

Case study: Beachcroft

beachcroft

Situation

Beachcroft is one of the largest national commercial law firms in the UK. With more than 1,500 employees, they provide commercial legal advice and litigation services from eight locations in the UK and Brussels.

Beachcroft was entering a new era of working. The firm was exploring innovative ways of tapping into what matters most to its talented lawyers and support staff.

The strategy could be summed up in one word – flexibility – both in terms of work location, but also in terms of remuneration. The trouble was, with flexibility comes complexity and the previous approach to benefits administration was inflexible and inefficient:

- Individual employees made benefit choices each year using paper forms;
- The HR function had to manually input over 1,000 paper forms into the HR system and construct reports from this;
- Only one person in the company could offer benefits advice, and there were 1,500 employees.

Action

In May 2007, Beachcroft partnered with Thomsons Online Benefits to implement a flexible benefits scheme to change all this with a combination of technology, internal communications and employee support.

Advantage, the new flexible benefits scheme, allows employees real time access to their benefits through Thomsons' Darwin technology. Moving the scheme online has reduced the administration burden for HR staff and employees. Furthermore, introducing salary sacrifice into several benefits has generated large savings in National Insurance contributions.

In May 2008, Beachcroft and Thomsons ran a second campaign. They staged six 'Helping Hand' road shows throughout the UK, aimed at educating employees on the importance of contributing to a pension.

Thomsons presented on pension topics ranging from tax implications to investment options. One-to-one sessions were available to guide individuals through the 'Advantage' website. The online system has made joining easier by providing:

- Paperless benefit enrolment;
- Pension calculator;
- Risk profiler tool to help set the level of fund risk;
- Independent fund comparison tool ;
- Real-time monitoring of fund value.

Result

- Employees became engaged, logging in to the Advantage website an average of 6 times each;
- The road shows resulted in 130 new pension scheme members;
- Beachcroft saved £120k annually in National Insurance contributions by implementing salary sacrifice;
- Beachcroft saved £30k per year in staffing costs by implementing an online platform with advanced reporting capabilities.

"Introducing flexible benefits was so pivotal for our culture; it even drove a flexible working initiative. Advantage is part of our ongoing strategy to make Beachcroft an employer of choice by supporting family life. Our 'Helping Hand' pension event was yet another step in that journey."

Phil Cousins, HR Director
Beachcroft LLP



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