

Fat Face

HR administration is simplified for store managers at Fat Face

Company description:

Since its inception in 1988, Fat Face has grown to be one of the UK's leading retailers of clothing and accessories for an active lifestyle. As well as its 171 stores, the company also sells through mail order, the web and a growing wholesale operation.

The challenge:

Fat Face needed to find a way to enable managers in its stores to enter accurate detail about starters, leavers and other staff changes, and then have the information processed as quickly as possible.

The solution:

NorthgateArinso's MyTeam module has been added to the existing ResourceLink HR and payroll solution. This gives managers true self service capability, empowering them to better manage information about their staff.

Benefits:

- Real time record keeping and much faster processing of employee information.
- A drastic reduction in the time it takes to get new starters on the system and working in store.
- A reduction in the chance that leavers will be overpaid.
- Managers can spend less time on administration and more time running the store.

Getting new starters on the shop floor sooner

Simon Jones, HR Information Manager at Fat Face, sums up what he was looking to achieve with MyTeam: "Our focus as a business is all about helping our customers to get the most that an outdoor lifestyle has to offer. To do this, we need our store managers to spend as much time as possible making sure that we have the right staff on the shop floor, and that they are delivering the right experience to our customers.

"So we are committed to doing everything we can to enable managers to concentrate on that role, rather than having unnecessary administration tasks to complete. That's why we wanted to replace the HR administration tool that managers were using with something much more efficient."

The tool Simon refers to gave store managers the facility to enter information about new starters, leavers and changes to employees' working pattern and so on. However, the system worked by creating an electronic form in store, which was then submitted to the payroll team for processing. This created a delay in getting new starters up and running in the stores; it could take a week or more for a form to be submitted and processed through to the issuing of a payroll number.

"The speed with which a payroll number can be given is a vital issue for us," Simon says. "An employee can't get their till log in access until this is done. This could be very frustrating for a store manager who wants to get someone working quickly after hiring them.

The use of MyTeam has addressed this issue and delivered a significant improvement. It now takes just 48 hours from a store manager entering a new starter's information on the system to a payroll number being assigned."

A simple process for store managers

When store managers take on new employees, they use MyTeam to get them onto the HR and payroll system. They use an interface - tailored by NorthgateArinso to meet Fat Face's particular needs - to enter information including personal details, NI number, bank account details, the type of role and post, shift pattern and salary.

Once all the information is entered onto MyTeam it is picked up by the payroll function (which is provided by NorthgateArinso's outsourcing service), who complete the processing and the payroll number is automatically generated within MyTeam.

"The interface used by store managers is very simple to use," says Simon. "It has lots of default options for users to select, such as store location and predefined levels of hourly pay rates. We didn't need to run any training sessions and a simple two-page instruction sheet enabled managers to get up and running quickly.

"MyTeam also greatly reduces the potential for errors, which was another problem we had with the previous system. If a store manager entered an incorrect NI number for example, it wouldn't be picked up until someone in payroll received the information. But now, there are checks within MyTeam to flag things like an invalid NI number or bank sort code. It obviously makes sense for any invalid information to be identified and addressed right at the start of the process.

"we are committed to doing everything we can to enable managers to concentrate on their role" - Simon Jones

"The system is also helping us to comply with right to work issues. A checklist at the end of the process helps managers to ensure they have done everything correctly, including checking the necessary paperwork such as passports and visas where appropriate. The checklist also reminds store managers to take up references, check working in the UK compliance and send the tax information to NorthgateArinso."

Maintaining accurate information

The fact that MyTeam instantly updates ResourceLink, rather than having a form created that has to be manually processed, means that information about employees is much more likely to be up to date. This is especially important when it comes to leavers.

"Store managers update the system in real time when an employee leaves Fat Face," says Simon. "The system then calculates pro rata holiday entitlement and cross references it against the number of hours of leave that the employee has taken.

Payroll are automatically informed of how many extra hours need to be paid or how many hours have been taken in excess of entitlement for the period work. They can then make an accurate final salary payment and generate the P45.

"This speed of processing removes the problem where someone is overpaid due to a delay in updating their records. With retail having relatively high staff turnover this could potentially save us a large amount of money during the course of a year.

"Similarly if there's a change such as someone moving to a different work pattern, from three days to five days for example, the store manager enters the details and ResourceLink is updated instantly. It means that if the employee is off sick or books a holiday there is correct information in the system with which to cross reference.

"The fact that information is accurate in real time is also essential for monitoring and reporting as we have a much better view of who is working in any particular store at a given time."

A positive response from store managers

Even after just a few weeks' experience with MyTeam, store managers were already seeing the difference it makes. Store managers have found the transition easy and they now have peace of mind that they have met their responsibilities and that each transaction has been completed.

Simon Jones sums up the impact MyTeam is making: "It's just so much better than submitting a form and not knowing the status of the processing. It's a much more efficient way to do things and enables store managers to spend less time on HR administration and more time running the store."

For an initial discussion about your requirements call us on 0800 035 0545.
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