

Managed human resource solutions that maximise the value of people



World Design & Trade

Background

THE CUSTOMER

World Design & Trade Company (WDT) is a designer, wholesaler and retailer of casual clothing for men and women. Employing over 200 people, the company owns three of the leading brands in today's fashion market, with a current turnover of £60 million.

WDT was set up in 1981 to manage the **Sonneti** brand, and has since introduced **Firetrap** (1993), and most recently **Full Circle** in 1996. These three brands are today available wholesale in major retailers, as well as fashion multiples and fashion stores across the UK and Eire. The company also exports its brands to Europe, the Middle East and Australasia. And all three brands have concessions in Selfridges and House of Fraser. In August 2004, WDT opens its first Concept Store in Covent Garden.

WDT is committed to excellence in every area of its business – people, product and service. Making sure it has the right mix of talent who will set the latest fashion trends, not react to them. And investing in technology and training to ensure it delivers the leading brands each season, supported by the very best customer service.

THE ISSUE

Over half of the company's employees frequently need to travel for their jobs. These include the designers, as well as those in sourcing, production, sales and marketing. These teams often have to meet with new suppliers and retail outlets that stock their clothes.

Until 2003, the company had been using a paper-based system for expenses, with a manual spreadsheet. But the finance team were processing about £0.5 million's worth of expense claims every year, which meant storing them was taking up a lot of office space. What's more, the claims didn't always contain the right level of detail and the time taken to authorise them was keeping the finance team away from their core business. The company felt the expense claims process needed a better system of control.

WDT were already partnering with Ceridian to deliver the payroll and manage their HR systems. Rather than build their own system, or invest in software from another provider, the company decided to become the flagship customer for Ceridian's web-based Managed Expenses service.

At the time, Ceridian were looking for a company to help test the system, and WDT agreed to help. Financial Director, John Bailey, explains "We had lengthy discussions with Ceridian and concluded their system could give us the necessary benefits. And, by being a beta tester, we could influence the development of the system and improvements to it."

"We felt Ceridian's Managed Expenses service was the only solution that would streamline the expense claims process and give us the level of control we needed over our corporate costs."

John Bailey *Financial Director, WDT*



World Design &
Trade Co. Ltd



Business solution

SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT

In the early part of 2003, WDT worked with the system developers at Ceridian to make the necessary enhancements and ensure it would meet WDT's requirements. For example, as the company's employees travel all over the world, they pay expenses in more than one currency. So they needed the system to translate all these into sterling to help manage costs.

The original date for the first beta test was put back to allow for further fine-tuning of the system, before the system went live at WDT in July 2003. The first test was a complete success and all employees received full payment for their expenses.

EXPENSE CLAIMS PROCESS

Employees at WDT now enter in their expenses at a secure website. They then print out the details, sending these and any receipts to Ceridian's service centre in Doncaster. Meanwhile, the claim is workflowed through to the relevant manager at WDT who authorises payment. Once this is given, the team at Doncaster process the claim before payment is made.

WDT receive a full breakdown of all expenses, with reports showing which employees make the most claims and highlighting anyone who isn't adhering to company policy. One optional policy that they have introduced is that every claim must have a receipt. This helps the finance team account for every penny spent by employees.

Benefits

Moving to a managed expenses service has improved the overall expense claims process for WDT, and delivered measurable business benefits by:

- ✓ **freeing resources to focus more on value-added activities**
- ✓ **helping to keep staff morale high by reimbursing employees more promptly**
- ✓ **giving WDT greater control over the process by flagging any claims that don't adhere to company policy**
- ✓ **identifying opportunities for cost-savings by highlighting possible corporate discounts WDT could negotiate**
- ✓ **reducing overhead costs, such as storage, as all records are archived by Ceridian**
- ✓ **giving a direct link on the system to the corporate credit card, making it easier for employees to enter any expenses put on this account**
- ✓ **providing ongoing support for the WDT team, from Ceridian's experts.**

WDT continue to provide invaluable feedback to the team at Ceridian, helping them enhance the solution. The two companies are currently working to further increase the speed of the system and make it even simpler to use.

"The team at Ceridian are very knowledgeable and provide us with full support. And we're working with them to enhance the system and add extra features that will improve the process for us and their other customers."

John Bailey Financial Director, WDT

To find out how Ceridian's range of managed HR and payroll solutions can help you maximise the value of your people, call 0800 733 337 or email info@ceridian.com for more information. Alternatively visit our website at www.ceridian.co.uk

