



STAR-INFO

Newsletter for Sage HRMS

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What's Inside

Page 2

Key Issues For Human Resources
CONTINUED

Page 3

Sage HRMS Product News

Page 4

New Career Enhancement
Training Offers On-Demand
Training

For Your Information

Sage North America recently announced the results of its Business Index survey. 923 businesses in the United States were surveyed as a part of the Sage biannual global survey. The Index showed that business owners are less optimistic about the nation's economy than they were six months ago but maintain a high level of confidence in the prospects for their own businesses. [Click here](#) to read more.

Key Issues For Human Resources

Five Trends And Issues You Need To Stay On Top Of In The Current Business Climate

Economic uncertainty is making the environment in which businesses operate difficult to predict. HR managers cannot control events or predict future economic conditions, but they can prepare for uncertainty and contingencies. Here we cover five factors relevant to the HR role that are evolving in the context of the current business climate.

1. The Patient Protection And Affordable Care Act (PPACA)

The PPACA is aimed primarily at decreasing the number of uninsured Americans and reducing the overall costs of health care. PPACA requires insurance companies to cover all applicants and offer the same rates regardless of pre-existing conditions or gender. The most controversial aspect of PPACA is the shared responsibility requirement, or individual mandate, that requires all individuals not covered by any other health plan purchase an approved private insurance policy or pay a penalty. Other portions of the Act affecting businesses include the following:

- » Health insurance exchanges will commence operation in each state, offering a marketplace where individuals and small businesses can compare policies and premiums, and buy insurance (with a government subsidy if eligible).
- » Firms employing 50 or more people but not offering health insurance also will pay a shared responsibility requirement if the government has had to subsidize an



employee's health care.

- » Very small businesses will be able to get subsidies if they purchase insurance through an exchange.
- » Effective January 1, 2012, employers were required to disclose the value of benefits provided for each employee's health insurance coverage on annual W-2s.

In June 2012, the United States Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of most of PPACA, but there is a possibility the Act could be overturned by congress at some future date. HR managers need to keep a close eye on this issue and make sure the organization is operating in compliance. Current versions of Sage HRMS payroll solutions include the ability to disclose insurance coverage on your Form W-2s.

(continued on page 2)

Key Issues For Human Resources

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2. Walking The Tightrope Of Social Media

Recruitment is a core function of Human Resources departments, and the Internet has become an essential tool of the trade. Recent studies show that as many as 80 percent of U.S. companies use social media, such as LinkedIn, for recruitment of employees.

On the other side of the coin, there is the possibility that employees could use social media to harm a company through malicious comments. Many employers have therefore developed social media policies to protect themselves. But in 2011 the General Counsel of the National Labor Relations Board issued a memorandum describing the liability that may apply when social media policies infringe on labor rights. It is important that policies are not too broad, but tailored to protect the legitimate business interests of the employer. HR managers need to carefully review policies with senior executives and legal counsel as appropriate. Moreover, it is likely that the liability will be tested in future litigation, making this an evolving area that will need to be revisited.

3. Strategic Alignment

In an uncertain business climate, HR managers must continually justify the costs of employee-related programs and benefits. Unlike other business units, HR departments cannot point to the ratio of costs to revenues as a measure of effectiveness. One evolving solution is strategic alignment.

Strategic alignment means using HR processes and information to align employees with the strategic goals identified by senior management. HR is in a unique position to communicate objectives to employees, and assist in implementing procedures to support strategic goals. For example, HR can implement a performance-based compensation system that directly supports strategic goals.

There are many tools available in your Sage HRMS solution that can be used to support corporate goals, and increase the value of the HR role in the organization. Call us if you need help implementing specific initiatives.

4. Succession Planning

Another way HR can contribute to corporate success is to be ready to replace key employees without a delay that disrupts operations. Even dissatisfied employees may be sticking it out for now, but as the economy recovers, they could choose to leave their employers. Thus the importance of succession planning and effective recruiting processes.

