

CASE STUDY

A system that builds trust

INTRODUCTION

Salaries and leave are little foxes that can seriously damage the vine of workplace relationships and productivity. "Employees find it impossible to do their best and have trust in their employer when the information on their payslips is just too often questionable or shrouded in mystery," says Andrew Brooks, project manager at XFour. "The impact of effective and accurate systems on people and workplace relations is what drives our focus at XFour. Our objective is to equip our clients with technology that makes the smooth running of human resource and payroll management possible." Brooks leads the project to migrate PEC Utility Management, a company that facilitates the usage monitoring of and payment for services between municipalities and the owners of commercial, residential and industrial buildings, to the Sage 300 People system.

CHALLENGES

Previously, PEC Utility Management used Sage X3 HRM for the management of its human resources and payroll functions, but had to change tack when Sage discontinued the system as part of a product consolidation exercise. This was our first Sage migration project and we couldn't be more pleased with how it played out," says Brooks. "The changeover started in May 2021 and at the end of August the payroll ran from Sage 300 People for the first time." "The implementation of the budgeting module is part of the project's second phase and is planned for March 2022 to dovetail with the PEC Utility Management budget cycle.

Commenting on the fact that before the migration to Sage 300 People there was no integration between human resources, payroll and the financial system, Elaine Pienaar, human resources director, says that much of the work had to be done manually. "Spreadsheets had to be updated or even created from scratch, and when employees requested information, we had to compare several sources to ensure the reports that went out were accurate."



Elize Human, payroll manager, recalls the stress of month ends. "In many cases we relied on our employees to pick up on and inform us of errors."

CUSTOMER SUMMARY

PEC Utility Management's head office is in Silvertondale, Pretoria, and its regional offices are in Cape Town and Bloemfontein. PEC Utility Management have been at the forefront of reselling and utility management in South Africa for almost three decades and now offers comprehensive revenue and utility management services to the private and public sectors in South Africa and across the African continent.



XFour is PEC's preferred SAGE partner.

"We have been nothing but satisfied with XFour's support on our SAGE systems, hence it just made sense for them to also manage the Sage 300 People migration."

Michelle du Preez
Project Manager at PEC

SOLUTION

With Sage 300 People, overtime and leave data is automatically pulled through as soon as it is approved by a manager. Integration is therefore no longer an issue. Pienaar and Human agree that accuracy, speed and ease of reporting have made their lives immeasurably easier – and that is without mentioning reliability. “We have confidence in 300 because we know the information is correct and we can rely on it.”

Aside from the new-found ease with which human resources and payroll teams do their daily jobs, the biggest benefit of Sage 300 People lies in the trust that is being built between head office and the regions. “We hear this often from our employees in the regional offices,” says Pienaar, adding that since the migration she had not once had to send a message to employees to apologise for leave data errors. It has also not been necessary to announce a reconciliation exercise.

“Sage 300 People is also highly user friendly. It is now easier to know what to do and where to look for something. We can solve problems ourselves, instead of continuously asking for help from Support,” adds Human.

The self-help portal for staff is a further advantage. With around 90% of PEC Utility Management’s workforce registered on it, people can obtain basic information on their own, which frees up the human resources and payroll teams to devote their time and attention to value-adding tasks. When more complex requests are lodged, the answers are quickly, easily and accurately available.

Both managers emphasise how user friendly the self-help portal is, mentioning that specific training was not needed. The manuals that were part of the rollout process, were all staff members needed to become familiar with the system. “We don’t get queries or reports of problems,” says Pienaar. Brooks views the PEC migration as a highlight, but not an exception to the rule.



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“Superior customer service is a given in our business. A good system is not the end of the story. It has to be implemented correctly for it to deliver the expected results. This project is a striking example of the impact that can be achieved when client, service provider and system work together.” - Andrew Brooks

