

Case Study

Local World
Local newspapers
Business Process Services

Leading local news network transforms HR operations with Ricoh



At Local World, a leading regional media network, people are one of the most important assets. With paper-based information scattered across multiple local offices, servicing the business' HR administration function was

becoming even more complex and expensive. But after deploying a Ricoh Business Process Service, Local World has reduced HR costs, improved efficiency and delivered better services to the business.

Executive summary

Name: Local World
Location: Leicester, East Midlands
Size: 2800 employees
Activity: Local newspapers and websites

Challenges

- Support a business strategy to centralise business services
- HR information and processes dispersed and increasingly difficult to manage
- Legacy information held in multiple styles and formats

Solution

- Ricoh Business Process Service
- HR record digitalisation
- Auditable, cloud-based application with sophisticated search criteria

Benefits

- Transforms HR operations, making them fast, efficient and less costly
- Cuts time to access HR information from 24 hours to seconds
- Helps to make business processes more streamlined
- Makes information simple and easy to find for non-technical users
- Helps turns large amounts of HR data into useful business information

Challenges

Local World is one of the largest regional media networks in the UK. It has a portfolio of long-standing print titles (16 daily titles, 35 paid weeklies, 31 free weeklies) and more than 74 websites. The company's local newspapers cover the Midlands and North East England, London and the South East, Central and Eastern England and South West England and South Wales. Local World newspapers reach over six million readers every week and over 18 million unique users every month visit its websites. Local World has three major industry shareholders dmg media, Trinity Mirror and the Yattendon Group.

In order to reduce costs and improve operational efficiency, Local World has a strategy to centralise many of its core business support, administration and back office functions. With people representing the company's most valuable and most costly asset, HR administration is a key function and one of many that is now centred in Local World's Accounting Services function in Leicester.

Historically, paper records about employees were held at local offices across England and Wales. This meant that processes, such as managing staff recruitment or departure, were becoming complex, costly and lengthy. Also, because Local World was formed through the acquisition of two businesses, HR information was recorded and filed in several different ways, so there was no standard format for recording and cataloguing employee data.

Although centralising the HR function would bring significant benefits, HR information would still need to be accessible to local managers. Local World needed some way of centralising its HR documents, while also making them accessible across the whole organisation. The company put out a tender and looked at a number of differed suppliers

and solutions. In the end, Local World decided to partner with Ricoh.

Jane Newman, Finance Director for Accounting Services at Local World, says, "Ricoh has a huge amount of experience in the document and information management space. Through a number of its existing customers, Ricoh was able to demonstrate an innate understanding of our business challenges and the solution it proposed made a compelling argument for choosing Ricoh."

Solution

Local World has used a Ricoh Business Process Service that has enabled the business to digitise thousands of HR records and create a cloud-based system to make the information accessible to authorised Local World users. The service started with Ricoh taking all of Local World's hardcopy HR documents to its specialist document management centre turning them into pdf documents.

During the digitisation process Ricoh developed a sophisticated document cataloguing and categorisation method. Where Local World used to have different types of paper documents, the Ricoh solution now means that each pdf has a standard look and feel, can be filed in a logical way and can be easily searched and accessed. Each pdf or employee record now has standard sub-sections, like pay, pensions or disciplinary actions, which are relevant to HR operations.

To help Local World meet compliance and regulatory requirements, other features of the Ricoh solution include: the ability to audit every document, track how and when a document has been accessed or changed, and the ability to manage hierarchical access to information. Even during the scanning process each document was audited by Ricoh, so that should one of them need to be scrutinised in the future, there is a record of its origin.

Having digitised the HR documents, Ricoh then developed a cloud-based application to enable the information to be accessed from anywhere and by anyone in Local World with the appropriate permission. Both the individual pdfs and the cloud application have rigorous and industry-standard security features built in to ensure confidential information is protected.

continued overleaf



Case Study Local World

Once digitisation was complete, Ricoh prepared all the hard-copy for archiving and returned them to Local World for longer-term storage and ultimately destruction once there was full confidence in the system.

Ricoh was able to manage the transition from a paper-based to digital HR function without disrupting day-to-day operations to schedule and on budget.

From the outset file update scanning has been made available to users direct from Local World's Ricoh Multifunction Products (MFPs) enabling locations around the UK to scan new records and create updates to existing files at no additional cost to Local World. Scanning from MFPs utilises existing Ricoh assets and offers users existing resources to manage file updates.

Through the change process Ricoh offered unhindered access to working files ensuring core administrative functions were able to continue. The project was planned, managed and delivered with a high level of competence underpinned by strong team communication throughout between both Local World and Ricoh.

Benefits

Graham Judge, Group HR Director for Local World, says, "There are many organisations that can digitise documents and make them available electronically. But what sets the Ricoh solution apart is the flexibility, usability and manageability that it has delivered around those digitised documents.

It has turned what was important data, locked on paper documents and scattered across the organisation, into business critical information that is available instantly where and when it's needed."

The solution has transformed the way Local World now manages its HR operation. It has virtually eliminated the time it takes to access employee information, reduced floor space for file storage and significantly improved processes which has saved time and money. Previously, a manager might have to call up a local office, find out if a file was available and then get it couriered overnight. With this solution information is now available securely and within seconds direct from the desktop. This capability has also helped to make HR administration faster and more efficient because the information needed to process a pay rise or a new starter, for example, can be accessed immediately. Other complex and time-consuming functions, such as managing temporary staff or staff churn, is much easier and faster.

Features in the Ricoh cloud solution, such as a simple, Google-like search facility, make the system easy to use. But if required, other features such as system administration tools are available for more advanced users.

Ricoh Solution/Products

- Cloud application development
- HR document management system
- Ricoh Multifunction Products

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