Case Study

Unilever's Total Rewards Portal: Consumer Goods

Consumer giant Unilever needed to provide total rewards statements to employees across 96 countries.

Our solution was one of the largest total rewards statement projects ever attempted — successfully.

With 120,000 employees and operations in 110 counties, Unilever is one of the largest fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) companies in the world, with a portfolio of brands that span foods, home and personal care. To transform itself into a more agile, competitive and winning organization, part of Unilever's strategy is to instill a stronger culture of performance and a stronger link between performance and rewards in its workforce.

Behind the scenes, we worked together with Unilever to create a data management system that combined global inputs from Unilever corporate, as well as 96 sets of local country inputs.

Unilever had long recognized the power of a progressive compensation, benefits and rewards strategy to keep employees engaged and feeling connected to the business.

The company worked with us to develop and deliver a personalized online total rewards statement (TRS) to its worldwide management population. We recommended moving the online statements to an employee "portal" to let employees easily access important personal compensation and benefits information. A portal of this type aggregates content and data from multiple sources to provide a single point of entry for users to explore their personal package of compensation and benefits and other HR programs.

The intended initial audience was 12,000 managers across 96 of the 110 countries in which Unilever operates. These managers cover a range of nationalities and cultures, although all are conversant in English. Unilever's benefits and related programs are a combination of global standards and local market-driven programs, resulting in varying levels of benefits and rewards across management in different countries. The best solution would be one that would forego static payroll files, opting instead to calculate each element in the employee's compensation based on formulas specific to each locale.

Objectives

Despite the multitude of variations on content, Unilever wanted the TRS to deliver a consistent message, look and user experience, which involved:

- A 'foundation' TRS that amalgamates and displays pay, incentive and benefits data via feeds from PeopleSoft, global share plan administrators, and local country sources

- Trouble-free access to content and data by individual users via 'simplified sign on' without having to log in again or remember multiple passwords

- A flexible platform, making it easier to add richer functionality that furthered the 'performance' agenda — including career modeling tools and dynamic manager reporting

- A survey tool to capture feedback about employees' rewards preferences, to determine which programs are most valued and motivating to employees

- Different variations of the Unilever logo according to the identity of the local operating company

- Plans to extend portal access to the general employee population over the next three years, including adding more localized content and multilingual capability

An Insightful Solution

In just six months, we developed a customized TRS and delivered on all core requirements. Unilever's custom portal included:

- A 'hub-and-spoke' method to manage the data collection work. A global central team, supported by regional teams, engaged 75 managers around the world in gathering requirements and definitions for all local compensation and benefit plans. In total, they captured approximately 500 formulas together with more than 3,000 variables and values that drove the display of personalized views of total rewards data and content.

- A user-friendly, visually appealing TRS experience. The TRS compiled the inputs and served up personalized displays that combined key messages, localized benefit descriptions, a confidential online survey tool and images from Unilever's branding library.

- An on-screen presentation structure that handles the different compensation and benefit programs from 96 countries. With its standard four-tab structure, users can navigate the content by home, pay, benefits and incentives categories. Each section features a data-driven graphic to put values in perspective for the user. Photo images support the user experience.

Behind the scenes, we worked together with Unilever to create a data management system that combined global inputs from Unilever corporate, as well as 96 sets of local country inputs. This solved the biggest challenge of the project: finding a cost-efficient—and fast—method of compiling requirements for dozens of countries.

The solution to that challenge was a self-service model for Unilever rewards managers to "feed" the global system. Country administrators were able to define formulas to create local rewards values, refresh rewards values by just updating variables used in the formulas, and import employee data to supplement and enable the formulas.

Real-World Results

To date, more than 50% of the target population has seen the site. Accuracy of personal information was nearly 100%. This added to a high-level of credibility for the TRS.

Anecdotal feedback from the business was highly positive, with senior executives around the world stating how engaging and impactful the communication has been for themselves and their reports. The TRS proved successful in creating the desired connection between performance and rewards at Unilever.

Around 10% of those who viewed their TRS also completed the survey on their attitudes towards Unilever. Results showed that, having viewed their TRS, more than 50% "would speak highly of Unilever." This survey also helped show which compensation and benefits were most important to individuals, and how satisfied they were with them. Unilever now uses the survey results and anecdotal evidence to drive continuous improvement, informing the next phases of communication and engagement, as well as overall rewards policy.

Now that the foundations have been established for the TRS, Unilever plans to evolve the system to enhance the experience and engage managers still further in its performance agenda.

Adding new, engaging functions will enable managers to model what their rewards could be in the future depending on different types of performance — thus further cementing the connection between rewards and performance.

Let's Talk

For more information about this project contact our Engagement Practice consulting team at **1.866.355.6647** or **hrservices@conduent.com**.

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