Luxury Car Brand Drives HR Process Improvements with SAP® SuccessFactors® and Aasonn

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
The exclusive U.S. importer and distributor of a luxury European auto manufacturer strives to maintain a standard of excellence, commitment and distinction synonymous with its brand. The company chose to standardize on the SAP® SuccessFactors® platform to centralize and automate many of its HR processes. Under the guidance of implementation partner Aasonn, the company has greatly reduced the administrative burden of managing daily HR tasks, achieved significant time savings, and enabled data-driven workforce decisions to position HR as a strategic function tied to organizational success.

COMPANY OVERVIEW
As a wholly-owned subsidiary of a German automobile manufacturer specializing in high-performance sports cars, SUVs and sedans, the company is the exclusive importer and distributor of the brand’s luxury vehicles throughout the United States. The company employs approximately 300 people who provide vehicles, parts, service, marketing and training for the luxury car brand’s 189 U.S. dealerships.

CHALLENGE
Driving HR Process Automation
As part of its ongoing commitment to operational excellence, the luxury car brand undertook a process improvement project in early 2016 with the aim of identifying HR processes and system inefficiencies. As part of this project, they calculated that their HR department had 100 different forms and manually processed more than 12,000 paper-based documents per year. While this paper-based approach to managing daily HR tasks may have been viable in the organization’s early years, the right systems were simply not in place to support the company’s recent and continued growth.

QUICK STATS
U.S. subsidiary of German automobile manufacturer specializing in high-performance sports cars, SUVs and sedans

Paper-based HR processes were outdated and time-consuming, requiring HR to manually process more than 12,000 documents annually

Multiple, disparate HR systems reduced data accuracy and limited reporting capabilities

Standardized HR process on the cloud-based SAP SuccessFactors HCM Suite, implemented and configured by Aasonn

Achieved significant time savings, enabled data-driven workforce decisions, and improved internal visibility into HR processes
Separate systems were used for different HR functions—such as recruiting and payroll—and these systems were not integrated, resulting in a great deal of manual and redundant data entry. Aside from the administrative burden this placed on the HR staff, these manual processes were also much more prone to human error. The organization needed a solution that would enable them to digitize their paper-based documents and automate many of their HR processes.

Consolidating and Integrating HR Data

Another key challenge the company faced was the integration of HR data from multiple sources. With various systems and processes in place—including paper-based PDF documents, Microsoft® Excel® spreadsheets, and various third-party platforms—extracting meaningful insights from their HR data was becoming increasingly difficult, if not impossible. Aside from looking to significantly reduce the amount of data entry required from an administrative perspective, they needed a solution that would allow their workforce data to be tightly integrated and unified across all the HR functions. This would enable them to improve HR data accuracy, create a single repository of workforce data, and more easily gather the insights needed to analyze and improve HR’s impact on the bottom line.

SOLUTION

Standardizing on SAP SuccessFactors

The company sought a cloud-based HCM solution to digitize, centralize and standardize their HR processes. Undertaking the vendor selection process in mid-2016, they chose to standardize on the SAP SuccessFactors platform. SAP SuccessFactors Employee Central with the Time Off functionality was implemented first to address the company’s core HR needs, followed by SAP SuccessFactors Recruiting and Onboarding. Most recently, SAP SuccessFactors Succession and Development was also implemented. With the fully integrated talent suite, the organization can now much more efficiently track and manage all phases of the employee lifecycle, from hire to retire.

SAP was the de facto standard in place globally by the U.S. subsidiary’s German parent company, so they were already using SAP for a number of their business applications. As such, the company believed continuing to standardize on the SAP SuccessFactors HCM Suite would ensure a smoother integration with the other applications and systems already in use across the organization.

“We used to manually process over 12,000 paper-based HR documents per year. With SAP SuccessFactors and Aasonn, we have been able to greatly reduce this administrative burden so we can focus on more strategic, value-added HR initiatives.”

—HR Systems and Process Manager

They also liked how user-friendly the SAP SuccessFactors solution was; the HR team could easily administer it without having to rely on internal IT resources to maintain and support the system.

Given SAP serves more than 180,000 customers in 130 countries, SAP had the experience and global support network needed to successfully expand the SAP SuccessFactors solution globally to the auto brand’s other international subsidiaries down the road. The U.S. subsidiary wanted a system that would be easy to roll out to the other global markets served by the well-known auto manufacturer, and SAP’s proven track record and global scalability fit the bill.

Partnering with Aasonn

In November 2016, the company began the first phase of the SAP SuccessFactors implementation with guidance from implementation partner Aasonn. With a number of implementation partners to choose from, the company sought input from the SAP SuccessFactors project team who, in turn, recommended Aasonn based on their experience with similar SAP SuccessFactors implementations.

“We chose Aasonn to guide us through the configuration and implementation of our HCM system based on their unmatched depth and breadth of experience with the SAP SuccessFactors suite,” said the company’s HR Systems and Process Manager. Having worked with over 2,000 SAP SuccessFactors customers, Aasonn is recognized by SAP SuccessFactors as one of their most experienced implementation partners, and the combined strength of SAP SuccessFactors and Aasonn was a winning combination.
OUTCOME

Improved Reporting Capabilities and HR Transparency

With a tightly integrated and fully unified talent platform, the auto brand’s U.S. subsidiary has centralized all employee data, eliminated redundant manual data entry and greatly improved HR’s reporting capabilities. They can now easily create and access powerful dashboards in real time, improving HR transparency and giving them the ability to make more data-driven workforce decisions that, ultimately, lead to better bottom-line results.

These enhanced reporting capabilities have also helped HR to be seen as more of a strategic business partner and elevated the role of the HR function internally. Prior to the SAP SuccessFactors implementation, for example, hiring managers didn’t have visibility into the behind-the-scenes workings of the HR team, which made it difficult to fully understand the scope and complexity of HR’s recruiting efforts. With the new recruiting system, however, any hiring manager can now see in real time the status of applications for any open position. Not only has the new platform made the recruiting process more efficient and scalable, but it has also given hiring managers more self-service visibility into the overall process—a vital element when you consider a single open internship position can easily yield 500-600 applications.

Time Savings and Efficiency Gains

The significant time savings from the automation of many HR processes which were previously manually executed freed the HR team to spend their time on more value-added strategic initiatives. With the use of the SAP SuccessFactors mobile application, the company has also been able to further improve workforce productivity and increase business agility by providing instant access to HR services across the SAP SuccessFactors HCM Suite.

Just using the Time Off functionality in Employee Central, for example, the company was able to generate tremendous time savings very early on in the implementation process. Under the previous paper-based system, the HR team would have to go through four or five thick binders—one page at a time—to manually enter employee PTO data at the end of each year. Now, with the self-service capabilities of Employee Central, employees submit their own PTO requests in the system to be approved by their manager, resulting in large efficiency gains.

Charting the Future

Having completed the first phase of the SAP SuccessFactors implementation in June 2017, the brand’s U.S. subsidiary is now looking to go live with additional modules of the HCM suite to achieve greater efficiencies and economies of scale. They are in the process of implementing SAP SuccessFactors Learning, Compensation, and Performance & Goals. They have just begun implementation of SAP SuccessFactors Learning—integrated with SAP Jam Collaboration—with the goal of using this as an intranet replacement, as well as to more easily distribute relevant information to targeted groups.

As the company’s HR and Systems Process Manager noted, “Based on the success we’ve seen from the first phase of our SAP SuccessFactors implementation guided by Aasonn, we are looking forward to expanding our use of the platform to realize even greater business value from our investment.”

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