



“With a single point of entry for data and Employee Self Service, HR can rely on the data to an extent that wasn’t possible in the past. Managers can run their own reports and the whole company recognises that HR data is sound.”

Nigel Rogers, HR Information Systems Manager,
Aberdeen Asset Management.

Case Study

Aberdeen Asset Management and HR.net

Introduction Aberdeen Asset Management PLC is an international investment management group operating in many countries of the world and controlling investments that total over £100 billion. The company is independent and is completely focused on fund management, where it operates in line with its own values of solid investments, research and risk monitoring. The company has teams of investment specialists based in all of its local markets and their expertise spans equities, fixed income investments and property. Aberdeen Asset Management's largest clients are institutional investors, such as national pension schemes, listed investment companies and charities. People are core to this operation and Aberdeen's staff have significant ownership in the business.

Challenge The staff at Aberdeen Asset Management increased from 780 to 1128 following the acquisition of Deutsche Asset Management. The employees are spread across the globe, between offices in London, Aberdeen, Philadelphia and the Far East. The existing HR system had been used alongside several separate, standalone Lotus Notes databases. Entering new data to these was causing too much manual data entry work and their reporting capability was limited. It was clear that the company needed a new HR system.

Like many financial companies, Aberdeen has complicated reward packages made up of salary, bonus, benefits and shares. Their compensation review process involves 60 managers who make recommendations to the Compensation Review Committee. This goes through three cycles of meetings before compensation awards are finalised. Ideally their new system would support this process, as well as meeting the essential requirements of interfacing neatly with their existing UK and international payrolls and telephone lists.

Solution The HR team, led by HR Information Systems Manager Nigel Rogers, invited five software vendors for discussions and carried out tests to see how easily their data could be loaded to the systems. Vizual's HR.net stood out as meeting their requirements better than any other company. Aberdeen Asset Management particularly liked the workflow features in HR.net and they felt comfortable that Vizual would be flexible enough to support some of their particular requirements relating to software interfaces and their compensation packages.

HR.net has now been installed globally and all of the employee data has been loaded: job history, pay, benefits, qualifications and compensation. Employee Self Service and Manager Self Service have been operational for some time in the UK and the Far East. Another software module, CPD, for Continuous Professional Development, has just been rolled out. HR.net is also being used to track recruitment internally. "HR.net is a pretty big, powerful system," said Nigel Rogers. "You get all of the modules and you can choose what you want to implement and when."

Key benefits

- Routine HR processes and reporting are much faster
- Reduced data entry
- No need to maintain duplicate systems
- Much more accurate, reliable HR data
- The Compensation Review process is much easier, with fewer appeals

HR.net has one single point of data entry and employees can update their own records, such as address and bank details, using the Employee Self Service module. This cuts out much of the tedious data entry work. Nigel Rogers explains “At first, a lot of people were cautious about HR.net, but they have begun to rely on the new system and they are now much happier. Quite a few people were concerned about the security of the data in the early days. We thought the security measures were adequate, but we added extra security and now people must use a password if they want to see their salary.”

HR.net is also making HR functions much easier. For example, the HR Department used to use checklists of tasks to deal with new staff joining the company. HR.net automates some of these procedures. Also, managers can use the Manager Self Service facilities of HR.net to access data about staff and employees. Naturally, this is much quicker than requesting the information from one of the HR advisors.

The HR advisors have all been up-skilled to create their own HR reports.



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Nigel Rogers, HR Information Systems Manager, Aberdeen Asset Management.

Other departments and managers at Aberdeen Asset Management are now relying totally upon the data within HR.net. For example, the HR Department used to have to provide accurate details about staff to the Request for Proposals team which works on new business. Now the RFP team can access the details they need immediately, online. The Finance Department also uses data from HR.net and no longer needs to keep their own separate records of headcount and so on.

“Previously, each department kept its own records for Absence Management,” explains Nigel Rogers. “Those spreadsheets are fast disappearing, as people realise that HR.net is faster.”

The Compensation Review process has become much easier for everyone. Each of the 60 managers used to submit their recommendations for pay awards and bonuses on spreadsheets which had to be re-keyed to produce the reports for the Compensation Review Committee, now, this is done much faster. HR.net produces a Total Reward Statement which shows the salary and value of benefits and shares, for each employee, even deferred awards. It is a big advantage to have all this information on one document which the employee and the manager can see. “We allow plenty of time for the compensation review process but now it takes less time and the numbers are more accurate.” said Nigel Rogers.

Aberdeen Asset Management now has a very efficient HR department. Since the acquisition of Deutsche Asset Management, the existing HR team only needed three more HR Managers to cope with the extra workload created by 340 more employees.

Future plans

Aberdeen Asset Management plans to implement HR.net in more areas and to enhance some of the existing processes. "We are working with Vizual to develop a new system for performance review and appraisals and we are developing a training system ourselves. This will allow staff to request training and submit their requests to their managers to be approved," said Nigel Rogers.

Besides this, HR.net is to be rolled out to the USA office, which will require some adjustments to support USA business practice. Next, the Absence Management

module is to be introduced in Australia and Thailand. Absence Management is particularly important in Singapore, which has strict rules governing how absence from work should be authorised and recorded.

"We shall also continue to update and enhance the Compensation Review process," said Nigel Rogers. "For example, there may be changes to the type of rewards given in any particular year. We are listening to the feedback from our management to learn how we can improve this in future."

About Vizual Business Tools

Vizual Business Tools develops business process-driven software solutions for all areas of workforce and people management. It works with a number of leading organisations worldwide, including De La Rue, Hilton, Regus, RIAS and Hastings Direct.

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Contact us

If you would like to arrange a meeting to discuss how we can begin to automate your processes and free up your to focus on your strategic concerns, or would like more information on anything in this case study, please contact us on the details below.

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