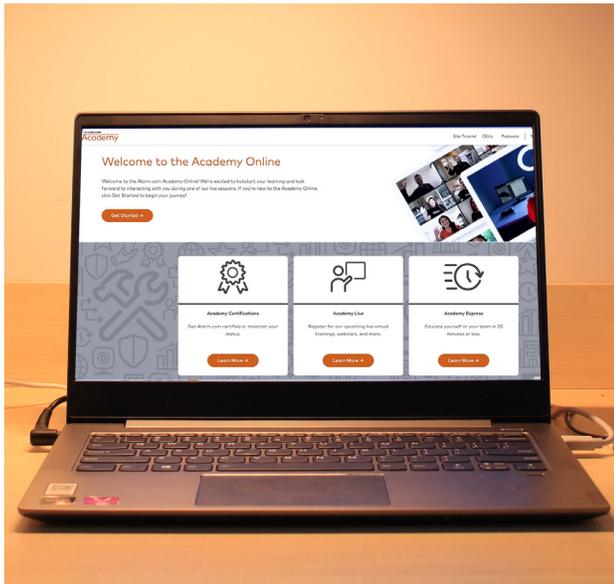# Alarm.com Academy Leads to Monumental Growth in Partner Education and Engagement

Previous LMS failed to deliver the support and partnership Alarm.com found with Skilljar

"Having worked with many LMSs including Absorb, Docebo, and Workday, I can say that partnership, support, and innovation are what differentiate Skilljar in the industry."
— Katie Bernal, Sr. Director, Partner Education & Development Programs, Alarm.com

CHALLENGE

The education team at Alarm.com focuses on partner education and enablement, selling their products through a network of service providers. The team ensures their partners can effectively sell, install, and support Alarm.com products and services and deliver an exceptional experience for their customers (end-users).

In the early days, Alarm.com had a training program that mostly consisted of monthly two-day, in-person trainings, where they covered sales and marketing, as well as technical

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INDUSTRY
Security systems, remote monitoring

EMPLOYEES
1,500+

HEADQUARTERS
Tysons, VA

WEBSITE
www.alarm.com

TRAINING PORTAL
Alarm.com Academy
Powered by Skilljar

TOP METRICS
Since switching to Skilljar:
- Course catalog has increased by over 400%
- 440,000+ course registrations
- 14,000 Alarm.com Certified Technicians - and counting!

Since relaunching their certification program in Q1 2022:
- 1,216 new certifications (March - October)
- 80% increase in Certified Techs maintaining their certification YOY

PREVIOUS LMS
Absorb

INTEGRATIONS
- Salesforce
- Webex
- Cvent
- Zoom

ABOUT ALARM.COM
Alarm.com Partner Portal and app is the leading platform for the intelligently connected property. Millions of consumers and businesses depend on Alarm.com's technology to manage and control their property from anywhere.

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and support subject areas. As their company grew, they quickly realized they needed a more scalable solution.

They used an LMS to host a limited number of courses while ramping up and building programs such as the Alarm.com Certified Technician program. Their previous LMS had very limited functionality and lacked the necessary guidance they were looking for. They needed a true partner to support their vision for growth.

Alarm.com's goals in switching to an improved LMS were to:

- Improve consumption/activity among partners using their content and educational platform
- Launch a brand new certification program to help reduce support burden, increase engagement, and increase product adoption rates
- Impact business operations and revenue through increased utilization of their resources and tools
- Broaden their content offering by providing partners with ways to reduce customer attrition and increase their attachment rates through education
- Scale their offering through Virtual Instructor-Led Training (VILT), additional certifications, and a new professional services offering

SOLUTION

Advice to LMS seekers or switchers

"I would encourage anyone looking for an LMS to consider Skilljar. It's so much more than just integrations and a working platform. Their partnership and culture – how happy, positive, and engaging their team is – has really made our relationship with them successful."
— Katie Bernal

Katie Bernal is the Senior Director of Partner Education & Development Programs at Alarm.com. She joined Alarm.com in 2013, tasked with building a comprehensive educational program to support all of Alarm.com's dealer partners. She is responsible for ensuring that partners have the educational resources and knowledge that they need to be successful in selling, supporting, and servicing their customers.

Mary Kidd is the Systems Manager for the Customer Operations team at Alarm.com. She has led eight software implementations, built the operational framework for Alarm.com's first certification program, and worked with leadership to launch their award-winning customer training program.

Their efforts have resulted in a decrease in support calls, an increase in product feature adoption, and an increase in partners implementing best practices for their businesses.

"We place a high value on training and providing self-service and self-enablement options for our customers. Training allows our partners to grow their businesses by selling more and retaining their customers. It's a mutually beneficial relationship between our training and our partners."
— Mary Kidd

After evaluating 10-15 other LMSs, Alarm.com chose Skilljar.
Alarm.com switched to Skilljar to establish a

"What really convinced us that Skilljar was the right LMS for us was the support; the Customer Success and Implementation teams are so attentive to our needs. One of Skilljar's major selling points and value adds is their support teams."
— Mary Kidd, Systems Manager, Customer Operations, Alarm.com

multi-faceted educational platform including live instructor-led training (virtual and in-person), recorded webinars, podcasts, asynchronous courses, and certifications. They focus on providing the right type of learning to technicians, sales people, customer support, and operations teams.

Over time, especially through the COVID-19 pandemic, the Alarm.com Academy expanded into more virtual opportunities, including online courses and virtual instructor-led sessions. The Alarm.com Academy had a very quick

"Skilljar has helped us immensely with building out our virtual programs during COVID-19. The amount of integrations they offer has been key. We love how responsive Skilljar is to our suggestions and needs. We feel heard and that Skilljar is here to help us grow and build!"
— Mary Kidd

implementation turnaround. The [Salesforce](#) and Webex integrations came at later phases so they could get the platform live as soon as possible. (Skilljar advises a [crawl, walk, run approach](#) to launching a customer education platform.)

