

Cloud-Pleaser: How Celestica's Transition to the HCM Cloud Transformed Business Performance



A more human resource.®



Operating in 13 countries, Canadian company Celestica's 27,000 employees provide supply chain solutions for firms across a wide range of markets, from aerospace and defense to communications and enterprise. **Penny Cavener, senior director of Celestica Global HR Solutions in Global Business Services**, recounts how the company transitioned to a cloud-based human capital management (HCM) solution and returned great results for the business.



Quick facts:

Company: Celestica

Headquarters: Toronto, Canada

Industry: Supply chain solutions

Employees: 27,000 operating in 13 countries

Learn more about Celestica at <https://www.celestica.com/home>

The Business Challenges Behind the Change

Celestica is transforming to ensure we are meeting our customers' needs and that we are putting them first all the time. Assessing how well our current technology supported this goal, we realized we faced three key gaps from a process perspective.

Number one was recruitment and onboarding – how do we quickly ramp up resources and incoming talent? Number two was the burden of manual, paper-based HR forms. Number three was being equipped for the transformational journey that we were on internally.

Defining the Destination – More Sophisticated Self-Service

We were determined to improve our self-service functionality for both employees and managers. We knew that was the first step in the bigger journey toward a unified experience for all. Celestica's fast becoming borderless, and our managers have employees reporting to them around the world. It's important for us to provide a standardized experience, so that managers can execute on HR processes to take care of their talent in a real-time environment.

We also wanted to achieve more with self-service, through a cloud solution. We knew we were ready. And we knew that ADP was ready for us from a technology platform perspective.

Celestica has a global footprint, with the majority of our employees in Asia. We also had to transfer 14 years' worth of data from the old solution to the new one. That meant that, over the course of four weeks, the core project team was working through that data conversion in three shifts, following the sun. It was exciting when we saw the light at the end of the tunnel and the last few countries were coming in, but it was an intense four weeks!

Creating the Conversations that Support Meaningful Buy-in

To secure buy-in from the regional executive leadership team, we tailored our conversations to each leader, focusing on what they perceived to be their biggest challenges and how this type of technology could help them. These conversations take time, but are invaluable when it later comes to cascading the benefits to managers. And there's no shortage of benefits! We told our managers, "It's going to open up information to you, real time, so that you'll be able to manage your talent better, cut out all of those paper-based forms, onboard your new hires and have them up and running on day one of their employment." We continued our roadshow of promoting the concept of this technology internally for quite some time.

A Candid Collaboration

We collaborated with ADP to carry out extensive due diligence before we signed a contract. That made it easier for us to jointly manage the budget and make sure we were still sticking to our original objectives if we had to go beyond the initially agreed figure. It also freed us up to focus on the implementation itself rather than worry about whether we were going over budget. ADP has a really good cost model, and they were open to creative approaches based on our history together. We had a challenge once where the scope of the work was outside what we thought was agreed to, but ADP was very accommodating of that challenge and acknowledged that they needed to expand their playbook because it was missed. So, that was a clear demonstration of them hearing, understanding and agreeing it was a problem they were going to partner with us to solve.

A Novel Approach to Implementation

We took an interesting and creative implementation approach, which proved very successful. We thought the new technology was more about 'lift and replace' than a brand new implementation, and ADP agreed with us. For modules we had previously deployed under another platform, the approach was do-it-yourself, while ADP's expertise gave us more focus and dedication for everything that was brand new. It worked well for both of us because it sped up the implementation, and we were able to spend more value-add hours consulting with ADP on modules that were more complex, based on our previous experiences.

We scored a quick win with the learning and performance management module. Since it was already in an alternative solution we were using, it was easy to transition over to the new ADP platform and become familiar with the technology. From there we moved into the bigger modules. Implementing recruitment and onboarding took the most time, since they touch every single employee across the organization. Compensation is the next big transformation. This was an opportunity for us to eliminate hundreds, if not thousands, of Excel®-based spreadsheets for compensation programs that are being executed around the world at different times of year.

Finally, we're going to end with workforce analytics, which takes all of this information and interprets it into meaningful analysis that our business leaders can apply. We want to drive more predictive modeling and deeper, more sophisticated analytics that will enable us to merge data outside of HR and bring a clearer picture to the business.

From Paper-Based to Paperless: Consistency, Convenience and Cost-Savings

The way we previously ran our HR processes – on paper-based forms – wasn't efficient or in sync with our core values at Celestica. As a sustainability-focused organization, we knew we wanted to create a paperless environment. We moved all of our paper-based forms online, workflow-enabled, to the new ADP GlobalView® HR Central, which combines ADP's service, expertise and pay integration with SAP SuccessFactors™, Employee Central and talent suite portal, where managers and employees have the same experience regardless of their worldwide location. Managers no longer waste thousands of hours trying to understand which form to complete and where to send it, and HR saves hours not having to find, complete or send forms to the appropriate area.

