UKG

OnSide Youth Zones realises time savings and boosts employee morale with UKG workforce management

With an emphasis on serious social impact, OnSide Youth Zones is the charity behind a network of 21st century youth centres called Youth Zones that are designed to give young people (aged 8–19 years old, or up to 25 for those with a disability) living in some of the UK's most disadvantaged areas somewhere to go, something to do, and someone to talk to in their leisure time. In order to continue its focus on social good, OnSide Youth Zones partnered with UKG (Ultimate Kronos Group) to modernise workforce management processes across its network of Youth Zones, and streamline critical HR tasks so employees can do what they do best – serve their communities.

Customer Snapshot

Industry:
Youth Services

Headquarters:
Bolton, UK

UKG footprint:
Over 750 employees across the network of Youth Zones

Products

• UKG Ready

With OnSide's growth plans, a solution was needed that could scale as well as provide value for the investment.

Duncan Hall, Systems Implementation Manager

Established in 2008, the charity OnSide Youth Zones has established a network of Youth Zones which provide thousands of young people with positive opportunities 7 nights a week, throughout the year – for 50p per visit plus £5 a year membership. Youth Zones are purpose-built, modern, safe, bright, inclusive places where young people can receive support, thrive, try new things, and succeed. Each Youth Zone is designed by and for young people and offers an extensive range of activities from music, to sport, to cookery and employability, with youth workers leading activities and providing a non-judgemental listening ear.

14 Youth Zones operate across the UK, with more being added each year. Each Youth Zone on average employs around 70 staff and 50 volunteers. Across the network, more than 38,000 members make around 520,000 visits to OnSide Youth Zones every year, attracting young people from the most disadvantaged communities.

OnSide functions through a unique partnership model comprising the private sector, local authorities, and the local community and its youth. Although each Youth Zone operates as an independent charity, OnSide delivers centralised services such as IT support and payroll, enabling each location to thrive and grow as sustainable organisations. With this in mind, the central support team identified the opportunity to streamline workforce related processes and improve efficiency, reducing the time and administrative burden placed on Youth Zone managers and the payroll team. OnSide partnered with UKG in early 2017 to introduce a time and attendance and absence management solution to Youth Zones across the OnSide network. Extremely satisfied with the results, OnSide's partnership with UKG continues to grow.

Challenges

- Inconsistency around recording worked hours and preparing data for payroll, which was extremely labour-intensive, taking each Youth Zone administrator up to four days per month to rectify

- Heavy dependence on paper-based and manual payroll processes

- Unreliable recording of worked hours and lateness in submissions caused administrative inefficiencies and often resulted in payroll inaccuracy

- Lack of visibility into all forms of rostering including hours worked, holiday accruals, and absence of staff and volunteers – resulting in the inability to leverage workforce data to understand leave patterns in each Youth Zone for better resourcing

- Production of accurate reports to stakeholders of how and where funds are being allocated and spent was time consuming

Solution

An automated UKG workforce management solution that simplifies time, attendance and absences management and streamlines payroll processing.

Results

- Employee empowerment and engagement via mobile-based, self-service functionality for accurately recorded hours worked, holiday balances, and other scheduling and benefits

- Manager empowerment to approve team-specific timesheets as they are closest to the activities accomplished
  - Improved management of planned and unplanned absences delivering the visibility and control needed to ensure activities are staffed appropriately
  - Reduced manager administration to 10 minutes every other day

- Liberation of the administration team from paper-based, time-intensive, processes to a modern, digital experience
  - A colossal reduction in time taken to prepare monthly payroll data, from several days to several minutes, with 'push of the button' automation

- Reduction in time spent on payroll tasks across each Youth Zone of over 60% (estimated) – reducing the time spent in the back office and allowing managers more time for their meaningful work with young people
  - Staff payroll is run accurately and on-time, with minimal payroll queries

- Overall improvements in staff engagement and accountability

- Greater visibility of Youth Zone expenditure which helps enable target benchmarking

- Rapid and accurate reporting to stakeholders on how funds have been allocated and spent

The story

From burdensome paper timekeeping to streamlined workforce automation

> Before we had UKG, recording worked hours was all about maintaining timesheets on a piece of paper. It was a manual process with employees writing down what time they came in and what time they left. By the end of the month, tabulating all this data to prepare it for payroll was a mammoth, often four-day task for the Youth Zone Business Admin Manager
>
> Duncan Hall, Systems Implementation Manager at OnSide Youth Zones

Accurate Data Capture

There was a huge need for greater efficiency and consistency around recording worked hours, absences, and overtime details across the Youth Zone. It was also becoming increasingly difficult for one administrator per Youth Zone to manage paper timesheets and submit to payroll on-time, whilst avoiding any errors.

Shining a spotlight on the challenges faced by employees before UKG solutions were implemented, Duncan adds: "Not only was the process extremely labour-intensive but its complexity led to inaccuracies as well. There were minor details that employees would forget to write down and the timesheets themselves would even sometimes go missing. The person preparing the payroll would often rely on guesswork to fill in the missing details. All this was leading to a lack of accuracy and potential compliance risks in final payrolls."

