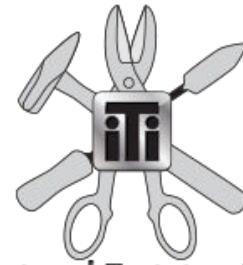


International Training Institute (ITI) Delivers Innovative Digital Training to Building Trades Apprentices



International Training Institute
For the Sheet Metal and Air Conditioning Industry

Key Successes

- Attracted a new generation of apprentices with innovative VR and simulation-based training.
- Expanded access to hands-on training at facilities lacking physical training labs.
- Enabled detailed assessment of apprentice proficiency with advanced tracking tools.
- Established a new, measurable standard for apprenticeship training and job readiness.

Summary

- More than 14,000 apprentices are registered at local training facilities (Joint Apprenticeship Training Committees or JATCs) in the United States and Canada.
- HVAC service is offered at approximately 65 JATCs, many of which lack the resources for a training lab
- The International Training Institute (ITI) partnered with Interplay Learning to provide modern, hands-on, virtual HVAC training at 90% of those JATCs
- Recruiters and organizers from the union used competency data from Interplay's data insights to expedite delivering qualified techs into the field.

About ITI

- ITI provides programs for training/retraining and develops training materials to improve sheet metal industry performance.
- Jointly sponsored by SMART, the International Association of Sheet Metal Air, Rail, and Transportation Workers.
- ITI oversees over 150 JATC locations, where apprentices enroll in 4-5 year programs to become journeypeople.

Training Goals

- Attract a younger generation of apprentices with engaging, modern training tools.
- Enhance the quality and accessibility of hands-on training across all JATCs.
- Standardize the measurement of apprentice skills and job readiness.
- Provide flexible learning paths and continuing education opportunities for apprentices.

Training Challenges

- Difficulty in recruiting younger apprentices in recent years.
- Limited capacity of traditional, instructor-led courses due to time and staffing constraints.
- Varying JATC sizes, with smaller facilities lacking physical training labs.
- Lack of tools to assess and verify the skills and experience of new apprentices.



Virtual Training Attracts Younger Recruits

When ITI program administrator Michael Harris first encountered an Interplay VR demo, he saw the strong value hands-on training could offer to SMART members and apprentices. JATC facilities vary dramatically in size, with some supporting as few as ten students and others supporting as many as 1,000.

Recruiting a younger generation of apprentices is an industry necessity, and hands-on learning and practice are essential to apprenticeships. The ability to visualize and troubleshoot complex scenarios is a challenge in smaller JATCs that lack training labs, but simulations offer a sophisticated answer that speaks to a generation of digital natives.

Empowering Apprenticeships with Digital Learning Tools

ITI partnered with Interplay Learning to deliver hands-on training to SMART apprentices and members at JATC locations nationwide, online through Interplay's platform. Intending to attract a new generation of apprentices, the organization hoped the technology would change how the workforce thinks about hands-on training.

Smaller JATCs can now offer comprehensive training, giving their members and apprentices experience parallel to what they might receive in a service lab. They can also earn continuing education credits in 21 specialty areas. With Interplay's suite of engagement and reporting tools, ITI can now more easily assess, train, and manage their growing number of apprentices, all in one place. They can direct student learning paths, track progress, and exercise control over content.

"We've seen hundreds of VR products. We always ask if they add value or if they're just cool. You can spend a lot of money on something that's just cool, but offers no real value. When we saw the Interplay VR demo, we could see how it would enhance training and learning retention for our members."

— Mike Harris

Driving Recruitment and Setting New Training Standards

Recruiters successfully attracted a new generation of digital-first apprentices by leveraging simulations and VR training, making apprenticeship programs more appealing to younger audiences. JATC locations were able to offer comprehensive technical, hands-on training in facilities where it was previously not possible, overcoming limitations due to space and resources.

The expanded Interplay Learning catalog provided a wider range of training options for SMART apprentices and members while giving instructors greater control to direct and oversee classes, manage student progress, and customize learning paths. This approach established a new, measurable standard for defining job readiness, enhancing the overall effectiveness and reach of the apprenticeship programs.

The comprehensive course offerings that JATCs are now offering SMART members and apprentices through Interplay give them access to more opportunities and faster, more powerful learning tools. At the same time, ITI is endowed with a compelling recruiting tool and sophisticated custom training. JATCs of all sizes can provide hands-on learning opportunities that are unrestricted by their available physical resources. Instructors have more control in assigning learning paths and observing students' progress and development, elevating the standards for the upcoming workforce.

"Virtual training gives students the ability to see things from a perspective they typically can't and helps them understand. For example, when you look at an HVAC system with exposed ducts, you have no idea what's going on inside, but with VR, now you can see right inside!" — Mike Harris.

Schedule time with a training expert to learn more.

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