viability. Onboarding a single, fully-qualified commercial pilot costs the company 15 working days together with a sizeable investment. This investment sits in tension with the need to train flight crew to the high standards required to operate safely, which in turn drives a firm need for efficiency. Furthermore, with the expense of onboarding and the encompassing training, it is paramount for Sky Messaging to identify suitable and capable crew from the outset.



The training program primarily includes flight and ground crew onboarding and induction, aircraft differences, proficiency, type technical as well as standard operating procedure training, to name just a few. This case study will focus specifically on flight crew onboarding, aircraft differences as well as elements from the standard operating procedure training.

SKY MESSAGING Quick Facts

- Established 2009
- Specialised training: Pilot induction, aircraft differences (tailwheel), banner-tow rating, proficiency, type technical as well as standard operating procedures
- 2018 Winner for Aviation Safety and 2018 Finalist for Aviation Customer Service and Aviation Training Award
- Training in Cape Town & Johannesburg

Sky Messaging identified Skypiom’s Knowledge Management System as the ideal platform to add value in and address the following challenge areas:



Challenge 01 Recognise and highlight suitable candidates before commencing the onboarding process.



Challenge 02 Streamline the entire training program, thereby reducing training time and associated costs.




Challenge 03 Identify knowledge gaps before they become material problems.




Challenge 04 Highlight instructor skillset, including strengths and weaknesses.

Solution:



Given that Sky Messaging receives upward of 200 curriculum vitae when it posts a vacant flight crew position, the company implements the Skypiom Online Personality & Cognitive Ability Profiling Suite (SOPCAPS) to assess the candidate from a personality as well as cognitive ability perspective: a voucher is sent to the candidate instructing them to create a profile and complete the SOPCAPS assessment from the comfort of their home. Their profile is then compared to existing top performing

flight crew and applicants whose personality and cognitive ability traits vary beyond a predetermined acceptable limit, as set by Sky Messaging, are disqualified from the process. Interestingly, only approximately 34% of all applicants are sufficiently motivated to complete the assessment within the required timeframe, which as a result mitigates less serious applicants from proceeding further. The five closest matches are then scrutinised further by qualified staff, after which the ideal candidate is easily identified and subsequently onboarded.



Streamlining the training program was accomplished by creating relevant courses that addressed flight crew onboarding, aircraft differences as well as standard operating procedures. Flight crew were tasked with consuming courses in their own time followed by complex assessments. Through the Knowledge Management System’s granular reporting engine data is turned into information from which Sky Messaging can ascertain each learner’s knowledge

gaps as well as areas that require supplemental training, which is corroborated by an instructor. Further to this, trends are revealed, which even extend to content and assessment ambiguity. Content and assessments were revised based on the outcomes. If it was found that a question received a minimum number of incorrect answers, the content, the instructor facilitating the training as well as the question were subsequently examined and – if warranted – revised and retrained on, thereby driving continuous quality improvement.

Solution 03
 Knowledge gaps are accurately presented via the Knowledge Management System's granular reporting module and then touched on

again by the instructor on a one-on-one basis, preventing the learner from having to receive training on elements that they have demonstrated adequate competency in.

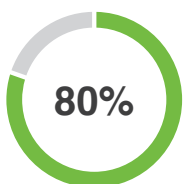
Solution 04
 Total quality management extends not only to learners and content, but also to instructors. This is why Sky Messaging evaluates its instructors

not only through feedback forms automatically generated on the KMS, but also based on learner results. Again, trends are showcased, which in turn are rectified by supplemental instructor training.

Conclusion:

SOPCAPS allows Sky Messaging to reduce the appointment of ill-suited crew from 42% to a low 14%, which not only saved the organisation significant amounts in financial resources but also mitigated the time spent on training less-befitting candidates.

Sky Messaging's training environment has seen drastic improvements pertaining to quality and effectiveness since implementing Skypiom's Knowledge Management System, whereby the return on expectation was calculated on flight and ground crew onboarding and induction as well as flight training, which comprises aircraft ground briefings (type technical and standard operating procedures), an introductory flight, aircraft training (differences, type rating and proficiencies), banner rating and the initial line check. Collectively, this was reduced by 80% (onboarding and induction) and 15% (flight training) respectively:



Onboarding & Induction Time Savings



Flight Training Time Savings

"The overall training was reduced from 15 to 9 working days, which brought with it an overall financial saving of 36%. This return has been consistent with expectations and we consider this a very strong return", says Anya Frey, Sky Messaging's

Quality and Safety Manager. *"Consistency, reproducibility and measurability are safeguarded and as a company we are in a position to make training decisions based on objective feedback rather than subjective guesswork".*