



Sage has successfully transformed its payroll growth strategy by adopting a partnership approach with ADP®

Founded in a Newcastle pub 40 years ago, millions of small and mid-sized businesses (SMBs) around the world are now served by Sage and its partners. Customers trust its finance, HR, and payroll software to make work and money flow. By digitising business processes and relationships with customers, suppliers, employees, banks, and governments; Sage's digital network connects SMBs, removing friction and delivering insights.

Take a new look at pay

Global Payroll and People Projects Director Charlotte O'Driscoll joined Sage four years ago and was tasked with setting up a unified global payroll strategy for the company. It was something she immediately relished. "Payroll is the only function that touches every employee, every month. As such, picking the right solution is key," she explains. "Whilst Sage makes great payroll solutions for SMBs, these are not the solutions that we can use internally due to our size. I wanted to change to a strategy that would best suit the business on our current growth plan."

Sage needed a solution fit for a large organisation that would give it control and consistency. However, the outcome of the analysis performed showed that Sage was using 14 separate payroll solutions globally. Sage knew that consolidating the disparate processes into one unified solution was needed to minimise the amount of support required and leverage unified capabilities of a central payroll solution.

Charlotte O'Driscoll,
Global Payroll and People Projects
Director at Sage

Quick facts

-  **Company:** Sage
-  **Industry:** Financial Services
-  **Established:** 1981
-  **Employees:** 11,785
-  **Headquarters:** Newcastle upon Tyne, UK

Learn more about Sage
at www.sage.com


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The challenges

Because every country has its own set of rules, regulations, banking systems, and compliance requirements, operating globally creates challenges for global businesses such as Sage to run a secure payroll. "We didn't want to have a fragmented model with multiple systems in multiple countries" explained Charlotte. "Whilst many vendors claim to have a global solution, very few do so in reality. Even those that do rarely have proven performance within multiple countries, struggle to remain up to date with the constantly changing legislative landscape within them."

In addition to a supplier's global expertise, Charlotte wanted to ensure that the selected supplier had a high level of customer service and could boast the upmost security posture. "I needed to be able to trust them" she said.

The solution

Sage went through an exhaustive process to identify and assess available payroll solutions on the market. There was one clear winner. "We went with ADP. It is the market leader in terms of multi-country payroll operations and has a highly scalable solution so can expand and adapt to the needs of our business," said Charlotte. This was key, as Sage is on a significant merger and acquisition drive that is likely to continue in the years to come.

The company chose to use ADP GlobalView for its large headcount countries and ADP Celergo for its smaller headcount countries. "Using both ADP GlobalView and ADP Celergo means that we have the best of both worlds and ensures we have the optimal solution within each country" commented Charlotte. "For example, in the smaller headcount countries, we still need to ensure compliance with local legal requirements, yet are unlikely to have the payroll specialists and expertise in those countries ourselves."

ADP's cloud based GlobalView platform makes it easy for companies such as Sage to run global payroll by using a single system of record to unify employee data while accommodating local payroll rules to run compliant payroll.

ADP Celergo, meanwhile, was perfect for the smaller territories Sage operates in as it helps HR and payroll professionals run multi-country payroll, whilst providing easy access to data. ADP Celergo easily handles changes, calculations, funding and reporting by standardising international payroll processes and providing a tool that supports clients in meeting their compliance obligations.

Both solutions provide staff with a portal they can use to log on to view their pay statements and tax information. Something that proved extremely popular and helped gain stakeholder buy-in.



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The results

Sage understands that it is always advantageous to have less vendors (and contracts) to manage. ADP provides a single platform right across the business. As well as easing continuity planning, it means that Charlotte and her team can now run global reports with minimal effort. "ADP provides us with sight across our entire business, which we didn't have before. Through the process we discovered a number of security risks we were carrying within the business that we have been able to eliminate."

Due to it enjoying standardisation across its global payroll processes, Sage's resource requirements are now minimal. "By moving to a single solution from ADP, standard processes and a standard control framework means the only things left to deal with are country specific. This makes it much easier to support and maintain. Plus, by automating more data flows, has removed several manual processes that were previously prone to human error," commented Charlotte.

Sage has been impressed with the service it received from ADP throughout the project. "Having the right team in place massively contributes to the success of any implementation. ADP ensured that was the case," enthused Charlotte. "The team has been fantastic and a true partner to us in our payroll transformation journey. They have been very flexible throughout the three-year phased rollout and allowed us to make changes where necessary."

The core change was to move from initially processing payroll in-house to a managed service from ADP.

"Data from payroll is really valuable to any business. By working with ADP, Sage now has a more global strategic view of the organisation and an effective governance model," added Charlotte. "Both tools are great to work with and have really impressed me. 'Whilst the benefits with each country have varied, internal productive and resource savings (30% reduction in headcount) has all helped achieve our overall goal of having a robust and compliant solution at a neutral investment."



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