



Intercontinental Hotels Group improves their merit review process using Cezanne Connect

InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) is the world's most global hotel company. It has more than 3,500 hotels and over 539,000 guest rooms in nearly 100 countries and territories around the world.



To manage its diverse operations and maintain high standards of service IHG places great importance on handling enterprise-wide initiatives effectively. It has recently implemented Cezanne Connect Pay Review to manage its annual merit review process for over 4,000 senior people across 20 global offices.

Labour intensive and slow

Like many organisations, IHG had been managing pay review for senior staff using a spreadsheet-based application. This was both time consuming and labour-intensive.

Reward specialists cut individual spreadsheets for each of the different pay review groups, then sent them out to the reviewing managers - some 400 across the business. Once these had been completed and returned, they had to be manually recompiled and checked.

As Gemma Fox, Reward Administrator at IHG explained. "This approach while workable, was hard to administer and resulted in data integrity problems. We had to manually check and recheck information, often having to compare different documents, some of which had been modified by reviewing managers so were not even in the same format."

Senior reward specialists were wasting a lot of time checking for errors and, because there was no way of managing the process, chasing up overdue pay proposals.

Automated, fast and transparent

The new system replaces the fragmented spreadsheet-based approach with a single, online application that is accessed via IHG's corporate intranet. At pay review time, the system automatically sends out emails to each of the reviewing managers with information about the review process, a link to the application and their secure login details.

Managers get immediate access to details for all of the employees in their review group, including the salary information and merit ratings applicable to each individual, together with their own specific budget guideline.

Reviewing managers can model pay proposals based on a percentage increase, increase amount or new salary amount. As they do so, they can see the effect this has on their overall budget, allowing them to experiment to find the optimum allocation.

Once the pay review proposals are complete, the system automatically routes them for approval within the company's review managers' hierarchy.

"The automatic routing has been one of the major benefits of the new system," said Gemma Fox. "There is no need to manually send spreadsheets - now the workflow process routes them automatically."

"As each review group is updated it is automatically rolled up into the higher level review groups, so we have a complete overview of all the twelve review plans at the top, which was always very difficult to gather before."

Cezanne Connect Pay Review was formerly known as HRM Connect Pay Review.



“Pay Review really does put us in the driving seat of the annual salary review, streamlining the process and saving us time.”

David House, Senior Vice President and Head of Reward, IHG

View from the top

IHG's reward team now have complete visibility over the whole pay review process as it is happening – something that was impossible with the previous approach. Pay Review lets them see both the overall picture and drill down to individual review groups to look at the detail. They are able to see who has completed reviews and who is lagging behind, who is over or under budget and what the overall figures are. This is enabling them to be much more proactive in resolving potential issues and helping to ensure that the process is completed on time.

Data integrity has also been improved. “The application provides much tighter control at the corporate level,” said David House, Senior Vice-President and Head of Reward at IHG. “Data can't be modified, and people or review groups can't be overlooked or wrongly allocated nor can budget guidelines be accidentally modified.”

For Gemma Fox's role as a reward administrator the key benefit of Pay Review has been the ease with which all of the information can be pulled together. Where before she had to wait until all of the spreadsheets had been returned by the reviewing managers, and then consolidate them, before being able to make any analysis of the figures, now all information is available instantly.

Enterprise reach

IHG has taken advantage of the system's web-native architecture to implement the solutions on a worldwide basis. Reviewing managers and reward specialists across its 20 global offices can log in via the intranet, at any time from anywhere.

As David House explained. “Because the application is online, we've been able to deploy the system across the whole of IHG easily, ensuring a greater level of consistency.”

The system also handles the multi currency issues faced by a global company like IHG. A baseline currency is set in the system, which includes exchange rates between the currencies that are used for the duration of the review. Managers can work in the local currency that is most familiar to them, whilst House and his team can view the information in a single baseline currency.

Smooth implementation

IHG has been delighted with Cezanne's understanding of the issues involved and the professionalism of the services.

“The implementation and user acceptance testing were very smooth – the Cezanne team was very good at understanding our needs, and extremely flexible as we faced time pressures due to our historical data integrity issues,” said Gemma Fox.

“Cezanne was also very responsive – when we had issues, they always came back to us very promptly.”

IHG is now in the process of implementing additional features, including specific capabilities to enable them to review pay awards to ensure the company is complying with US Adverse Impact legislation relating to minority and gender issues.

“Pay Review gives us a complete overview of our merit review process worldwide across all areas of our business, which would not have been possible before. It really does put us in the driving seat of the annual salary review, streamlining the process and saving us time. Pay Review gives us a truly enterprise approach to managing this key activity,” concluded David House.