Boeing Begins Training 21,000 Managers Nationwide Using DigitalXpress Satellite Broadcast Services

The task of training more than 21,000 managers nationwide is a daunting one. But with the help of DigitalXpress, a direct-broadcast satellite company, The Boeing Company today begins linking participating employees from 62 learning sites at 25 geographical locations across the nation.

DigitalXpress is a provider of high-quality, low-cost satellite-to-desktop digital video, audio and data information distribution systems for business, education, employee communication and other client needs.

The Boeing Center for Leadership and Learning (BCLL) in Seattle today is airing the first in a series of live-broadcast, interactive management training workshops. Called "Taking Care of Business," the workshops include a moderator, speakers, live dramatization built around case studies, commentators, and live questions and answers. Key Boeing senior executives are scheduled to participate in person and on video during the six-month run of the workshops.

DigitalXpress, using its XpressVideo service, is extending the Boeing Education Network's (BEN) televised educational programming to company facilities throughout the continental United States. Participating BEN locations are equipped with a small, low-cost antenna and integrated receiver/decoder and secure transmission signal.

Programming originating from KCTS-TV studios in Seattle is broadcast digitally from DigitalXpress operations center in St. Paul, Minn., to a commercial satellite transponder. Programming is downlinked to the Boeing sites for the training program.

BCLL was given the task of training more than 20,000 managers worldwide with information from a series of executive sessions. How was the best way to do that? It was determined that training -- delivered by satellite -- would be the most efficient method. DigitalXpress was contracted by BCLL to carry out this effort.

Participant feedback was positive following beta testing this summer of the broadcast system with a two-day interactive televised workshop to 1,000 Boeing managers, said David Dunnington, new business development manager for Broadcast Services, part of Boeing Commercial Space Company.

Rather than using a boring a watch-and-listen-only approach, the interactive program -- televised across the nation to Boeing sites with DigitalXpress downlinks -- was found by participants to be engaging and stimulating.

The two-day course also will be delivered by DigitalXpress to an international audience of Boeing managers beginning in April 1998. The "Taking Care of Business" course will be taken by managers at five sites in Great Britain, Germany, Japan, the Peoples Republic of China and Australia.

"DigitalXpress is a natural fit for us," said Tom Fideler, distance learning manager for BCLL. "When we were assigned the task back in February of training managers in this course, we knew we'd be dealing with a larger workforce after the merger with McDonnell Douglas.

"Distance learning was the answer. DigitalXpress was instrumental in assisting us in setting up the sites."

On Aug. 5, DigitalXpress broadcast the Boeing - McDonnell Douglas merger kickoff activities to more than 150,000 employees at 58 Boeing sites in 16 states and Canada. The direct-broadcast satellite company also has supplied customers such as Nike, United Artists Theaters and Arthur Andersen with video, video-based training and data transmission capabilities.

DigitalXpress was co-founded by Boeing Commercial Space Co., Conus Communications and Computing Devices International.

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