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Success Stories From Buck Consultants

How the Hudson's Bay Company found ROI in employee communications



"My Hbc provides a secure, easy-to-use vehicle that empowers associates to view their earning information anytime, with 24/7 online access. This has allowed us to significantly reduce operating costs while providing associates with easier access to information, benefits and services."

Bob Kolida,
EVP Human Resources

THE ISSUE: WE NEED A WAY TO CONNECT WITH RETAIL ASSOCIATES, AND WE HAVE TO JUSTIFY THE COST

The Hudson's Bay Company (Hbc) is Canada's oldest corporation, founded in 1670. It is also Canada's largest diversified general merchandise retailer, with over 600 retail locations and nearly 60,000 associates located in every province in Canada, and 10,000 employees in the United States. With that many employees spread across Hbc's network of stores, communicating consistent, simultaneous messages is a difficult, expensive undertaking. A corporate intranet is in place, but most employees do not have a computer as part of their job. Any new technology that could help with this challenge would need to show a compelling return on investment to gain acceptance – a tall order for a communications solution.

AN INSIGHTFUL SOLUTION: ONLINE PAY SLIPS

Hbc discussed the problem with Buck. The key was to look at other HR costs to see how a web-based solution might help, and that opened the "back door" to the answer.

Like most corporations, Hbc distributes printed pay slips for all of its employees. Its payroll provider prints the slips and ships them to every store, where store managers hand them to employees. With the normal retail staff working part-time shifts, the delay in distribution and the extra time involved in the logistics of delivery were costly.

But what if instead of printing the pay slips, they were posted to a secure employee website, accessible from anywhere? Virtually all of the store's associates could access the internet from home, and had email accounts. With pay slips posted securely online, and with most employees logging in on payday (part-time retail workers usually verify they were paid correctly for the number of hours they worked), Hbc would have a way to communicate its announcements, policies, practices, and other initiatives consistently and simultaneously to all its associates.

Employees of the various Hbc banners access a customized and secure website, available on the internet, and hosted by Buck in a CICA 5970 / SAS 70 certified data centre. In effect, online pay slips became the foundation to launch an employee web site, accessible from anywhere.

buck

REAL WORLD RESULTS

The solution paid for itself from the first day, cutting Hbc's pay slip distribution cost by half. Furthermore, it supports Hbc's "green initiative" by eliminating printing and distribution.

The solution gives Hbc's associates fast and convenient access to their pay information. Employees were invited to register by email, giving Hbc another way to get its messages out to its associates. And the implementation of a secure website, visited by employees every other week, represents the foundation for further automation for total compensation statements, onboarding new employees, and scheduling work shifts.

Hbc's Manager of Communications, Roula Panopoulos, said the project implementation went live without incident as over 50,000 Hbc associates were invited to register for the site. The project was completed on time, the result, says Roula, of Buck's responsiveness to the company's concerns and their hard-working efforts to make the project a success.

CONTACT US

For more information about this project, contact Buck at infocanada@buckconsultants.com.