



CASE STUDY

NATURES WAY FOODS

Natures Way Foods improves staff management with Web-based Kronos system

Major Benefits Achieved by Natures Way Foods

- Web-based system allows easy access from other locations
- Flexible system for enrolling contractor staff
- Improved accessibility of employee data for managers
- Staff schedules easy to administer
- Web architecture reduces additional costs when rolling out to new locations
- Simple and effective way of monitoring Working Time Directive
- Excellent reporting functionality
- Remote 'clocking' has benefited staff based away from site
- Facility to link Kronos to the ERP system to provide accurate job costing
- Integration with Midland HR and Payroll
- Intuitive system – easy to navigate.

Natures Way Foods

Natures Way Foods supplies washed and ready to eat salads to leading companies in the UK, including Tesco, Morrisons and McDonalds. The business is run from 2 sites in West Sussex and 1 site in Hampshire and sources a large proportion of its products from a sister company, Langmead Farms. The company is passionate about delivering 100% customer satisfaction and continually invests in its systems and processes to ensure excellent supply to customers, 365 days a year. Turnover topped £53 million in the financial year 2003-2004 and have had double digit growth year &

year, over the past eleven years, the future growth plan is to double the turnover of the business to £150m by 2011.

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Andrew Brierley, Natures Way Foods

The Challenge

The company previously recorded employees' working time with a semi-automated time and attendance system that was becoming increasingly problematic. With a client/server set up, the desire to expand the system to cover all three Natures Way Foods sites was cost prohibitive. The company, therefore required a web-based system with a wider range of functionality that could be integrated with other systems, such as HR, payroll and the ERP system.



The Solution

Following an extensive evaluation of a number of systems vendors, Natures Way Foods selected Kronos. Commenting on the selection, Andrew Brierley, project manager, said, "We were impressed by the overall functionality of the Kronos system and the opportunity to extend the system across more than one site with minimal additional cost. Taking into account additional benefits, such as ongoing support and maintenance, Kronos was the obvious choice".

Initially, Natures Way Foods were users of Kronos Workforce Central 4.3, but have recently migrated to Kronos Workforce Central 5.1, with a licence to register up to 1,000 employees.

Kronos at Natures Way Foods

All 500 permanent employees are required to record their working time and each member of staff has a schedule set up in Kronos, regardless of whether they work full or part-time, salaried or contract. The organisation is open for business 24/7, with staff working a rotating shift pattern. Staff record their time using swipe card terminals and are requested to record time at the beginning and end of a shift. The web-based system has been deployed across all three sites and can also be accessed remotely from employees' homes when required – for professional staff working out of hours, for example.

Project Benefits

Natures Way Foods has seen a number of benefits as a result of fully automating the system, including:

Web-based system efficiencies

The web-based nature of the system ensured an easy deployment over the initial two sites, with very few additional costs incurred to install Kronos at a third site in Portsmouth.

Web architecture also enables managers to access employee timecard information direct from their desktops, putting managers in control of employee information.

Easy management of contractor workforce

In addition to permanent employees, Natures Way Foods employs a flexible workforce direct from Poland. Natures Way Foods adheres to a strict ethics code laid down by many major supermarkets and uses Kronos to ensure that the workforce cannot be scheduled to work more than a maximum number of hours per week – and no more than the average number of hours allowed under Working Time

Directive rules. Contractors record their working time in exactly the same way as permanent employees and are paid via the Kronos system.

Straightforward and intuitive staff scheduling

Staff work in 12-hour shifts with a rotating pattern, with Kronos administrators responsible for entering and updating the shifts in Kronos. Whatever the complexity of the shift pattern, the system is easy to load and shifts can be changed quickly either on an individual basis or for a larger group.

Holiday accruals for salaried staff.

Kronos keeps a record of all staff holidays, including lieu hours owed to office based staff. Previously, the information was not easily accessible, with manual timecards used to record and monitor holiday and lieu hours entitlement.

Excellent reporting functionality

Absence, attendance and overtime reporting are widely used at Natures Way Foods, including board level reports on absence levels and trends. The company awards an annual attendance bonus for staff who achieve 100% attendance and estimate that it takes only 5 minutes to run the report from Kronos.

Andrew Brierley explained, "Kronos reports are giving us a fantastic insight into absence levels and trends, as well as punctuality and overall attendance. We soon plan to use a Monday/Friday report from Kronos to see if patterns are emerging on staff taking days off around the weekend".

Activity based reporting to improve product costing

Activity based costing is currently carried out manually by Natures Way Foods – a time consuming process that is about to change with the introduction of Business Objects report writing. Data from the Kronos system and the ERP system will soon be merged to form one report in Business Objects to accurately measure the productivity of individuals and teams, and to measure the exact cost of individual items.

Natures Way Foods is continuing to invest in its Kronos system, with future developments including the installation of Kronos Calendars, which will enable the review of all employees activities in a graphical format, whilst allowing drilling down capabilities back to the employee's time card.



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