

# CUSTOMER PROFILE

PUBLIC SECTOR

LAWSON LEARNING AT CARPENTERSVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT



## Lawson Learning Accelerator Spells Success for Illinois School District

### Overview

Illinois-based Carpentersville School District leverages Lawson Learning Accelerator to quickly and efficiently train, test, and support end users on Lawson and non-Lawson software applications.

"Learning should be fun. If you just purchase learning products off the shelf, they're going to be developed according to someone else's criteria. Learning Accelerator allows us to customize learning, so our staff can have fun while they're learning."

**Eric Willard**  
Chief Technology Officer



## Carpentersville School District

The Carpentersville School District, located in the far northwest suburbs of Chicago, serves a diverse population living in 15 villages and cities throughout three counties. The district has 27 elementary, charter, middle and high schools across 122 square miles. As one of the state's second largest districts in terms of student count, Carpentersville School District has 2,500 staff members and 20,000 students – numbers the district anticipates will double within the next 10 years.

## Carpentersville and Lawson

In preparation for such growth, the district sought to update legacy information technology. When the district began searching for a new educational software solution to improve information quality and reduce administrative costs, a nationwide bid produced Lawson. "When we launched three years ago, we immediately found that training on Lawson solutions was wonderful," says Dr. Cheryl Crates, chief financial officer for the district.

After adding two schools in a year, with plans to open and staff more schools in the future, training and re-training issues began to arise. To address these issues, the district looked for a product that would handle its knowledge and skills-learning training requirements.

## Lawson Learning Accelerator

Upon reviewing a variety of authoring tools, the district chose Lawson Learning Accelerator for many reasons, according to Chief Technology Officer Eric Willard. "One reason is that Lawson Learning Accelerator comes from a lineage of quality. It's technologically sound. It fits our infrastructure, as well as what we're trying to do technically."

Lawson Learning Accelerator is a solution that comes exclusively from Lawson Learning. While providing customers end-to-end Lawson expertise, Lawson Learning continually invests in services and technology to help customers reduce the time to implement, lower cost of ownership, and improve the value of using Lawson products.

## Simplifies – and Speeds – Training

"One of the challenges school districts face specifically in learning is the whole issue of time. Teachers have contracts to work for a certain number of hours per days and days per year. Anyone in education realizes this is just the tip of the iceberg; most teachers put in an awful lot of their own personal time, doing work outside the classroom. Learning Accelerator allows us to develop courses that provide teachers and administrative staff members the flexibility to learn in their own way, at their own pace, and in their own time," says Willard.

Learning Accelerator can customize learning according to user role and workflows by capturing and reproducing user activity within the application. This feature was another reason the district chose Lawson. According to Willard, "Learning should be fun. If you just purchase learning products off the shelf, they're going to be developed according to someone else's criteria. Learning Accelerator allows us to customize learning, so our staff can have fun while they're learning."



The Learning Accelerator authoring system allows the district to create a variety of training options, including e-learning lessons, assessments, online help, and printed documentation. They may create all of the outputs through a single Learning Accelerator authoring session, streamlining the development and ongoing maintenance of their content.

Simulations created by Lawson Learning Accelerator address a variety of learning styles with audio, written, and hands-on elements. Ultimately, it offers training efficiency by enabling self-directed study at the learner's pace. Learners may access the training when and how they want it — with no risk to the district's production environment.

By basing their lessons on realistic user roles and workflows, the district achieves a quick transfer of skills into the job. Ross King, systems analyst for the district, adds, "One of the nice things about Learning Accelerator is that it allows people to go through training programs whenever they want from their desks. Plus, it's an excellent product because it works with any system. You don't have to have Lawson. You can use it with a student system or your finance system — however you choose."

For added convenience, Learning Accelerator allows learners to validate their proficiency and "test out" of user training by completing the test element of a Learning Accelerator course. Trainers may then use an assessment tool to determine whether the learning is being absorbed, as well as how to tailor training to meet specific goals.

## Lawson Professional Services Speeds Success

Learning Accelerator tools, including Developer, Style Editor, and Glossary Creator, helped the district design, create, and publish a complete learning program to support their applications roll-out. In addition, the district leveraged Lawson Professional Services resources and expertise, which Programmer Analyst Fred Kobos says was instrumental in getting the district and its employees up and running on Learning Accelerator. For example, he explains, as Lawson presented the application during user groups, "You could just see the eyes pop open among attendees across departments as they realized the many ways they could use Learning Accelerator."

"Lawson consultants have definite value. They know the product. They know how it works. They know the little ins and outs. And, unlike non-Lawson consultants, they have the contacts within Lawson to get the answers they need, fast," says Kobos.

"We've been very pleased with the services that we have acquired from Lawson. I would encourage other districts of like size and complexity to look at Lawson Learning Accelerator for their future needs," says Superintendent Dr. Kenneth Arndt.

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## A Partnership for Progress

With Lawson Learning Accelerator in place, the district realizes a faster transfer of skills on the job, which translates to a faster, measurable return on their Lawson investment.

"Learning Accelerator is a Lawson add-on product, but it isn't a Lawson-only product," explains Crates. "The functionality of Learning Accelerator begins with our Lawson business office products. But then it can blossom out to our student and teacher training for their software as well."

The district is looking forward to a long partnership with Lawson as the company continues to maintain, enhance, and develop Lawson Learning Accelerator. "You not only need the product, but you need the company behind it," says Willard. "We do know that change is a constant. And as technology changes, with a company like Lawson behind Learning Accelerator, the product will continue to change to meet our needs."