

Case study →

Employment contracts now signed electronically at Please Payroll

Please

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“Employment contracts now signed electronically at Please Payroll”

In the human resources market, it is crucial that work is done quickly. For instance, if an employment contract remains unsigned in someone’s bag for weeks, they will not get paid, and both the employer and the employee will face unnecessary risks. “Electronic signatures allow us to significantly speed up and simplify the process of hiring new people.”

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Please Payroll serves as a Professional Employer Organisation (PEO) for some 1,300 companies. This means that Please Payroll's clients recruit their employees and negotiate these employees' salaries themselves, only to commission Please Payroll to draw up their employees' employment contracts, pay their employees' wages and monitor their employees' sickness absence. Hans van de Ven likes to summarise the company's work as follows: 'We take on all of our clients' tedious jobs, thus allowing them to focus on their core business.'

Clear timesheets

'We are always on the look-out for innovative methods', Van de Ven goes on to say. The managing director specifically mentions one such innovation: the online portal Please Payroll introduced back in 2005. 'Before that time, timesheets and information on new employees were submitted in all sorts of ways -- by email, by fax, by snail mail, typewritten, handwritten... You name it, we got it. As a result, we needed more and more people to process the information thus submitted, and still mistakes were made, and mistakes tend to be costly.'

Such mistakes stopped being made once the online portal was introduced.

Among other things, the portal allows employees to log with a username, password and personalised code and to upload information such as timesheets. 'Once a timesheet has been uploaded, the client receives a message, and can then log in to our portal to modify or approve the timesheet.' By approving the timesheet, the client electronically signs it.

'Since we now pay twenty thousand employees' wages a year, this has now resulted in very significant cost savings.'

Employment contracts signed quickly

Electronic signatures are not just a great boon when approving timesheets, but also save time when signing employment contracts. 'It is crucial that we can act quickly. For instance, people applying for jobs in cafés and restaurants can often start working the day after the job interview. However, they need a signed employment contract to be able to do so. A photocopy of their valid ID must have been made as well, or they won't be able to embark on their new duties.'

However, in actual practice, contracts tend to disappear in a bag or pile of papers, only to be returned with a signature weeks later, Van de Ven says. 'So we expedited this process by making the contract available through the online portal and allowing it to be signed electronically.'

Immediately after the interview in which the terms of employment are discussed, the employee receives an online version of their employment contract through their personal Please Payroll account. If the employee agrees to the terms of the contract, the contract can be signed online at once, using a personalised code sent to the employee by text message.

According to Please Payroll's managing director, online contracts are generally signed immediately. As a result, new employees can start working sooner, and the arrangements agreed between the employees and their employers have been recorded. There is another benefit, as well. Electronically signed contracts allow for a considerable reduction in postage costs, which Van de Ven says is quite the boon. 'Since we now pay twenty thousand employees' wages every year, this has resulted in very significant cost savings.'

Please Payroll introduced electronic signing of employment contracts in 2013. Since 2014, the company has used the Signhost, a software solution that specialises in electronic signatures. This platform has been fully integrated with Please Payroll's online portal through an application programming interface, allowing employees to sign contracts without leaving their personal section of the Please Payroll portal. 'Signhost did an excellent job on this', says Van de Ven. 'After we started talking to Signhost, most of our requirements were implemented quickly, and we had our system up and running less than two weeks later.'

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