

BAE Air Systems Group reap rewards of greater employee self-reliance

Crown Computing demonstrated the flexibility and benefits of its Open Options solution when BAE returned to extend to a third site in the Military Air Solutions group. Based around a web-browser and swipe cards employees have been given extended responsibility for managing their attendance and absence, proving to be a remarkable success to employees and management alike.



BAE SYSTEMS

Open Options operational manager at BAE Systems, Diane Elleray, explains how "Employees became more self-reliant when clocking time, booking holidays or querying the system," adding "The number of unqualified

hours quickly fell to negligible levels". Self-service has also helped in "Saving considerable administration," as "Three central administrators manage 9,000 people's time and attendance". (continued on page 2.)

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Vitacress Salads Ltd Gain Vital Insight

Vitacress Salads Ltd will gain a vital insight into labour costing when Crown's system rolls out at initially two UK sites. Open Options' ability to interface with existing systems was fundamental in the selection process.

"The requirement was to adopt a solution which is capable of interfacing with existing payroll, financial and operational data to deliver activity and labour costs for the business at departmental levels," said HR manager, Tony Alcock.

The system will initially feature at Vitacress' inspection and packaging

facilities at their Hampshire and Wiltshire sites, managing a total of 550 employees.

"The new Crown Computing system will allow us to enhance manufacturing effectiveness by empowering managers to maximise labour efficiency," said Alcock, adding "The system will allow the company to better understand and manage absenteeism."

"We are providing Vitacress with a seamless resource management unit," said Mike Hawkesford, MD, Crown Computing.

BAE Air Systems Group reap rewards of greater employee self-reliance

(continued from front page).

As existing users of the solution at its Warton and Samlesbury sites in Lancashire, BAE desired expansion to cover a further 750 staff at its Woodford site in Cheshire, especially considering the high level of satisfaction experienced with Crown. "Everybody I've met from Crown Computing is very professional," remarked Elleray. For example, in relation to the implementation and configuration process, "You can get an awful lot done in a day with a consultant and Crown Computing proved really helpful."

"Everybody I've met from Crown is very professional."



"Not only does Open Options deliver the right solution but it's proved its value to BAE Systems"

Crown also managed to solve some major working differences between each site, exemplifying the flexibility of **Open Options**. Shift patterns,

overtime rates and holidays all differed, but as a rules-based system, **Open Options** allows each site to operate autonomously from a single software platform. The previous ageing system failed to offer the benefits of Crown's system. For example, BAE used an ICL based solution for recording overtime, a time consuming process where employees sent paper-based overtime reports to departmental managers. Now, with the web browser and swipe card system, the process can be conducted with greater ease and minimal mistakes. Employees also have the benefit of querying overtime through multi-functional time clocks.

Moreover, the system greatly benefits management. It allows each employee's attendance to be drawn upon at any moment in time, highlighting any discrepancies, and also produces weekly reports which include manual clocking adjustments made by the finance team, overtime to be paid, and holiday entitlements.

The adopted solution therefore has proven a "Very useful tool by employees and managers alike".



"Not only does **Open Options** deliver the right solution but it's proved its value to BAE Systems," said Elleray.



Crown System Unifies Grampian T&A

Grampian Country Food Group have unified their time and attendance recording with Crown Computing's Open Options solution. Rationalisation has significantly reduced administration and operational costs, assuring a solid return on investment.

"The administrative effort involved has been significantly reduced," said project manager, Rob Herring.

The UK's leading privately owned agri-food business, employing 20,000 people across 38 sites, attained multiple systems as the business grew through acquisition. "The main business objective was to deliver a single corporate solution," explained Herring. Fundamentally, the new system had to cope with multiple payroll interfaces and many complex shift patterns and payment rules; all historically associated with the food processing industry. "Some of the rules and working patterns are so complicated that you wonder how this will be achieved," remarked

Herring. "But we've always managed to implement them using **Open Options** powerful rules engine."

"Some of the rules and working patterns are so complicated that you wonder how this will be achieved."

