

First Circle transforms HR and payroll into integrated, paperless processes

Enabling efficiencies and self-service for HR, managers and employees

When you buy a litre of milk or a household cleaning product, there's a strong chance the container it's in was made by First Circle Packaging. The company designs and manufactures innovative and sustainable plastic packaging solutions, producing around half a billion containers a year – ranging from 65ml bottles to 5L jerricans – for customers in a range of industries.

Nearly 200 people work at First Circle's four sites in the UK and Ireland. With the help of Civica's HR and payroll solutions, a two-person HR team can take care of them all.

Previously, the company used HR and payroll software from another vendor. They processed payroll in house. "It was very admin heavy", recalls Sarah Dickenson, HR Manager at First Circle. "The HR, payroll and time and attendance weren't properly integrated, so processes were

inefficient with a lot of duplicated data and effort. We needed a separate login for each system and had to manually export and import data between them."

Integrated HR and payroll

A price increase for the previous software was the final straw that prompted Sarah and HR Director Greg Ward to look for a new solution. They chose Civica HR and payroll solutions for a number of reasons, as Greg explains: "Civica offers a complete solution that integrates HR, payroll, time and attendance, recruitment and learning management, alongside a payroll bureau service. Compared with other solutions we evaluated, Civica offered better functionality and easier navigation. On top of that, the Civica team did an in-depth demo that really let us see how the software would help us."

Key outcomes



~ £60,000
cost savings
in year 1



Paper-heavy
processes
transformed
to **zero paper**



Efficiency savings
with unified data
and increased
automation



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Greg Ward, HR Director, First Circle

A smooth implementation

Because the previous contract was ending, Civica and First Circle had to work fast to roll out the core Civica software modules: Payroll, People Hub (the HR solution), and Time & Attendance.

"The Civica project manager developed a perfect project plan," says Greg. "Everyone respected the dates and the rollout went smoothly, ensuring we were trained and ready to use the system on day one." Further People Hub modules, including recruitment management and learning management, will be implemented to provide a complete and future-proof solution that can grow with the business.

Having used the Civica Payroll bureau service at a previous company, Sarah was confident about entrusting them

with First Circle's payroll processing and payslip production. "You can't afford for anything to go wrong with payroll," she says. "Right from the start, we felt we were in safe hands, with Civica seamlessly handling the differences between UK and Irish payroll requirements, and acting as an extension of our own team."

Convenient mobile app

Around two-thirds of First Circle's people work in production, engineering and other operational roles that don't have direct access to a computer.

Fortunately, the Civica solution offers an integrated mobile app that employees simply download to their personal mobile phones. As well as viewing their payslips and submitting holiday requests, they use the app to clock in and out — an experience that Sarah describes as being much simpler than the previous process.

Decisions based on real-time data

All employee data, including clocking in and clocking out, is consolidated in People Hub, giving managers a real-time overview of their team including holidays and other authorised absences. Instead of burdening HR with requests for information, managers have it all at their fingertips, so they can make informed decisions more quickly, such as approving overtime. There's also no risk of them treating failure to clock in as an unauthorised absence.

"The Civica solutions give managers the tools they need to be accountable for managing their teams and their payroll," says Sarah. "They like being self sufficient, and generally find it takes only 10 minutes a day in the system to stay on top of everything."

Less paper, more automation

Removing reliance on paper and increasing automation with the Civica solutions have made First Circle's HR and payroll processes more efficient, with much less manual admin. For example, People Hub sends automated emails reminding managers about new starters or upcoming probationary reviews, saving Sarah time and effort. The Quick Enquiry feature makes it easy for HR and managers to generate customised reporting to meet a variety of needs. Civica and First Circle also developed a bespoke report that provides an overview of each shift, including the operational costs of running it.

Greg estimates first-year cost savings of over £60,000, with efficiency savings in addition. "Civica offers great pricing, a good-quality product, and a consistently high level of customer support that gives us a lot of confidence," he says. "The relationship with the Civica team was open and honest from the start, and that feeling of trust has carried on through the entire journey with Civica."

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Sarah Dickenson, HR Manager, First Circle

Find out more about how Civica's solutions could support your organisation:

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