

## Can You Beat the ABB Reliability Challenge?

In order to attract a younger generation to maintenance, a field where the skilled workers are rapidly reaching retirement, you need something that makes it “cool.” What better way to appeal to the video-gaming generation than with an online training tool that “talks the talk” of the target audience, yet teaches the lessons of previous generations? In creating an online video game, users will get an understanding of what it takes to run a plant in a fun, challenging, and pleasantly addicting way.

The Maintenance Crisis, or the retirement of skilled workers and the missing generation of replacements, is growing. Meanwhile, the video game revolution has America’s future workforce glued to the couch in order to reach one objective: winning.

How can you align that mentality to the real world when life is often more complicated than just passing a series of phases, to get to the top? By merging this generation’s now chosen form of entertainment with online training, you get the best of both worlds: something that appeals to America’s future workforce and teaches them how – and hopefully why – they should “apply here.”

A critical aspect of the inception of the ABB Reliability Challenge was to not only make maintenance and reliability sexy, but also create a fresh learning experience that could be easily accessible to multiple people in multiple plants. By interactively experiencing maintenance decisions, users are able to see how their choices affect customer satisfaction, equipment effectiveness, morale and profit.



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The game’s success is in its ability to build an understanding of how to run a plant successfully by having users face dilemmas from the factory floor up through the boardroom. Moreover, it shows the dangers of firefighting and the consequences of unplanned maintenance.

This not only is an appealing exercise for future maintenance leaders, but also is generating success as existing employees are competing against one another for the bragging rights to the top score. This is providing an opportunity to both increase their maintenance and reliability knowledge while confirming an existing expertise by achieving record-breaking scores.

While many training tools currently exist, there needed to be something that built on these concepts but generated a new appeal. Finding a way to give users the opportunity to become Plant Managers for a day and understand all it took to run a plant – now that would be cool. The introduction of iPhone applications already demonstrated that fun games can teach important lessons.

Creating an online video game to teach these lessons gets both the existing workforce and a new generation caught up in an exciting, educational training.

As part of ABB's continuous improvement process, the game has been incorporated into training sessions to provide a more interactive environment which fosters better retention.

The return on investment is infinite: a free training exercise that only requires a small amount of your time. And what do you get as a result?

- A new generation of interested workers.
- A free training opportunity for everyone in your plant.
- A fundamental understanding of reliability basics that can be applied at your plant starting today.

“Will this game encourage future generations to dream of becoming maintenance professionals when they grow up? Hopefully. Maybe it's time for our favorite video game characters to don hard hats and show the world who the real heroes are,” said Alexis Gajewski, Associate Editor, Digital Media.