Managers are now appreciating improved information, and greater access to information, at the £1.8 billion turnover company. **Open Options** offers a single database, divided by sites and accessible over a wide area network and the real-time nature of the system has proven a great asset. "Managers now know



from **Open Options** at the beginning of the shift how many people they've got in. They also run their own reports for absence and overtime," explained Herring.

Additionally, employees are enjoying faster, simpler clocking in, and manual data collection inaccuracies have been eradicated, particularly at the 22 sites employing manual clock card systems. "From the point of view of manual collection, there were sometimes inaccuracies," said Herring. Central reporting was not easy either."

A solid return on investment has been further assured by reducing operational costs at the Scottish

based meat producers. Old maintenance contracts have been cancelled, and the company have saved on IT support, thanks to **Open Options'** ease of use and user-configuration. "We were able to configure the system ourselves," explained Herring.

The right choice

As existing users at two sites in Suffolk and Northern Ireland, Grampian knew they could expect a quality service from Crown in relation to product, implementation and support. "What swung it for us was the existing relationship we enjoyed with Crown Computing," said Herring.

Manager-administration courses, on-site workshops and telephone assistance have ensured smooth implementation, and Herring remarks how a Crown consultant "knew the system very well and was professional in her approach," adding Crown are "Very good on support."

"We made the right choice of **Open Options** time and attendance from **Crown Computing.**" said Herring.

regulate -

Work/Life balance... or should it be Life/Work balance?



This article has been written for Crown Computing by Derek Eccleston.

Derek is Managing Director of ELT Ltd., a consultancy specialising in the provision of training, advice and support for Employers on all aspects of Employment Law.

For further details visit www.eltraining.co.uk

Recent changes to “Family Friendly” rights

Paid maternity leave (and adoption leave) was extended from 26 to 39 weeks in April 2007.

This change applies to any woman whose expected date of childbirth is on or after 1 April 2007 – irrespective of when the baby actually arrives.

For adoption pay, the new rules apply for adoptions where the child is placed for adoption after 1 April 2007.

The Government has also set a goal of increasing the paid element of maternity leave from 39 weeks to 12 months leave within the current term of this Government, probably in 2009.

Some of the other changes are:-

- A new right for mothers to transfer a proportion of their maternity leave and pay. There is power in the Work and Families Act to provide for maternity pay to be transferred from the mother to a partner; in the form of additional, paid, paternity leave. The Government envisages that this would only apply after the first 6 months of maternity leave have been taken. This would potentially mean up to 3 months paid leave could be transferred if the mother chooses to return at this point. This new right will be called Additional Paternity Leave
- The requirement to have 6 months' qualifying service to be entitled to take additional maternity leave has been scrapped – with the result that all pregnant employees are entitled to 6 months of Ordinary maternity leave, immediately followed by a further 6 months of Additional Maternity Leave. Removing the current length of service requirement for additional maternity leave will mean that irrespective of service all pregnant women will be able to take 12 months leave from April 2007.

However the position on Adoption Leave is not changing, which means that an application to take Adoption Leave requires the employee to have at least 26 weeks service. Both parents may be eligible to take some Adoption Leave.

- Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) is only available to a woman who has achieved at least 26 weeks qualifying service, and this has not changed. So although all women are eligible to take up to a year off, only those with 6 months service will be able to claim Statutory Maternity Pay from their employer.
- New “keep in touch days” have also been introduced. This means that a woman can return to her employer and carry out some paid employment for a few days without this impacting on her right to claim statutory maternity pay. The Regulations permit employees to do occasional work during maternity leave without any loss of statutory rights or causing the maternity leave to come to an end prematurely. These are to be known as “keeping in touch days” and will be limited to a maximum of 10 days in any one period of maternity or adoption leave. These are voluntary in nature –

the Employer cannot insist on a woman coming in for any of these days. Equally a woman cannot insist that she is allowed to come in! These KIT days do not extend the period of maternity or adoption leave.

The Regulations also make it clear that employers are entitled to maintain reasonable contact with their employees during maternity leave. This is a situation that has not been very clear in the past. The key word here is obviously "reasonable", and an occasional call from the employer regarding returning to work dates for example would be acceptable.

