

K3 Equator freshens up employee attendance

A leading supplier of potatoes and vegetables to the UK retail market is improving employee attendance rates thanks to the advanced Human Resource Management solution, Equator from K3.

Manor Fresh, which is an exclusive supplier of potatoes to Marks & Spencer, utilises Equator's Personnel, Payroll and Time and Attendance (T&A) modules to manage staffing at its two factory's in Lincolnshire. The transparency of HR information provided by Equator has enabled the company to commend 42% of staff with 100% on their no-sickness records over the past year. This is quite an achievement considering the Food, Drink and Tobacco industry has one of the highest absentee rates of any industry, according to figures from the CIPD absence management reports for 2012. Businesses in this sector lose on average eight days a year to staff absences compared to the textiles industry which loses just 3.8 days a year.



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At a glance

Company

Manor Fresh

Industry sector

Supplier of fresh produce

Number of employees

200 +

The challenge

- Demanding production schedules
- Lateness and absenteeism monitoring
- Spreadsheets being used for reporting

Solution & services

- Equator
- Time and Attendance
 - Payroll
 - Personnel

The benefits

- Reduced time spent on admin
- Management of staff punctuality
- Easy data access
- Integrated solution
- Reducing need for paperwork



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The fresh produce sector is becoming busier as Britain's consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables is on the increase. Data from the latest National Diet and Nutrition Survey (NDNS) shows that the average consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables was 3.1 and 3.0 portions for women and men respectively – comparative data from 2001 found that women consumed 2.9 and men 2.7 portions. With this, and anticipated further increases in consumption of fresh produce, suppliers like Manor Fresh need to have tight staffing processes and the flexibility in their business to meet demanding production schedules. Equator helps the company to keep its finger on the pulse in recording employee attendance and punctuality rates.

There are 169 hourly paid employees monitored by Manor Fresh's Equator solution. The company utilises T&A beyond the traditional method of tracking jobs and people, but instead uses it to monitor specific employee hours and attendance. The reports created by the module allow the company to monitor attendance and lateness in greater detail. The solution automatically flags up a notification when a member of staff is late to work and compiles this information for immediate assessing of staffing levels that same day. The data can then be displayed in weekly, monthly and annual graphic calendars.

Shaun Turner, Payroll Administrator at Manor Fresh, operates T&A on a daily basis. He says: "The T&A module within our Equator solution allows me to segregate all shift patterns, which makes it easier to generate reports for other areas of the company. Previously we could only access dayshift and

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Not only has Equator assisted with the management of staff punctuality but it is also helping Manor Fresh to reduce the amount of time it spends on general administrative duties. A recent report by Pfizer states that employee absence costs UK businesses £14 billion every year but Manor Fresh is recording absentee rates to ensure that it is always getting maximum productivity from its fresh produce operations.

Employee absence was previously recorded by inputting absence information into a spreadsheet and analysing this through various formulae. Today, Manor Fresh uses Equator to work out employee absence rates on a points basis. The more days off an employee has, the more points are accumulated. This saves the company at least six full working days a year, compared with manual methods.



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Manor Fresh also uses Equator to keep track of employee holidays. The solution enables the company to accurately book, track and monitor employee holiday entitlement against shift rotas. This allows managers to plan rotas in advance to ensure that the company remains productive at all times.

Since operating Equator internally, Manor Fresh has also experienced a number of cost saving benefits, not least the labour time saved by reducing administrative tasks. The company previously outsourced payroll duties but is now able to bring this task in house by utilising the Equator Payroll module. The intuitive nature of Equator means that the company doesn't need to spend time and money training staff to manage payroll, resulting in further time saving efficiencies.

All data is stored within Equator and is easily accessible at any time. This enables Manor Fresh to keep one full record for payroll and personnel, rather than storing this information in multiple spreadsheets. Amendments to data can be made easily whenever an employee moves onto a higher rate of pay and Equator records this change for all records of that employee.

Mandy Baker, HR Officer at Manor Fresh explains the benefits the company has experienced since operating Equator in house.

“Since we brought Equator in house we have really improved the efficiency of our HR processes. Our records are now easy to keep up to date and we can make changes to data quickly and easily. It is easy for us to interrogate information and the reporting facilities within Equator mean that we can be proactive rather than reactive when managing absence and long term illness. It also means that we can quickly and accurately respond to adhoc requests for information from the managers.”

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