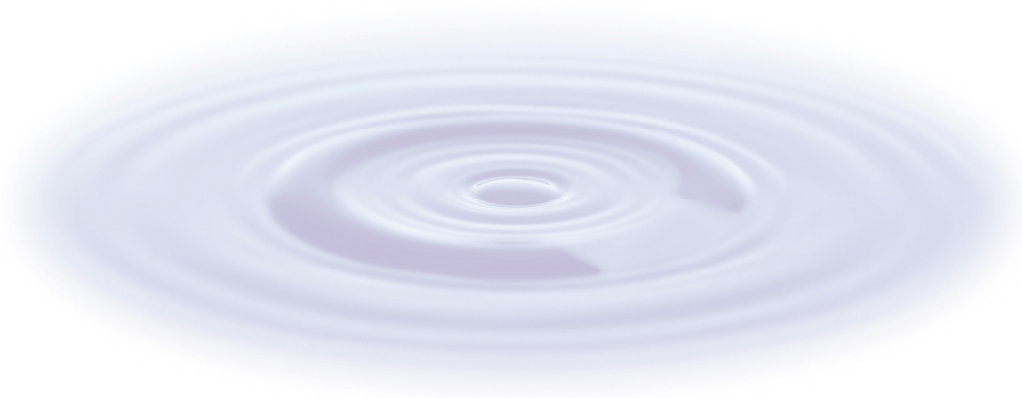




**Lessons in Integration:
An Insider's Guide to HCM Solutions**



Let Unity ripple through your business

Lessons in Integration: An Insider's Guide to HCM Solutions

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If you are looking for an integrated HR and Payroll system this document will help you understand the often confusing terminology used by solutions providers and to identify which solutions will meet your expectations...and which ones will not.

Featured topics:

- Integration
- Reporting
- Modular systems

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Integration

Many solution providers make bold and upfront statements about the integrated nature of their systems. In reality unless you push and prod further you will not discover that their interpretation of integrated is far different from the one commonly accepted within the technology and business arena.

The sales language	The reality
<p><i>"Our solutions are seamlessly integrated"</i></p>	<p><i>"Seamlessly integrated"</i> doesn't necessarily indicate that the HR and Payroll solutions have the same pedigree (lots of the solutions currently available have been created through mergers and acquisitions) and there can be duplication of data that is held separately in both the HR and Payroll solutions.</p> <p>The implications can make analysing both HR and Payroll data in one report quite difficult as the data is not held in one place.</p>
<p><i>"...using a single database"</i></p>	<p>While not overtly communicating an untruth the fact that a solution uses a single database does not necessarily indicate that the functional elements using the single database are truly integrated.</p> <p>As such the HR and Payroll systems may both utilise a single SQL database but the data itself is linked using an interface.</p> <p>When systems are upgraded or you add new fields to the system will the interface function in the same way?</p>
<p><i>"...all data fields integrated using shared tables"</i></p>	<p>A shared table does not represent full integration. Sharing data between HR and Payroll ultimately means that the data fields still exist as separate entities.</p> <p>The main negative implication of this is again focused on the impact it will have on your ability to combine data in a report which is contained in the HR and Payroll systems independently.</p>

The Carval Approach:

We are unaware of any other UK based solutions provider that has developed its own suite of truly integrated solutions that cover the functional areas of HR, Payroll, Time & Attendance and Self Service.

Our solutions utilise a single database with no interfaces or duplication of database fields.

As such data is easily available in one place for further analysis inside or outside the solution

Reporting

One of the very top reasons that companies look to new solutions and replace existing systems is because the reporting facilities provided by their current systems are inadequate.

Often the main issues are either the facilities offered are too complex or too restrictive and inflexible.

The sales language	The reality
<p><i>"...integrated suite of configurable reports"</i></p>	<p>Often the reports provided as standard with a solution can be configured using parameters provided by the solution developer. However if you wish to adapt the report considerably or wish to create one from scratch you will very quickly realise that you either require costly resource from the solution provider or your own internal technical resource (if available).</p> <p>These circumstances can often lead to non-technical users creating their own standalone Excel spreadsheets to report on data, because to get the information out of either HR or Payroll is too difficult and time consuming. Over the course of time the number and extent of these standalone spreadsheets can increase and ultimately mean that the you are not using the HR and Payroll systems for one of the primary purposes for which you procured them – that is to provide your business with useful information.</p>
<p><i>"...reports are provided using industry standard reporting tools such as Crystal reports"</i></p>	<p>Many systems utilise 3rd party reporting tools to provide reporting functionality.</p> <p>While these tools offer a great deal of flexibility and capability to create and modify reports you do require an equal amount of technical ability to extract the maximum benefit from these tools.</p> <p>The cost in both time and resources required to adapt and create new reports can mean that those reports never get created.</p> <p>The other serious issue that can occur when using a 3rd party reporting tool is focused on data security. If the 3rd party reporting tool has not been properly "embedded" within the structure of the overall HR or Payroll solution there are potential issues around how secure the data is when being interrogated by a 3rd party reporting tool.</p>

The Carval Approach:

By providing a truly embedded reporting tool with in our solution we access the benefits of a comprehensive reporting facility that is intuitive and easy to use but also by embedding the tool within our solution we eliminate any security issues that can arise when these types of tools interrogate databases.

Modular Systems

Most solutions whether they are focused on HCM or not are delivered using a modular design.

The sales language	The reality
<i>"...comes with a suite of modules"</i>	In demonstrations it can be difficult to keep track on what is standard functionality and what is provided as part of an additional module. It can also be very easy to be left with an impression that certain functionality is standard only to discover during the implementation that you need to purchase another functional module.

The Carval Approach:

Our solutions are divided into 4 main functional elements – HR, Payroll, Time & Attendance and Self Service.

There are no additional modules you need to purchase to provide additional functionality, modules come as standard within the solution suite.

As such our HR solution comes with standard functionality to manage:

- Training & Development
- Online Appraisal and performance monitoring
- Recruitment (including e facilities)
- Employee questionnaires and surveys

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