Statutory Maternity Pay can now also commence on any day of the week, to coincide with the start of maternity leave.

- A woman returning from maternity leave is now required to give 8 weeks notice (not 4 weeks as before) if she wishes to return to work from maternity leave earlier than originally proposed. This is better news for the employer who will have a little longer to plan for her return and perhaps to give notice to any maternity cover replacement or agency staff. The Employer can waive this if they wish and allow the woman to return at shorter notice if it suits the needs of the organisation.

The Right to Request Flexible Working is extended to "carers"

The right to request flexible working has been extended to those caring

for disabled or sick relatives (but not, at least at this stage, those with child care responsibilities for older but healthy children). The Government has confirmed that the definition of qualifying carer will be:

"any employee who is, or expects to be, caring for an adult who:

- is married to, or the partner or civil partner of the employee; or
- is a 'near relative' of the employee;
- falls into neither category but lives at the same address as the employee.

The 'near relative' definition includes parents, parent-in-law, adult child, adopted adult child, siblings (including those who are in-laws), uncles, aunts or grandparents and step-relatives."

Work and Families Act - Some Questions answered

Question

Is it correct that employees still need 26 weeks' service to qualify for adoption leave, but not for additional maternity leave?

Answer

Yes. An employee with an expected week of childbirth on or after 1 April 2007 will qualify for both ordinary maternity leave (OML) and additional maternity leave (AML) regardless of her length of service. To qualify for adoption leave, however, an employee must have been continuously employed by the same employer for 26 weeks by the end of the week in which they are notified of having been matched with a child for adoption.

Question

Given that the maternity pay period has increased to 39 weeks, are employees entitled to all their

contract terms and conditions, other than pay, for 39 weeks?

Answer

No. Despite the extension of the maternity pay period to 39 weeks for employees with an expected week of childbirth on or after 1 April 2007, the distinctions between Ordinary ML and Additional ML remain. Therefore, an employee will continue to be entitled to her contractual benefits (excluding remuneration), such as gym membership and use of a company car, during her 26 weeks of OML, but not during AML, unless the employment contract provides for this (although some employers continue to offer them for simplicity).

Question

If an employee with an expected week of childbirth on or after 1 April 2007 wants to return to work

at the end of her OML does she have to notify her employer?

Answer

Yes. An employer will usually expect an employee to return to work on the first working day after her AML finishes, ie 52 weeks after her maternity leave began. If an employee wishes to return to work at the end of her OML, or at any time before the end of her AML, she must give her employer eight weeks' notice of the new return date. This is an extension from the previous 28-day notice requirement and is designed to allow both parties to plan more effectively for the employee's return to work. If an employee returns to work early without giving her employer eight weeks' notice, the employer can postpone her return for eight weeks or until the date on which she was due to return, whichever occurs sooner.

Unilever Welcomes Open Options

Ice Cream
manufacturers
benefit from more
effective activity
management

Unilever UK Ice Cream have significantly improved their activity management by adopting Crown Computing's Open Options solution. Employee time can now be effectively captured and allocated, allowing the company to better cost and manage their activities.

HR Manager, Andrew Hurcum explains how "The company is now deploying people more cost effectively," adding "Open Options time and attendance has enabled us to get a grip on our activities."

...when making around three million ice cream products per day, precise deployment of 486 employees is an essential attribute of the new system.

"Open Options has enabled us to get a grip on our activities."

As manufacturers of the Wall's brand, making around three million ice cream products per day, precise deployment of their 486 employees is an essential attribute of the new system. Hurcum explains how the previous system failed to fulfil this need, "All it did was to produce paper based reports, the main purpose of which was to capture whether people had attended work or not. We needed a new system to help us plan our production activity."

Open Options satisfies this requirement. Whenever an employee clocks in, the system allocates their working time to a pre-scheduled task set through Open Options activity planner, enabling line managers to review attendance, and distribute their workforce as necessary. Last minute changes are possible to cope with the absences or to manoeuvre the staff to cover production demands.

