NUCLEUS
RESEARCH

WORKFORCE SOFTWARE MODERNIZES STATE PAYROLL PRACTICES

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THE BOTTOM LINE

A state government agency deployed the WorkForce Software solution to modernize its data workforce capabilities. The agency realized significant time savings through cutting its payroll process in half while also increasing payroll accuracy. In addition, the organization was able to complete the deployment in half the time that it would have taken to upgrade the legacy timeclock solution. All of this has led to a unified, modern workforce solution across the agency, despite the organization's complex structure and workforce needs.

THE COMPANY

This state agency is made up of five different departments, each of which operates as a separate, independent entity. The agency has multiple unions across its more than 8,000 employees. Each of the departments have different time and attendance, clock technology and other individual compliance needs. The purchasing and implementation of technology for all these entities is handled internally by the organization's IT department.

THE CHALLENGE

This organization had multiple entities with timeclock applications that were no longer being serviced. When looking at a new timeclock system, the organization wanted to move forward with a standard application across the entire organization. The number of different solutions meant that it had to standardize practices across the organization, forcing it to manually organize workforce-related data before it was able to run any type of analysis. In addition, the organization allows employees to work at multiple entities, each with its own payroll system. Employees could work at multiple departments during a single pay period. Tracking the hours worked and salary owed to employees across multiple systems meant that the agency needed a unified payroll system that would be capable of handling this specific requirement.

THE STRATEGY

The organization started to look at new solutions in 2014. As part of this process, the organization put out a request for proposal (RFP). The organization worked with the five departments to get a detailed understanding of each entity's specific requests as well as high-level details around what was required.

After considering multiple vendors, the organization ultimately decided to go with WorkForce Software because it was the only vendor that clearly demonstrated the ability to meet all of the organization's requirements, particularly the need for software that allowed for employees to be on multiple payroll systems.

During the implementation, the organization leveraged internal resources to handle most of the required work itself, choosing to bring on only one consultant to serve as a liaison between the vendor and the organization. The organization structured the implementation teams so that it had points of contact at each of the entities, an overall project manager, and a person from WorkForce Software. In addition, there was a core project team of two to three technical personnel, and two functional business teams. The organization started with the common functionality requirements and then moved on to the entity's individual needs. The agency went live with its WorkForce Software system in February 2016.

KEY BENEFIT AREAS

By moving to WorkForce Software, this government agency was able to move multiple business units onto a cohesive, modern workforce management system, thereby updating practices and procedures to better facilitate workforce-related procedures within the organization. Key benefit areas seen as a result of the WorkForce Software deployment include:

- Reduction in payroll processing time. By combining the scheduling and personnel information into one system, the state agency was able to reduce the time it took to run payroll by 50 percent.

- Increased payroll accuracy. The input of data from WorkForce Software allowed the state to run a more accurate payroll, significantly reducing the amount of incorrect payments. This had two main benefits as it lowered overall payments, while also saving HR staff the time of having to go back and correct pay shortages that occurred.

- Reduced Family and Medical Leave Act (FLMA) time. By moving to WorkForce Software, the organization was able to reduce the time that it spent managing FLMA by one-third. The organization has also been able to fully automate its leave process, eliminating the HR staff's input entirely, thereby further reducing the administrative burden on HR.

- Reduced implementation costs. On its previous system, the organization had looked at updating the solution to a newer model. The implementation timeline developed for this was twice as long as the WorkForce Software deployment, which would have resulted in higher costs and a longer payback period.

KEY COST AREAS

The largest cost area of the organization's deployment was the purchase and configuration of the WorkForce Software. Other cost areas included professional services to aid in implementation and training, personnel time for the employees who executed the implementation, and employee time spent being trained on the new system. Because of the organization's employment structure, the team essentially had to run five simultaneous deployments. This increased the cost as compared to a similarly-sized deployment across a single business unit.

LESSONS LEARNED

The most important takeaway from the agency's deployment of WorkForce Software was that the structuring of the deployment and the phasing of the implementation ensured success. With multiple different entities and requirements, the deployment could have represented a significant investment in both time and resources for the organization. In order to avoid a bottleneck, the organization structured the deployment so that it first focused on the common features and functionalities needed across the organization. Only after this was completed did the organization then move on to the individual specifications that each entity required.

By doing this, the organization was able to launch a completed WorkForce Software deployment in half the time that it has been quoted for upgrading its legacy solution. This had both direct and indirect financial benefits for the organization. Chief among these was the reduced internal resources required by the agency: the organization was able to lower the commitment requirements that it faced internally, allowing employees to stay focused on their regular positions. The shorter implementation also meant a faster time to benefit phase and thus a shorter payback period for the agency's deployment.