It was a similar story with onboarding. Previously, we sent offer packages with forms for new hires to fill out by mail. Now, we send the candidates a link for them to enter their details online. Then they receive their employee I.D. and we've got them onboarded and ready to go on day one of employment. The integrated technology between the HR and ADP® Global Payroll modules means that new hires' information goes straight to payroll all on its own. And of course, fewer hands mean higher data integrity.

Celestica's Results of Automation and Integration

- Saved 99,000 hours a year moving from paper-based forms to paperless processes
- Implemented the new SuccessFactors™ Employee Central portal in 24 countries in 14 months, with dedicated delivery and support from ADP
- Improved manager and employee self-service capabilities
- Improved standardization and efficiency
- Enabled the HR teams to move from transactional roles to strategic support

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We determined that by going paperless we’re saving 99,000 hours a year from a manager perspective alone. With the help of ADP, we’ve gained efficiencies, and as we continue stabilizing, enhancing and improving, we’re going to grow and expand with those efficiencies in place.

The Long-Lasting Reach of Reliable Data

Having one unified platform for HR processes and data is critical. It gives us confidence in the integrity of our data, and we’ve noticed that other functions within the company have come to rely on our information as a sound source for their own purposes. It also changes the conversation between the senior leaders and HR business partners who support them – it comes back to HR not just providing transactional support to those business partners, but claiming their place as an equal partner at the table, positioning the right people where they need to be to help our company continue to grow.

Local Cultures Coupled with Global Compliance

You can imagine that with Celestica operating in 13 countries, one of the table stakes was a multi-lingual platform. We doubted whether HCM technology could cope with that, and some of the smaller countries whose languages are not as common can be difficult. ADP demonstrated they could handle it with ease. In addition, we have to be very conscious of local statutory requirements in order to stay compliant. We feel very safe and secure in the fact that ADP’s area of expertise is making sure that these technology platforms are compliant for us. ADP gives us a tremendous sense of comfort and security in knowing that they take responsibility for that with all of our payroll systems.

Bringing Home the Benefits

There are three groups of employees at Celestica who have felt the advantage of this technology. Firstly, we gave all employees access to their pay statement anytime, whether through their phone or the self-service portal, so they can now manage their own data in real time. Equipped with the technology at their fingertips, our HR team shifted from administrative tasks to providing a more strategic angle to the business leaders they support. The third group is our HR operations, or what we call Global Business Services. Their role transitioned from mundane, master-data transactions to becoming much more analytical from the payroll and time perspective. Now those Global Business Services groups make sure that the workflow and data is accurate and ready for payroll.

Partnership in Practice

ADP has been our partner for a very long time, so we already enjoyed mutual trust and respect. That pre-existing credibility is one of the key reasons that we were successful in getting our executive leadership team’s approval and buy-in to move forward with the HCM migration.

Managing a project of this scale is not easy. Internally, we needed to have talented people who were willing to work long hours knowing that the reward is right around the corner, even when that corner felt pretty far away. Couple that with senior leaders who support and facilitate the vision – removing blockers, making sure we had what we needed to be successful. Then layer on top a partner, ADP, who knows us and understands our people, our processes, our current technology and our complexity. Having one dedicated team with one service model from ADP will do that for you. In fact, some of these folks in the service area have been with us from day one. When we have a problem, we get direct access to those experts and they immediately understand the issue.

Was it always sunshine and giggles? It was not. We worked around the clock, 24/7, and spent a lot of the implementation on location in Asia. ADP’s willingness to adjust their own time zone working hours for us truly demonstrated the partnership and the commitment we have for each other. At the end of the day, ADP is wherever we are and wherever we need to be. That’s the key for us.

Words of Wisdom for Companies Considering Cloud Migration

To any organization who wants to migrate their HCM systems to the cloud, you need to know your customers, and understand their pain points. You need to have standardized processes. And you absolutely need to have clean data. Without that data, you are going to fail. With it, it's so much easier to implement.

Change management is also critical to the overall project success. I'm a SAP HR consultant. At first I resisted the idea of moving our master data from the on-premise solution to the new solution in the cloud. I couldn't believe that technology could be seamless and accurate in a real-time environment. ADP experts proved to me that there wouldn't be an issue, and that's how they got me on board.

All in all, it took us 14 months to migrate 14 years' of data across 24 countries to ADP GlobalView HR Central. Throughout the process, we found you can never over-communicate. Groups impacted by the change were wary at first, since it meant a change to the way they were doing their job, and they weren't sure what it would mean longer term. But as we progressed and they saw what the ADP technology could do, that changed the game. They saw how it could raise their own skill set and give them much more visibility of real-time data and transactions to be able to support their leaders.

Finally, you need a partner who's going to understand your core values and align with your objectives so that they are walking that journey with you. And you know that when you hit a storm, they're going to open an umbrella for you and protect you. We found that partner with ADP.

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Learn more about how ADP’s HCM solutions can help support your organization.