

CiL Fresh Gains a Competitive Edge & Insight Into Food Safety Training Needs With Qstream's Microlearning Technology

About Andres Ornelas



Andres Ornelas is the Compliance Manager for CiL Fresh, focusing on food and employee safety education for 65 warehouse workers in Weslaco, Texas and another 75 in Reynosa, Mexico. He trains and develops these employees throughout their tenure at the organization, from onboarding to acclimation and beyond.

Andres began his career as an executive assistant to the president of CiL Fresh in March 2020. What was supposed to be a six-month engagement turned into a full-time job. He had planned to move on to get his teaching certificate but found he could exercise his passion for education at CiL Fresh, a company committed to helping people advance their careers. "I realized it was an opportunity for me to get great work experience," Andres recalls. "I was given a lot of responsibility right off the bat, so I took that opportunity and just ran with it."

Today, he has several important roles related to compliance, including handling OSHA warehouse visits and food safety audits. He appreciates the organization's trust in him and how they encourage his creativity.

"They let me bring ideas to the table and execute them," he explains. "It's been a trial-and-error process, but at the same time, I know that I've helped the company grow and have been at the forefront of many aspects of the business. These are valuable experiences I will carry with me throughout my career."



About CiL Fresh

[CiL Fresh](#) is an international leader in the supply of cold room services and fresh citrus products such as oranges, limes, lemons, grapefruit and tangerines, with over 25 years of experience. They pride themselves on delivering the highest quality products from fields with safe and good agricultural practices. These fields are located primarily in the States of Sonora, Tamaulipas, and Veracruz, Mexico, Texas, and California. Sonora and Northern Sinaloa are the only regions of Mexico that are certified by USDA and SADER as fruit fly-free zones. CiL Fresh operates cold rooms in Mission, Weslaco and San Antonio, TX, as well as Reynosa, Mexico.



The Challenge

Immediately upon assuming his new role as compliance manager, Andres noticed a need for a learning technology to supplement their traditional classroom-style training. He quickly saw an opportunity to make his mark and improve learning outcomes for the organization.

CiL Fresh was conducting traditional training sessions consisting of monthly in-person meetings. “We’d get all 60 employees in the break room and give them a 20-minute speech. Afterward, they would sign a form acknowledging that they participated, and that was it,” he explains. But how did they know if these employees were listening and, better yet, remembering the information? These were questions Andres asked himself.

“We were not assessing employees on the knowledge they gained from these training sessions,” he says. “Just presenting the information to employees wasn’t enough. We needed to actually see what they were retaining.”

The FDA frequently sends out investigators to ensure all equipment is compliant. “Cleaning and sanitizing are a big part of what we do, but also training employees and making sure that they know the different types of hazards that can come across in a facility like this. The end goal is to deliver safe, high-quality food to the market,” explains Andres.

So, what’s the cost of not following these guidelines, on top of potentially putting out a contaminated product? “You’re not going to be in the US market. It’s very regulated,” he says. And when employees don’t have the knowledge to respond to work situations compliantly, people’s lives and the business itself are at stake.

Andres wasted no time investigating learning platforms that could help facilitate a “food safety foundation” for his organization.

“We work with big retail stores and companies, and if we don’t have this foundation, we’re just not going to sell to them in the first place,” says Andres. “So, if we want to be in the big leagues, we’ve got to meet all the requirements.”

The Solution

Into the thick of his investigation into training technology, Andres came across Qstream at the Food Safety Summit in Rosemont, Illinois in 2022. “It was a very eye-opening experience for me. During that whole summit, I got to see a lot of different training compliance software for our operations, but Qstream stuck with me the most because of the processes it used. The salesperson was passionate about the product and made her pitch with elegance.”

He recalled a learning theory class he took discussing microlearning or delivering small bits of information over spaced intervals for optimal knowledge

“Cleaning and sanitizing are a big part of what we do, but also training employees and making sure that they know the different types of hazards that can come across in a facility like this. The end goal is to deliver safe, high-quality food to the market.”

**ANDRES ORNELAS
COMPLIANCE MANAGER,
CIL FRESH**



retention. He spoke with the Qstream team and decided he wanted to position the program to leadership, where it was very well received.

“I had dabbled with Google Forms and SurveyMonkey, but there were a lot of obstacles to those tools,” he explains. “The Qstream demonstration convinced me I did not need to search for other platforms. I knew it was our only choice.”

So, what convinced him to use the platform? He explains, “The analytics really stood out to me right from the start. Google Forms and SurveyMonkey are both very basic, but Qstream breaks down the questions in a way that allows me to see which learners are getting them right and which ones are struggling. Additionally, the information is presented in a way that I can easily share with my superiors.”

He also believed that Qstream, which delivers bite-sized, easily digestible content and builds job-critical skills, would help CiL Fresh stand out from their competitors and give their employees a modern and practical learning experience.

“We wanted to be the first in our region to offer a tool like this,” he says.

Andres’s boss saw the benefits of implementing a platform like Qstream. “Leadership knows that food safety is a hot topic in the produce industry,” Andres explains. “Back in the day, the name of the game was quality. That’s what everyone wanted. Nowadays, quality is straightforward and easily accessible, so these big companies are looking for just that. That is something my boss has passed down to me, that food safety is a top priority.”

With buy-in from his boss and superiors, they purchased Qstream and went full steam ahead.

The Results

Since many of Andres’s learners are front-line workers and don’t have direct access to a computer or work email, he took an innovative approach to implementing Qstream. He bought tablets and held quick classroom sessions with groups of eight employees. They’d each complete their Qstream and had the ability to ask Andres any questions as well as discuss the content amongst themselves. This fueled social learning, which is a great way to encourage further knowledge uptake and team collaboration, and also served as a vehicle to collect feedback on the questions themselves. “What ended up happening is they gained the confidence to ask further questions about other topics covered in the Qstream.”