With the new system, managers can now appreciate labour costs at an activity, and production line factory level.



Further benefits

"We've used it to drive down costs significantly," comments Hurcum. This has been achieved through significant improvements in absence, time reconciliation, holiday bookings

and minimising payroll errors. Better administration has also reduced costs, as Hurcum explains how "There's no need for dedicated administrators."

"We've used it to drive down costs significantly."

Moreover, Unilever, who produce Wall's branded products such as Cornetto, Magnum and Viennetta, are appreciating the simplicity of the **Open Options** solution, "Open Options is very easy to use and does exactly what it says it does" says Hurcum.



Ice cool Implementation, Red hot customer relations

The new system went live within four months.

A high level of co-operation ensured this successful implementation. Hurcum explains how "A Crown Computing consultant helps you manage the whole of your project." Crown provided software installation, training and expert assistance with the configuration of the Activity Management within the Workforce Management suite. Hurcum states

"They helped us to input the information and rules so the system accurately reflected our requirements."

Furthermore, great relations developed between the two companies. Hurcum explains how "Crown Computing has built up a good understanding of our business and their approach to training was excellent. The help desk are extremely friendly too."



Unilever



press releases...



Carillion Health Chooses Crown Computing for Time & Attendance

Crown Computing has been selected by the Carillion Group to provide and implement its **Open Options Time & Attendance and Workforce Scheduling** solution throughout the company, starting within the facilities management functions of Carillion Health's nine NHS Trust hospitals around the UK.

All facilities management organisations, especially those within the health sector are tasked with delivering a continually improved service to their community whilst providing a more flexible approach to the shifts worked by their employees.

This is certainly the case at Carillion, who wish to make optimum use of their resources, in order to match the demands for its services with the ever increasing pressure on margins. These services include the managing of all of its non-medical support

services such as catering, cleaning and estates management.

Carillion has been responsible for both the construction of the hospital buildings and the subsequent delivery of Facilities Management services to a number of hospitals around the UK, including the Great Western Hospital at Swindon, the John Radcliffe NHS at Oxford and the Queen Alexandra NHS at Portsmouth.

"As part of our approach to these services and as part of our commitment to providing better quality internal administrative processes, Carillion has undertaken to implement a fully integrated Workforce Scheduling, Activity Management and Time & Attendance solution, linked to Oracle HR, Payroll and, where appropriate, Oracle Financials," said Carillion's Project Manager, Neil Davies.

"Our objective is to improve our resourcing and scheduling to ensure we have the right number of people in the right job at the right time. And then to reduce the administrative effort of paying people in a more accurate and timely way. In this way, we can properly plan our service levels whilst controlling operational costs."

Mike Hawkesford, MD, Crown Computing comments, "Crown's Open Options will provide significant benefits to the business, and when linked to the Oracle back office HR and payment systems, will provide Carillion with an exceptionally strong management tool with which to improve the management of its employees."



Civil Nuclear Constabulary Feel Domino Effect

The Civil Nuclear Constabulary (CNC) can look forward to more effective Officer deployment with the introduction of Crown's system across 15 operational units, in what has been named Project Domino.

The contract was awarded to Crown through Computacentre and via the office for Government commerce framework.

The CNC works in partnership with nuclear operators and Home Office Forces, and deploys around 800 police officers and staff.

"The **Open Options** solution will represent a major step forward in our ability to manage and deploy our officers in the most effective and efficient manner. A comprehensive networked solution is vital to our organisation which deploys Police Officers at civil nuclear sites in England, Scotland and Wales," said Sgt Mark Taylor, Domino Project Manager, at CNC.

Replacing an ageing legacy system, the force-wide solution will improve scheduling of duty managers, better management of overtime and leave, and highlight labour costs across the force. It will improve the absence management process, and reduce administration significantly.



Crown Computing Limited,
Amber Close, Tamworth Business Park, Amington, Tamworth, Staffordshire B77 4RP
Tel: **01827 309800**
Fax: 01827 309810
sales@crowncomputing.co.uk
www.crowncomputing.co.uk

