

# Carval's integrated approach drastically reduces operating costs at diary experts **Charles Letts & Co Ltd**



Carval's integrated solution for Human Resource Management, Payroll and Time and Attendance Management provides the flexibility needed for a leading global diary supplier with complex shift patterns and drastically reduced operating costs.



## Background

Charles Letts & Co began in 1796 when John Letts opened a stationery business and then produced the world's first commercial diary in 1812. The company is now a leading global supplier of personal organisers, diaries and related accessories, commanding 40% of the UK market and selling in over 40 international markets. Its two principal brands, Filofax and Letts, carry worldwide recognition. All products are designed in-house and manufactured both overseas and at the company's own facility in Scotland.

Charles Letts & Co Ltd has been successfully using Carval HR Unity Software for 7 years. The flexibility of the integrated HR, Payroll and Time and Attendance Management System allows them to cope with the complex shift patterns of 600 employees.

**Colin Brown, Payroll Manager at Letts' Dalkeith site explains the challenges of running a Payroll Department for this large print company and how implementing Carval HR Unity Software has helped him drastically reduce operating overheads.**

## Colin, what payrolls do you currently run?

I have 2 payrolls; monthly and weekly. The monthly is run 12 times a year and I have 115 employees to process. The weekly has 250 employees at peak times and there are over 200 different pay rates, 11 different shift patterns, 30 different input codes making up total pay and 3 different rules governing overtime payments. We operate seasonal hours based on a 5 day week of 37.5 hours for weekly paid employees and 35 hours for certain members of staff. For the weekly paid employees, this works by operating a 4 day week of 32 hours for 27 weeks and then a 5 day week of 42 hours for 25 weeks. For both seasons the weekly pay remains the same. For a shift worker, the 5 day week is of 36 hours but during the 4 day week they work 32 hours and during the 5 day week 38.75 hours. This means I have to change pay rates and shift patterns twice a year for each season.

For the monthly staff who work seasonal hours, it is more complex. In customer services, for example, we have 12 members of staff, who in the low season (the 4 day week), each have a different day off with different start and finish times. This means that I have 80 different work patterns for staff!

## When and why did you decide to acquire an integrated HR, Payroll and T&A system?

In August 2000, the Company was subject to a management buyout followed in July 2001 with the acquisition of the Filofax group of Companies to form Letts Filofax, the Timeplan Company. As the business was changing so did the demands on payroll, therefore a decision was made to bring the payroll back in house. Our in house controls and information reports were quite poor, hence the decision to go for the fully integrated HR, Payroll & T&A system.

***"The introduction and use of the system has meant a reduction in staff employed in payroll and given the facility to produce much more meaningful management information."***

Colin Brown, Payroll Manager  
Charles Letts & Co Ltd

### **Why did you choose Carval HR Unity Software?**

We chose Carval on the recommendation of another print company in Scotland who already used the system. They had similar union requirements placed on payment of wages, so it was decided not to re-invent the wheel and go with Carval because it was a proven solution.

### **How did the implementation go? What were the challenges?**

Looking back, the implementation was quite painless. I was fortunate to forge a good relationship with the Project Manager, who had been seconded to assist with the implementation. Bill Wilson and John Ovington from Carval were very accessible in helping resolve any problems.

### **What benefits do you think have come from using Carval HR Unity Software?**

The introduction and use of the system has meant a reduction in staff employed in payroll and given the facility to produce much more meaningful management information.

Using more of the system's capacity means that we now only need one part time employee to do the payroll, whereas we used to have a staff of eight, and I have the time to deal with management/union functions.