Qstream’s program manager analytics

All are available at the team and individual level

Proficiency rate: Proficiency is a measure of correctness. Correctness is the percentage of a question the learner got correct, i.e., 0 for incorrect, 100% for right, and between for partially correct, depending on the number of correct answers in multiple choice. This stat is used to pinpoint knowledge gaps at the team and individual levels.

Engagement rate: Whether a participant started a Qstream they are enrolled in.

Participation rate: The percentage of question attempts the participant had/has the opportunity to answer versus those they actually answered.

Completion rate: The percentage of questions in the Qstream the participant has completed. Qstream uses a spaced algorithm that asks each question two times before considering it mastered and retiring it. A question is deemed completed when it is either “Retired and Mastered” (consecutive correct attempts) or “Retired Not Mastered” (all attempts used without answering consecutively correct).

“It was very hands-on,” says Andres. “About 80% of employees did it through this manner. The other 20% completed the Qstream on their device or work computer.”

Qstreams can be delivered via email, push notification via the Qstream mobile app, or directly to a communication and collaboration tool such as Microsoft Teams or Slack.

Andres started by launching a few courses from Qstream’s microlearning content library on team building, first-aid basics and effective communication. “One thing I’ve come to learn is that in any type of business, communication is key, and we have to know to communicate with and listen to other people to do our jobs effectively,” Andres says.

For his first custom Qstream, he consulted his team to build out the content, aiming to get high participation, completion and proficiency percentages and use the analytics to understand trends across his learners. “My goal was to offer more focused training to these groups or departments to ensure everyone’s on the same page.”

Andres has launched 12 Qstreams (nine have been completed, and three are active) in English and Spanish, taking advantage of Qstream’s translation services for diverse workforces. One hundred and fifty-four participants have enrolled in Qstreams, and the organization has seen a 13.27% increase in proficiency across the board. Andres also has received high engagement, with US participants reaching 88% and Mexico participants achieving a whopping 95% engagement rate.

Andres says that Qstream has also been a hit with new employees. “They see Qstream and are impressed since most of them are coming from other warehouses doing standard training,” he explains.



CiL Fresh's Qstream Results At A Glance

- 13.27% improvement in topic proficiency
- 2 locations trained
- 154 participants; 506 participant enrollments
- 95% engagement for Mexico participants; 88% engagement for US participants
- Topics covered: Organic handling, effective communication, food safety, first-aid basics

The analytics, too, are playing the role he hoped for, giving him more profound and valuable insight into who knows what and where knowledge gaps exist. “The analytics are top-notch,” he says. “I like that I can log in from anywhere and check precisely where my learners are at. It doesn’t get any easier than that.”

He appreciates Qstream’s on-the-go, mobile approach. “Anything that I can do paperless is a go for me. I’m not a big fan of having a bunch of binders in my office taking up space and then having the stack grow as time passes,” explains Andres. “So having it all on my computer and checking it from anywhere is a huge win.”

Andres says the Qstream customer onboarding process was very smooth, and he appreciates how responsive and helpful everyone is - from his sales rep to the product implementation team to the content services team, who walked him through best practices for building practical Qstream questions.

“There’s always an open line of communication with the whole team. I was eager to get started, and the team enabled me to be successful,” he says.

Andres believes Qstream has delivered in a couple of ways regarding cost savings. “If we’re looking at things from a monetary standpoint, I believe Qstream saves us a lot of money on things like supplies, storage and even time itself.”

What’s Next

Andres says it best: “I’ve barely scratched the surface of what Qstream can offer.” The tool has multiple use cases and applications.

“I’m very interested in using videos in the next Qstreams we launch,” he says. “The goal for me is to have the videos play and then have the employees answer questions based on those videos. And those videos would be content we create in our warehouse specific to our operation.”

He also hopes to continue growing his career at CiL Fresh, and the company's recent growth gives him hope for his future with the organization. "They are a local company, which I've come to appreciate because sometimes the big players will come in and run out the little guys," explains Andres. "I am helping the community grow by working here since the company was started in south Texas, so I plan to stay and continue that."

Andres's Proudest Achievement

Qstream isn't the only way Andres is innovating the compliance training at CiL Fresh. He also created an incentive program from the ground up. He says Qstream and this initiative, Fresh Coins, are his two career highlights at the organization.

"Essentially, the way it works is we distribute 100 Fresh Coins per month to employees demonstrating good practices," he explains. When these outlined behaviors and practices are witnessed, the employee gets a Fresh Coin, which they deposit into a drop box. At the end of the month, they hold a raffle and distribute cash prizes to six winners.

"I'm so proud of this program because it has helped everyone," says Andres. "It helps the supervisors by having something to incentivize their employees, and then it also helps the employees by rewarding them for their hard work."

Does Andres Recommend Qstream?

"Yes, I would recommend Qstream for anyone looking to reinforce information and measure what training material is being remembered," he says. "It's effortless to use, whether on a tablet, a phone or a computer. The microlearning content library of pre-built courses is great when you are getting started. Plus, it can support multimedia, whether video, audio or images, making it very accessible."

For more information on how Qstream serves the food & beverage industry, [click here](#).

"I would recommend Qstream for anyone looking to reinforce information and measure what training material is being remembered."

ANDRES ORNELAS



Qstream is the leading enterprise microlearning and knowledge reinforcement solution proven by science and in practice to boost learner performance. Hundreds of organizations rely on Qstream to build high-performance teams by delivering a personalized and agile learning experience that delivers the highest levels of retention, engagement and efficiency along with analytics that provide precision insights and expose a real-time view of performance readiness.

www.sacredstree.com | info@sacredstree.com