



Case Study

How Macmillan improved efficiencies and boosted opt-in benefits with Strait Logics



One of the UK's most well-known publishing companies has been streamlining their HR operations, improving employee engagement and driving a stronger benefits uptake through Strait Logics.

Our case study explores how the publishing giant drove smoother HR processes using Strait Logics' rewards and benefits platform, Rewards Portal.

About Macmillan/ Making life easy for booksellers

With a rich history as one of the UK's leading publishers, Macmillan looks after the trade arm of the wider umbrella business. Whether it's the products you see in Waterstones, or the books lining the shelves in the independent bookshops, Macmillan manages the trade relations, customer services, and distribution for booksellers across the country, with 700 staff across their Swansea and Basingstoke offices.

We spoke to Lisa Purdy, Macmillan's Head of HR about implementing Rewards Portal for the business's UK workforce.

Identifying a need for better systems

Not having a dedicated benefits system meant the HR team were using an intranet system, sending endless emails, and putting together PDF documents to communicate the workplace benefits available to their staff. After conducting regular staff surveys where employees were asked to rate the benefits on offer, it became clear staff members were often totally unaware of what benefits were available to them. This lack of awareness meant the team were also inundated with questions from staff about their opt-in benefits and in particular, their pension plans and payments.

The HR team operated a legacy, limiting calendar system which needed cumbersome manual work, using spreadsheets to figure out the leave remaining for each employee. Likewise, with



complex shift patterns, including night shift workers, a total of 126 different Rotas - made up of 1,407 timings, and 36 different leave of absence categories, their existing system didn't provide the functionality they needed.

With disparate HR systems that didn't connect, the HR team's workflow was complex and overseeing 250 work patterns meant time-consuming manual communications costing the HR team in time and resources. Lisa quickly identified a need for a central hub for the company's benefits, where staff could have better access to their workplace perks at a glance, and the team could access up-to-date information. As they were investing a great deal to deliver a number of perks for their workforce, the team wanted to find a way to make benefits become front of mind for their staff so that the company, and the individual employees could make the most of that investment.

"We just needed something that would help us build efficiency and help us communicate what our staff have available to them in terms of benefits."

Lisa Purdy, Head of HR

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Streamlining the process with Strait Logics

After looking around for the right benefits tool, Macmillan found Rewards Portal, a platform by Strait Logics. The tool offers a comprehensive system that allows staff to see their benefits in one digestible view, via a one-stop dashboard, along with offering communication solutions and calendar management.

Where before, the teams calendar management centred around complex spreadsheets with formulas, the calendar feature in Rewards Portal meant the team now don't have to do anything manually and spreadsheets were no longer required. The comprehensive calendar module allowed managers to easily access reliable information such as annual leave remaining for their direct reports.

One challenge the Macmillan HR team encountered was the lack of integration between their workplace benefits solution and the HR system. The Strait Logics team worked on some troubleshooting to ensure that Macmillan's HRIS data could be securely imported into their benefits solution on a nightly basis via a bespoke automation. That meant up to date data was then live and accessible for the HR team every day, which in turn freed up the team's valuable time, where they were previously manually updating dated information. This also enabled employees to view the latest information most relevant to them.

"The survey tool delivers more for us than we expected. We're really pleased with how well it flows now and it is very easy to follow. It's great to have many different functions including staff surveys all under one system.

The Flexible Benefits, and Total Rewards tools make things much more connected for us as an HR team and much more visible for our workforce, and we love that it can all be connected up to our HR system"

Lisa Purdy, Head of HR

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With employee engagement as a core focus, Macmillan also wanted to run regular workforce surveys and had been looking for a survey tool for quite a while. As Strait Logics offer a survey module that's baked into the platform, they began using it to gather valuable feedback from their staff.

Having a platform that the team were able to join up with their HR system means employees have much better visibility of benefits available to them and what they're opted into. The HR team even went one step further, producing YouTube explainer videos, with the help of the Strait Logics team, which enabled employees to get a quick view of how to best use the platform for their needs.

Likewise, to ensure that staff know exactly what benefits are available to them from day one of their role, the HR team included a Rewards Portal session in their onboarding process. This has meant there's no longer the same ambiguity as to what perks are on offer.



Building a benefits-savvy workforce

With the new Strait Logics system integrated with their HR system, not only have the HR team significantly streamlined their workflow, but the wider Macmillan workforce has a better grasp of what's available to them and how to truly make the most of their benefits.

With Strait Logics responding quickly to meet the unique needs of the team, and overall, better visibility of their opted-in perks, the Macmillan HR team saw a significant rise in the number of employees opting into private medical options and paying more into their pension.

With the right systems in place, employee engagement is improved driving longevity, and workers are now better off as they invest more into their future both personally and at the company.

"Now people realise early on what they're getting as part of their package, which usually exceeds their expectations, and they can now find all that information in one place.

We've had more of an uptake of private medical since implementing the system and we know people have started increasing their pension contributions. With the Total Rewards solution now, our employees are far more proactive with their benefits."

Lisa Purdy, Head of HR



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