Major Grocer Upgrades HR Processes

Overview

Business Challenge

- Keep pace with hiring needs of rapidly growing grocer
- Ensure consistent and timely response to HR events

Solution

- Guided self-service for HR requests
- Integration to HRMS to leverage data and corporate policies

Benefits

- Saved over 90 percent of the time spent managing the process
- Accelerated the completion of requests by over 400 percent

This major grocer employs over 32,000 employees, has established 166 stores in North America and the United Kingdom, and has been on Fortune Magazine's Top 100 Best Companies to Work For list for many years. Recruiting, hiring, and empowering great people is top priority for this company, and so are the processes that help bring great people on board. However, keeping up with HR events and ensuring process completion is a huge task—particularly since this organization is the fastest growing grocer in North America. The HR team decided it was time to upgrade how they supported their managers and employees in the stores—and ultimately their customers.

The Need to Upgrade Processes

With the growing volume of requests, the HR group realized they needed a better way of empowering local managers to own more of the process—while still maintaining corporate standards and policies. Consider the complexity of their current process:

- Process requests come from any manager in the 166 stores, spread across 10 regions, involving any of over 32,000 employees
- The basic employee information must be validated against corporate guidelines and employee data kept in the central Oracle human resource management system (HRMS)
- Many requests require approval from additional managers—work that must be coordinated by the central HR teams
- Most requests must be processed within a week before the next pay cycle

"The major grocer concluded that they could implement BPM more quickly and cheaply for their diverse process management requirements than any other alternative-including Oracle"

Like many HR groups, this team manages their employee information in a central HRMS from Oracle. Trained specialists enter and update employee information using the complex Oracle application. And like many organizations, the HR team was also using the common tools at hand to do their work—paper faxes, e-mail, MS Excel, and phone calls. Because the process relied so heavily on human interactions, inefficiencies existed in many places:

- **Communication by Fax.** Store managers had to submit HR requests using paper faxes—making it difficult for them to confirm requests were received. Confirmation e-mails and phone calls from those managers took away valuable time from the central HR staff.
- **Redundant Data Validation.** Upon reviewing requests, the HR staff often realized that information was incorrect, missing, or that the request did not meet company policies. Store managers had to be personally contacted to resolve the inaccuracies or problems.
- **Informal Approval Process.** In many cases, approvals were required for various requests. Again, the HR staff would have to coordinate with regional managers for those approvals—requiring research time, multiple e-mails, and phone calls.
- **Difficult to Understand Request Status.** Request status reports were kept in MS Excel and only available to local managers and HR management upon request—making it difficult to know whether requests would be processed on time.
- **Unseen Bottlenecks.** Lack of process metrics made it difficult for HR management to know where the bottlenecks were and which types of requests were taking the longest. Without this visibility, it was difficult to escalate work or modify the process to eliminate bottlenecks.

Extending processes outside the HR organization

The HR team turned to Lombardi Teamworks® to help them extend their processes out to the local stores and to efficiently manage HR requests. Specific capabilities include:

- **Internal Request Portal Enables Self-Service.** Store managers and employees can now log on to an internal Teamworks portal to initiate requests. Users can track the progress of their requests and receive tasks if additional information is required.
- **Data Validation Eliminates Time-Consuming Errors and Omissions.** Teamworks automatically validates all information entered for completeness and accuracy. Teamworks interacts with Oracle directly to ensure employee information is accurate and that requests follow company policies.

Solution Components

Services
- Lombardi Teamworks®

IBM Business Partner
- Lombardi Services

- **Efficient, Automatic Task Generation.** Teamworks automatically identifies requests that require approval and routes them to the appropriate manager. Notification happens through e-mail and a deadline for completion is generated.
- **Real-time Status and Visibility Drives Improvement.** Managers can view the real-time status of requests and overall performance using a Teamworks ScoreBoard portal—no more calls or e-mails to determine the status of a request. If there are bottlenecks, managers can see where the problem is and help drive resolution.
- **Collaborating for Success.** Teamworks' unique design environment allowed business and IT staff to collaboratively design and implement the HR self-service process. The iterative Teamworks implementation framework allowed the team to continually refine requirements and ultimately deliver a solution that drives results.

Cost-effective process solutions in 90 days

The major grocer concluded they could implement BPM software more quickly and cheaply for their diverse process management requirements than any other alternative—including Oracle. The conclusion was validated by the initial deployment of Teamworks. The first HR processes were deployed to 500 users in 90 days. The initial deployment yielded significant benefits—with reductions of up to 90 percent of the time spent managing the process while accelerating the completion of requests by over 400 percent. Today, there are 14 different processes deployed—supporting a complete range of areas from pay changes to 401K and other employee benefits.

About Lombardi, an IBM company

Lombardi, an IBM company, is a market leader in business process management (BPM) for companies, systems integrators and government agencies of all sizes. We help clients optimize performance, increase agility, and reduce costs, by discovering, documenting, automating, and continuously improving business processes. Our solutions are built on open standards, and provide ongoing prioritization, planning, visibility and control of business processes, increasing the speed and flexibility with which organizations can manage their business process activities and decision making.

For more information

To learn more about Lombardi Teamworks, please contact your IBM marketing representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit the following Web site:

- www.lombardi.com
- **ibm.com**/software/websphere/announcement.html

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