

Issues & Trends

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ArvinMeritor Product Training and Service Learning System:

Technical Training for Heavy-Duty Truck and Trailer Technicians Blends Online and Instructor Led Learning

If you say ArvinMeritor to a fleet owner, chances are he'll think of the many fine drivetrain, braking, trailer, and electronic vehicle control products the company manufactures for the commercial vehicle industry around the globe. If you say ArvinMeritor to a service technician, chances are just as good he'll think of the company's broad offering of product maintenance training.

That's because ArvinMeritor has been a leader in providing product training for its commercial vehicle products to industry service technicians for decades. In 2007, the heavy-duty component supplier expanded this training with the introduction of ArvinMeritor Product Training and Service web site, a new blended training offering for dealer and fleet technicians.

A Long History of Valuable Training

Training has always been an important part of ArvinMeritor's program to support

its dealer and fleet technicians. However, in the early days of the industry, trucks were simpler and training was considered more as a solution to a specific problem than as a proactive tool to save money and prevent downtime. Most component suppliers provided maintenance manuals for drivetrain, brakes, and trailer components, which were the staple of training departments. Field representatives worked with fleets to help them with individual issues.

As heavy-duty components became more sophisticated during the 1980s and 1990s, dealer and fleet technicians required more guidance in identifying and troubleshooting component issues. The industry's offering of training materials expanded to include more troubleshooting guides. As it became practical to use VHS, this tool was incorporated into the training mix. Vocational education was seen as an excellent conduit to helping technicians learn about maintenance and repair

methods. Classroom field training of fleet technicians picked up.

During the last decade, training has evolved to include not only maintenance and troubleshooting manuals and field training, but also self-guided learning on CD, DVD and the internet. The industry's training offering has come from being an as-needed effort in support of dealer and fleet technicians to being an integral part of the supplier's offering to customers.

Training Today

Technology has not only helped the trucking industry evolve to new levels of efficiency and cost effectiveness, but it also has helped those involved with technical training keep pace with the many changes that have occurred in the industry, also. But keeping technicians current on the variety of drive axle, brake, clutch, transmission, trailer, and electronic vehicle control systems available today is a daunting task for dealers and fleets, which are feeling the pinch of competition and the challenge of worker diversity.

ArvinMeritor Product Training and Services Website

To help educate fleet and dealer technicians on the service, repair and diagnostics of current and new Meritor branded products, the company has developed a product training and service website designed to help fleet and dealer technicians identify and solve component problems more efficiently than before. The online website is designed to work as a blended program that incorporates elements of self-guided online learning and instructor led classroom training to provide a cost-effective, hybrid learning experience that promotes knowledge and skill retention better than either type alone.

It is designed as a systematic course to train dealer and fleet technicians on each Meritor product in every product group. In addition to technician training, the system will offer, aftermarket parts, driver, salesperson, and warranty administration training courses.

The ArvinMeritor online site also will also offer Virtual Classroom Training. Live technical training, service update, and sales training will be conducted on an as needed basis via the web. Dealer and fleet personnel can view the live presentation and submit questions or if they miss the live presentation, the sessions will be archived for later viewing.

Curriculum Teaches, Builds on Basics

The training curriculum is divided into three categories: truck, trailer and bus and coach products. Each of these categories contains two levels of learning.

Online Learning – At the level-one stage, technicians progress through a series of four modules that teach them how to identify/describe the Meritor product, proper component/system operation, preventive maintenance and symptom diagnostics.

The symptom diagnostic modules includes full-motion video, animations and still images to help the technicians assimilate information as quickly as possible and a series of tactile "Apply It" opportunities, in which they use their computer mouse to increase the level of learning through interactivity.

ArvinMeritor currently has approximately 66 online courses that cover the company's full range of products for the commercial vehicle market. More are scheduled for release later in 2008-9.

Instructor-Led Training – Once the technicians are trained in the basics through online learning, level-two training provides an opportunity to gain hands-on experience diagnosing and repairing components and systems at a regional training center or at the place of business and under the guidance of ArvinMeritor technical experts. This allows them to touch, feel and “taste” the components and systems on which they will be working.

To help minimize travel for technicians, ArvinMeritor has partnered with 11 of the nation’s best trade schools in North America. This allows ArvinMeritor to provide the best instructor-led training at a convenient location that has appropriate service bays, tools and other equipment. It also helps ensure the very best environment to help technicians learn to properly identify, repair and perform preventive maintenance on the Meritor components with which they will be working regularly.

Sales Training for Heavy-Duty Truck and Trailer Sales Professionals

To help educate dealer sales personnel on the basics of Meritor products, product offerings, product features and benefits, the product training and service website includes sales training courses. These Product Overview courses currently cover, steer axle, drive axle, driveline, trailer, brake, and electronic vehicle control systems products. The online website is designed to work as a blended program. The dealer salesperson completes the Product Overview courses and the ArvinMeritor District Manager follows up with in-person supportive training. This hybrid learning experience provides a cost-effective training delivery process that promotes knowledge and skill retention better than either type alone.

Skills Programs Build Knowledge, Experience

Competition can bring out the best in people. That’s why ArvinMeritor’s training organization has a long history of participation in vocational skills development programs and technical competitions organized by industry associations and fleets. Involvement not only allows ArvinMeritor technical experts to share knowledge and build skills in participants, but it also provides an opportunity for participating students and industry technicians to interact with high-level component supplier and OEM engineers, executives and fleet personnel to gain knowledge and forge relationships to further their learning.

Some of the skills competitions in which ArvinMeritor participates include:

SkillsUSA – The company has a long-standing relationship with SkillsUSA (formerly the Vocational Industrial Clubs of America), providing new components, training materials, competition support and leadership on a local, regional and national level. The organization’s most immediate national president is John Hinesley, an ArvinMeritor executive who has been involved with SkillsUSA at all levels for more than two decades.

TMC SuperTech – ArvinMeritor also strongly supports The Technology and Maintenance Council’s SuperTech competition by providing technical support and product for the event’s brakes and drive axle skills stations. ArvinMeritor periodically adds new products to the competition and cycles past years’ competition components to trade schools with which the company has an established relationship.

FedEx Top Wrench – This competition, created and managed by Federal Express, uses technical troubleshooting, repair and maintenance information supplied by ArvinMeritor through its National Account Representative, to test the skills of FedEx's service technicians. The company provides brake and ABS products and has written procedures used by FedEx in the competition.

Ryder Top Tech – This competition, created and managed by Ryder Truck Rental, uses technical troubleshooting, repair and maintenance information supplied by ArvinMeritor to test the skills of Ryder's service technicians. ArvinMeritor provides brake and axle products for the

competition and has written procedures used by Ryder in the competition.

Conclusion

The ArvinMeritor online website training was established to provide the commercial vehicle industry with a comprehensive learning curriculum to provide product knowledge and skills training required of today's commercial vehicle technicians at the dealer and fleet level. It incorporates the latest, most effective online and instructor led tools available in adult education into a system designed to ultimately create the commercial vehicle industry's best technicians.

To schedule training, please consult with your local ArvinMeritor district manager.

If you'd like more information on this topic, or for copies of other Issues & Trends, contact ArvinMeritor Marketing Communications at 248/435-1933, fax to 248/435-9946, e-mail david.pennington@arvinmeritor.com, or visit our web site at: www.arvinmeritor.com

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