

# Case Study

**Cascade HR** are the leading provider of .Net human resource and integrated Payroll solutions to the UK market. Founded in 1992 Cascade now have over 500 clients across many industries and sectors.

Our most innovative solution to date is CascadeHRP which is a .Net browser based HR system along with our own integrated HMRC accredited Payroll solution which is a proactive, dynamic and vibrant HR solution offering cutting edge, proven functionality to today's HR & Payroll Professionals.

Punter Southall  
Group

**Punter Southall Group** is made up of several companies working in the financial services sector, Punter's main business is in providing actuarial and pension administration advice, in addition Punter are also involved in providing client's employee benefits consultancy and investment consultancy to both companies and high net worth individuals. The company employs around 650 predominately professional staff across 11 locations throughout the UK.

**Prior to implementing** the latest Cascade .NET product Punter were using a Cascade legacy product called Sense.

Phil Silver - HR Operations Manager at Punter comments "When I joined the Group we were using a product called Sense. This had been implemented in the Group a few months before I joined and the project appeared to be going off the rails predominantly due to a lack of ownership in our Group with nobody driving the project forward."

Phil continues, "I was brought in to evaluate what we had purchased and make a decision as to the way forward,

This seemed to present two options, firstly, develop what we had in place, or secondly to start again and go out and source another product.

It became clear early on that as stated earlier a lot of our issues were caused through the lack of ownership by anyone in the Group, rather than issues with the Sense product. The system had a number of gaps in data where we had just not thought the project through in terms of what we wanted from the system.

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One of the first things I did was to meet with Cascade HR's Client Services Director, Heather Boiangiu, to discuss my thoughts of what I saw as the issues and what I wanted from the system. There were gaps in the functionality but it was clear to me that Cascade were keen to get us back on track and provide us with the help we needed to get the software to meet the needs of the Group.

I needed to understand what the Group wanted going forward and at the same time establish what the Sense product could do.

I knew from previous implementations that we may need to customise the product to closer meet our requirements as clearly our needs may not be the same as other users so having an off the shelf solution may not necessarily be right.

Heather Boiangiu, Client Services Director at Cascade helped me in put some structure to our ideas and was very open in terms of what we could or could not achieve with the product we had.

It became clear that there were some things that I was keen to introduce that the current product was not able to provide so we began to talk about a new product that was being developed by Cascade which in turn lead to the idea of Punter Southall Group becoming a beta test site.

Having been down this route in previous organisations I was comfortable with the idea of being a beta test site and knew from experience that this would be the best way to get to where we wanted to be."

#### The Decision

Punter decided to move ahead with becoming a beta test site for the new Cascade product in December 2005. It was agreed at that time that the project would kick off in March 2006, which fitted in with other workload commitments of my team.

A project plan was put together by Cascade and agreed by both parties.

#### The Project

Phil comments, "Once the project kicked off in late March 2006, the developers at Cascade took an extract of our data and loaded that into the Beta software so we could test our own recognisable and current data.

Heather Boiangiu, Cascade HR's Client Services Director spent a number of days working with us going through our specific requirements and training us on any new functionality.

The plan was to run the beta test site in parallel with our current system so end users would not suffer any downtime or be aware of any changes going on in the background.

It was key that we could ensure that the two systems were giving the same answers to any reports or queries.

There were some key differences with the new software that needed training and we were given what was required by Heather.

We were asked to try and break the new system by whatever way possible to check every screen and every button and literally try and make it fall over. I am pleased to advise we failed to do this and the system was found to be completely stable.

Once we were comfortable that everything was working we agreed a go live date.

We informed all staff of the change we were making and on the agreed day the system was switched over and rolled out with no problems occurring.

Through this whole process the Heather was on site and the Developers at Cascade were on standby to ensure any fix that was needed would be actioned ASAP. This proved unnecessary as there were no problems."

#### The Solution

Phil continues, "The Cascade system has now been running just short of two years with no issues what so ever.

In addition to Core HR we have;

- System Designer - We felt that going forward we wanted the ability to be able to add additional fields or screens and instantly be able to report on any additions that have been made, all this without the need to get the software house to do this and incurring additional consultancy days.

- The Workflow Tool - We were keen to automate a whole raft of typical HR processes. Perhaps the biggest gain is the reduced paperwork and saving in time spent on handling standard HR processes. The system now sends to managers e-mails re probation ends, we get told by the system when somebody is leaving, so we can start our leaver process and all new joiners automatically get sent a Health & Safety statement and Work Station Assessment questionnaire.

- Active Directory single sign on - Staff using the previous Sense product were forever asking for their passwords to be reset as they had forgotten them. Single Sign in removes this problem immediately.

- Staff Surveys - We wanted the ability to get feedback from our employees and this module allows this. We have used the survey tool to handle a stress audit, benefit review and the Staff Christmas Party Invite."

#### The Future

Punter Southall have recently implemented our HMRC approved payroll module, Phil comments, "We have just completed the implementation of the Cascade payroll over all 7 of our payrolls. this module meets the precise needs of our Group."