

UPSKILLING TO DISRUPT VISION CARE

THE CHALLENGE

Leading vision care innovation amidst a tech talent shortage

Rapidly adopting new technology has been a cornerstone of 1-800 Contacts since the company's founding. Its disruptions to vision care were first supported with a call center and now include a best-in-class mobile app, a first-to-market mobile try-on experience, and, most recently, a virtual prescription renewal service called ExpressExam.

"We love to go into the industry and see where we can make big changes," says Team Lead Kirk Graves.

But continuous innovation requires a steady stream of skilled workers capable of keeping up on the latest technologies. To address this challenge, leadership at 1-800 Contacts looked to elevate existing talent to the IT org.

Says Senior Software Engineer and instructor Yessenia Figueroa, "At 1-800 Contacts we have the desire to diversify. We have found that many of our IT gurus have started in the call center. So, we approached different types of people interested in expanding their knowledge." She explains how they identified a possible solution to both the tech talent shortage and the lack of diversity in IT: a formalized path from the call center to a career in technology.

WHO THEY ARE:

As the original disruptor of the vision industry, 1-800 Contacts has spent 25 years working to make vision care simple and affordable. Its recent telehealth product, ExpressExam, allows customers to renew vision prescriptions online, "at home, in your sweatpants, without talking to anybody."

1800-CONTACTS BY THE NUMBERS



Headquartered in Utah, U.S.



Nearly 20M followers



Founded in a dorm room in 1995

STAYING AT THE FOREFRONT REQUIRES STRATEGY

"We know that there's massive disruption happening in healthcare in general and we're doing a lot at the forefront of that, which is very exciting."

- Amy Larson, Chief Technology Officer, 1-800 Contacts

THE SOLUTION

CTAC University, an in-house skills bootcamp supercharged by Pluralsight

CTAC University—named after the company’s old stock ticker symbol, CTAC—consists of in-person classes supplemented with Pluralsight courses and skill assessments in key technologies for the company’s future objectives.

Kirk says pairing the program with Pluralsight was a no brainer. “We could either spend lots of money sending people off to training, or we could implement Pluralsight.”

“We particularly like to use the channels,” says Chris Wilsher, Director of Enterprise Software Development. “They help teams to really focus in... and allow people to learn at their own pace. Pluralsight allows them to get more hands on in their own time.”

Yessenia uses Pluralsight both in her instructor role with CTAC-U and in her day-to-day job functions.

She says, “Having a tool like Pluralsight, where the content is curated and prepared with the correct information, it feels like I’m going more spot-on to the information that I need to learn, instead of chasing my tail searching around online.”

Chris adds, “The thing that’s always impressed us about Pluralsight is the quality of the content. And as we’ve watched the platform evolve over the years, it’s become so much easier to consume that quality content when you need it and where you need it.”

WHAT WE’RE LEARNING:

- ANGULAR**
- C#**
- HTML**
- CSS**

THE KEY BENEFITS OF PLURALSIGHT FOR 1-800 CONTACTS



STEADY TALENT STREAM

At the end of each CTAC-U cohort the company will have skilled tech talent to place on key projects.



COST SAVINGS

Pluralsight replaces in-person training and workshops with on-demand learning customized to each person’s skill level.



ENGAGED EMPLOYEES

From the call center to the tech org, employees feel valued and motivated to help the company thrive as the company shows investment in them.



SPEEDIER TO MARKET

1-800 Contacts continues to innovate for customers by quickly building transformative vision care solutions thanks to on-demand skill development.

SPEEDING UP WITHOUT SACRIFICE

“We’re all about wanting to move faster, but with quality. That’s one of the huge benefits in using Pluralsight. It’s allowed us to get up to speed quicker and move faster.”

- Chris Wilsher, Director of Enterprise Software Development, 1-800 Contacts

THE RESULTS

Teeing up talent for future innovation

Kirk says Pluralsight analytics are helping build better teams within 1-800 Contacts.

“As people progress, we can take that to our IT managers and say, ‘Here’s somebody who might be a really good fit.’ ”

With the right people on the right projects—and the ability to get up to speed on crucial skills anytime and from anywhere—1-800 Contacts has a dev team that can move quickly to make the big changes the company is known for. They recently pulled off an upgrade to their website and built ExpressExam by upskilling from AngularJS to Angular

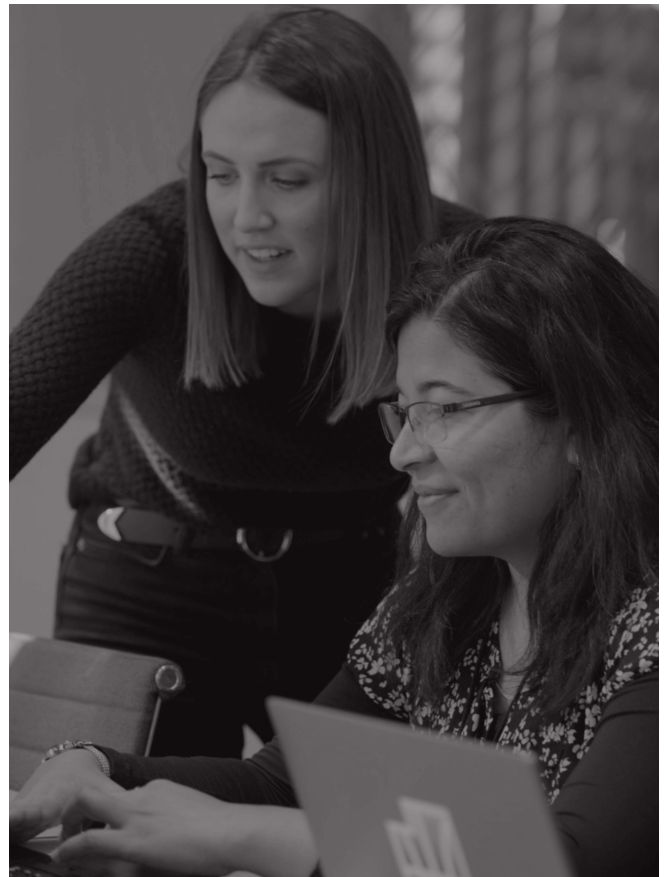
“CTAC-U and Pluralsight are improving our technology skills in order to help the business grow,” says Yessenia. “People are more engaged, they ask more questions, they become more comfortable with the material.”

CTO Amy Larson says, “We see tremendous benefits from having this pipeline.”

Want to increase the speed of innovation at your organization?

Learn more.

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CREATING OPPORTUNITIES TO CONTRIBUTE TO COMPANY-WIDE SUCCESS

“The business benefit of CTAC-U at 1-800 Contacts is that we diversify our culture. When we have a more diverse IT department, we are better able to share our knowledge.”

- Yessenia Figueroa, Senior Software Engineer and CTAC instructor, 1-800 Contacts