Advice to LMS seekers or switchers cont'd

Here is Katie's advice for anyone looking to start up a new training program or switch to an improved LMS.

Know your needs. Working with or reviewing different LMSs (including Absorb, Docebo, and Workday Learning) has helped us realize what features we needed. Some features are only unique to a specific platform so it's important to know your needs and select the platform that can best fulfill them, so they don't have to develop it from scratch.

Identify at least one project manager to take ownership over contact with vendors, allocating resources, communicating to stakeholders, preparing implementation timelines, defining scope, etc.

Take your time and provide plenty of notice to all stakeholders. The RFP process will likely take around six months, if not longer. Migrating will take anywhere from 2-6+ months depending on your requirements, integration needs, and content volume. Don't rush the process. Compromises will need to be made, but outside of key/deal-breaker requirements, ensuring that the company you choose will partner with you is most important.

Create a robust and comprehensive needs assessment to share with vendors off the bat. This will help to eliminate useless meetings – if a platform cannot meet your needs, they should let you know instead of scheduling a demo that won't go anywhere.

"Our implementation manager at Skilljar made the process of rebuilding and configuring the integration with our Partner Portal as smooth as possible. The support of the implementation team from start-to-finish was indicative of the ongoing support and partnership we received throughout our entire time with Skilljar."
— Katie Bernal

RESULTS

"We've been able to showcase and demonstrate the impact of our training in lowering support interactions and call volume as well as increasing product adoption."
— Mary Kidd

Usage of Alarm.com's training by external customers was low until they had the opportunity to build out their platform and content.

Since switching to Skilljar:
- Course catalog has increased by over 400%
- They've had 440,000+ course registrations
- There are currently 14,000 Alarm.com Certified Technicians - and counting!

Through the end of 2021:
- Total Course Completions = ~80,000
- Unique Users = 10,736

"When we started with Skilljar our goal was to scale and reach as many partners as possible. Before Alarm.com Academy, we trained ~30-40 people a month, so reaching this many people with this level of consumption has been monumental."
— Mary Kidd

In the first quarter of 2021, Katie's team relaunched their tech certification program to be foundationally focused, including intermediate and mastery level certifications and a new visual design of the content.

"Developing a certification program, which was an ask from our CEO, has increased the impact we've seen within our business and organization as a whole"
— Mary Kidd

Advice to LMS seekers or switchers cont'd

Mary Kidd adds:

Have a shared vision for where you want to be in one year, five years, etc. and then grow your program from there. Starting off with a handful of courses is fine, as long as you focus on what your main objectives are.

Share the success of those early program wins with your executive team will help you gain the internal buy-in you need to build your program faster.

Keep an iterative and agile mindset. Once you define the scope of your program, focus on that scope. Not everything's going to deploy at once. You're going to have to continue to develop and improve over time.

"It doesn't matter how many people you have on your team or how many courses you start with initially; what matters is sharing a unified goal, identifying your objectives and what you see as success for your programs, and staying focused on those goals as you begin to grow."
— Mary Kidd

Results included:
- 1,216 new certifications in 2022 (March - October)
- 80% increase in Certified Techs maintaining their certification YOY (Technicians are required to complete a certain number of certification units every two years.)
- 280% increase in "My Binder" activity (Articles saved from the knowledge base for easy access while on the job)

skilljar   Trained customers are your best customers.   → **Request a Demo**

Their partner education program started over ten years ago with another LMS and a team of three. They've since grown to a team of ~30 partner education professionals comprised of instructors (including VILT), content developers, instructional designers, and e-learning content developers.

Alarm.com was so successful with Skilljar, they introduced the platform to four subsidiary companies, including one migration from Talent LMS for partner training. Mary Kidd trained the other groups to manage most of their own training.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR ALARM.COM ACADEMY?

Alarm.com currently offers a foundational certification curriculum for their technicians in which they take a series of online courses followed by an exam. They are working on two additional certifications that will be more advanced and incorporate a blended-learning style. They are also building a new partner onboarding program that will include a platform certification for all non-technical roles.

They are also working on incorporating (Virtual Reality) VR into their programming to create a learning environment to "play" and practice with fun exercises and games.

"Skilljar has been phenomenal in helping us build out our education program. Since we started using Skilljar in 2016, we've been able to develop applications and programs to help our partners succeed, including our certification program, learning paths, and curricula."
— Katie Bernal

Data Measurement and Reporting

Alarm.com uses Skilljar's reporting to measure the impact and evaluate the success of their training programs. Their training team looks at course completion, registration for VILT sessions, as well as the number of certifications granted month by month and year over year. They also make overall linkages to success as a reduction of call volume interactions in their support center.

Their training team looks to assess technician behavior after completing training.

Specifically:

- Are the technicians using the support center more or less?
- What type of searches are they conducting?
- What type of tickets are they submitting?
- Are training programs affecting these behaviors in any positive way?

They use Skilljar's Data Connector with their data warehouse to tie a technician taking certain classes or becoming certified to the number of interactions that company has with our support center. In addition, they look at overall engagement with their knowledge base.

Alarm.com routinely shares their business objectives and results through quarterly business reviews with Skilljar executives. They also enjoy hearing from Skilljar what's on our product roadmap.

"By having quarterly business reviews and biweekly check-ins with our CSM, knowing that they really value our success and stand ready to assist us, has made Skilljar a fantastic system to work with."
— Mary Kidd