

Beyond payroll: the system that can change your business

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Can changing your payroll system change your business? This is a big claim. Payroll was traditionally a business process with clear timelines. Today, it still has to happen as regularly as clockwork and requires considerable administration and diligence. But it was traditionally thought of as isolated.



Source: Supplied. Sandra Crous, managing director of PaySpace.

So it seems strange to say that payroll can change your business and can be the stepping stone for the digital future. Yet through cloud services, business can take payroll beyond how it functions today.

Naturally, as the head of a cloud-native payroll and HR solution, the idea of beyond payroll is compelling, extending from my interactions with customers.

What we are finding is that the customers that are looking for new technology platforms are looking for digitisation and efficiency. They want to work smarter and not harder.

It's interesting that many of these customers are not only large enterprises but also smaller businesses, and many of the adopters are the younger generation. They are more familiar with technology, and they want to get those benefits. They want to see more value from payroll.

No more payroll processing hermits

The value of cloud payroll platforms reinforces the point about business transformation: a traditional payroll environment can be manual and time-specific.

It often involves one or a few cloistered individuals sitting hunched over a laptop for several days during payroll processing, collating data, generating reports and making sure that the payroll is paid accurately and on time.

Cloud-native payroll systems turn this culture on its ear. Here's an emerging feature in the industry as an example:

We recently launched WhatsApp integration with our service. This lets employees access their payslips, leave records, claims, tax certificate, personal details through WhatsApp accounts, so they don't need an email address - just a phone with a linked WhatsApp account.

Employees can also use self-service to engage with payroll and departments such as HR.

A customer related this to me: their employees started using self-service to access copies of their ID stored in the software. That is such a simple thing, but it saves them from finding and scanning their ID when it is already available at their fingertips. So, one small addition to the payroll system translates into a big benefit for employees - and no administrator had to intervene to find and give them the ID copy. It's all automated.



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Automation, along with integration, expands the value of cloud-native payroll. As another customer with multiple branch locations commented, the cloud system means no more updates or backups. You just log in and do your work. You can even approve leave transactions and other elements on your phone from anywhere.

Reducing manual work creates additional benefits. Such a payroll system makes it easy for different people to contribute to a single source of business data by using self-service portals and process maps to align with different stakeholders. They can also access that data, putting valuable employee and finance information right in front of decision-makers.

I remember how we used to prepare financial packs and reports that we would go through once a month. They had a lot of depth and took a lot of work to compile. But the new way of work is no longer having those absolute deadlines. It's about being ready every day.

Different parts of the business can access data and generate specific insights, using Power BI and Cloud Analytics, when and where they need it. Integrated data is of enormous value to a company, and a payroll system is a great stepping stone to create that integration.

Payroll: the cloud stepping stone

Yet the same can be said about many business systems. Integration, automation and access are the hallmarks of the best cloud-software systems. So why use payroll as the candidate to take a business into the digital age?

Let's distil it to three points, first, payroll systems are typically very manual and functionally segregated from the rest of the business, so it's a perfect opportunity for cloud software to do its magic.

Second, payroll can overlap with many other parts of the business. More people will benefit from it. And third, traditional

payroll systems are more isolated so replacing them is less disruptive than other types of software. Cloud payroll is a good proof of concept for digital modernisation in the business.

Cloud payroll platforms can change your business. They turn a crucial yet marginalised business system into a digital foundation, improve access to information, extend services to more people, and articulate how companies can pursue digital improvements.

It adds value to the lives of the entire business, it gives back value to employees, it saves the time of administrators and accountants, and it's an investment you no longer use only during payroll processing time, but gain value from every day.

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