Reducing the Administrative Burden

The Youth Zone managers were desperate for a solution that would ease their administrative burden as well as keep them and the youth workers happy and motivated in their roles. Duncan adds: "We also wanted to ensure the responsibility for managing staff time was in the right place where decision-making and approvals could be made more quickly and efficiently, in the past this burden fell on one person – the business admin manager – and they weren't necessarily best placed to make decisions on time worked, for instance if a member of staff had forgotten to log their start and end times on their paper timesheet, or if a staff member wanted to know how much leave they had accrued. Introducing UKG allowed us to delegate this work to the line managers who had a better understanding of their team's worked hours. This means they could quickly make decisions, almost in real time, rather than waiting for the business admin manager to pick this up at the end of the month where it would take considerable effort to understand timesheets from the beginning of the month and where decisions had to be made with limited information. For me, it was about putting the ownership and responsibility in the right place, from running the payroll all the way down to the individual member of staff starting their shift."

Taking Ownership

"We instilled this ownership in the team so that we empowered staff to take responsibility for their own time, introducing the UKG app so they could see their worked hours, their schedules, allowing them to request changes if they'd forgotten to clock out, to request leave, and then we empowered the managers to approve overtime, to approve leave requests, and to manage their schedules and exceptions. This helped engage the team in the whole process which led to much greater accuracy of payroll in less time than it took before. The staff themselves welcomed the introduction of the app as they felt more in control of their own time – they could book their annual leave from work or from the comfort of their own home and they could view their timesheets and have visibility of what they would be paid before they actually received their wage slip. All this led to a more engaged workforce where everyone played their part in managing time and leave."

Bringing greater visibility and control to workforce management

While UKG was originally selected in 2017 to deploy biometric timeclocks and timekeeping solutions across four Youth Zones, it has since become a part of OnSide's standard model and is installed in each new Youth Zone.

Talking about how UKG solutions helped to transform OnSide's network, Duncan says: "With OnSide's growth plans, a solution was needed that could scale as well as provide value for the investment. With each Youth Zone operating as an independent charity with much of its funding coming from local businesses and councils, there was a big need for accountability. We also get funding from different avenues for specific projects. It becomes all the more important that we know exactly where we're spending that money. We're required to report back where the hours have been spent and separate them out from the budget. This is where the UKG reporting tool comes in handy and gives us a clear visibility of employee allocation by project."

Things have dramatically changed since the UKG solution was introduced. Administrative processes have become simpler, workloads are more evenly distributed, and tasks like absence monitoring and employee availability can be tracked more effectively. Duncan further shares: "Unplanned absences can impact the services we are able to deliver. Although absence tracking was possible before UKG, it was often difficult and time consuming to collate the right data. The use of UKG has helped OnSide gain visibility and control of absences, and enable our absence policies to be followed and applied consistently." Previously, a lot of time was spent calculating leave entitlement, and keeping this updated and accurate on a monthly basis was difficult. With UKG, this process is now automated meaning less work and far greater accuracy. The entitlement is also calculated in real time which gives the staff and managers a more accurate picture rather than waiting for balances to be manually updated once a month.

In part, OnSide opted for UKG as Duncan had worked with the vendor before and was already aware of the capabilities the solution offered. Duncan adds: "Another useful feature of UKG is its mobile app, which allows our employees to check their timesheets and get real-time updates on worked hours, holiday balances, and other benefits. And since not all of our employees work throughout the week (some just work once a week), the app gives everyone - staff and volunteers - clear accessibility and visibility, making them feel more involved and engaged. UKG also offers a great support system to its customers."

Optimising performance and employee engagement

Duncan goes on to discuss the impact the UKG technology has had on the long-term running of the Youth Zones. Not only does the solution provide OnSide managers with a clear overview of employee hours worked, but it also automatically builds attendance patterns of individuals and ensures that workers are paid on time. Duncan adds: "An individual manager would previously spend a couple of hours a week tabulating the employees' worked hours data. I always say the best way to manage our UKG solution is little and often, just 10 minutes spent every couple of days will enable the teams to stay on top of their timecards. Given we have over 150 managers across the organisation, this represents a significant saving on time and cost, and improvement on productivity. As a result, each Youth Zone benefits from having more time spent supporting the young people. Another significant time saving has been achieved in the payroll team with monthly payroll preparation being reduced from four days per Youth Zone to less than an hour.

OnSide's UKG solution has also helped improve employee engagement and accountability. Duncan sums up by saying: "Worker accountability has improved with the accuracy of time capture, and this greater sense of trust and transparency has reflected positively on employee morale. With a technology partner like UKG on board, it is much easier to manage the workforce and their expectations now, meaning that we have happier people for the long term."

Planning for further benefits: talent acquisition, recruitment, and HR solutions

With UKG demonstrating its worth from the get-go, OnSide is eager to explore other UKG solution capabilities across its network. Duncan explains:

"We are really keen to add more UKG features to our current portfolio, including HR, which is being trialled at one of our sites currently. These will drive further benefits by helping us to better manage the CVs we receive, handle recruitment and map the overall employee journey from first contact. We're excited to develop these additional features and continue our development alongside such a trusted partner."

To view more UKG customer success stories, visit here

Key Benefits

- 60% REDUCTION IN MANAGER TIME spent on payroll related tasks

- TIME SPENT PREPARING PAYROLL reduced from several days to several minutes

- IMPROVED ABSENCE MANAGEMENT enables better service delivery

- IMPROVED EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT through self-service functionality

With a technology partner like UKG on board, it is much easier to manage the workforce and their expectations now, meaning that we have happier people for the long term.

Duncan Hall, Systems Implementation Manager

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