Succession planning is the process of identifying and developing internal people with the potential to fill key positions. When it is done effectively, the consequences of a surprise departure can be mitigated. Effective succession planning includes:

- » Identifying positions that require a quick succession plan
- » Defining the skills, competencies, and other attributes needed
- » Identifying employees that meet these requirements
- » Providing targeted employees with training and development experiences to prepare them for advancement

Succession planning software also can be used to predict where key departures are likely to occur in the future, allowing a company to fill skilled and key positions before a gap arises. Succession planning tools are available for your Sage HRMS solution.

5. Using Technology To Reduce Business Uncertainty

The use of HR-related technology is increasingly essential in a business and regulatory environment characterized by uncertainty. Human Resource Management Systems (HRMS) were traditionally thought

of as cost-reduction tools, automating routine administrative tasks to raise productivity within the HR department itself. But when viewed as part of an investment in a competitive workforce, it can do much more. Through employee self-service, training, development, compensation, and benefits management, HR managers can help keep employees stay engaged and satisfied. These systems also deliver the analytics to help executives examine trends, support business decisions, and plan for future organizational changes.

Expanding your HRMS solution to include integrated tools such as: performance management; learning and training; tools for decision support; and self-service portals is an investment in the most important asset of the organization—its employees. The return on the investment in employees can change a struggling company into a winning company.

Conclusion

In an environment of continued business and regulatory uncertainty, HR will need to play a significant role. This role may include keeping current on top of regulatory changes pertinent to employers, and developing a very competitive workforce while keeping costs as low as possible. Your Sage HRMS solution provides the tools you need for success. Call us for assistance. ✨

Sage HRMS Product News

In an effort to continue to improve the Sage HRMS product line, Sage Employer Solutions included product enhancements and third-quarter tax and legislative content in the Sage HRMS product update. Sage Employer Solutions also introduced new gadgets and new subscription-based pricing. We will take a look at each in turn.

Sage HRMS Product Update

The Sage HRMS Product Update delivered in September 2012. The new features and capabilities are designed to improve the customer experience and provide greater flexibility in the use of the software.

Electronic Delivery Of Software And Updates

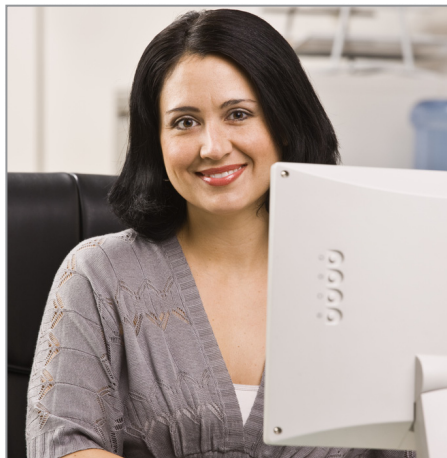
Beginning with Q3 Product Update, released on 09/25/2012, the Sage Advisor Update feature was installed to allow for automated notification when updates are available for downloading from the Customer Portal. This delivery method ensures updates are available quickly and on demand and will replace the shipment of new releases and upgrades by mail. This is the first step in making it easy for customers to review and obtain the latest version of the software. Later this year, a user interface will be added into the software that will advise you automatically of updates on a schedule of your choosing, and provide a direct link to the download area.

Sage Employee Self Service Enhancements

Several improvements have been made to Sage Employee Self Service (ESS). There are two new widgets that you can add to your custom Web pages:

- » An Open Enrollment Status widget
- » New Manager widgets

Security is improved with added encryption capabilities. The licensing system has



been modified so that it no longer counts Inactive Employees. Text now can be entered on the open enrollment exit screen.

New Sage Payroll CheckPrint

Sage Payroll CheckPrint is a new add-on custom check stock print solution that provides ready-to-print payroll checks. Support is included for self-sealing check stock, and a MICR font for the new SAP Crystal Reports® for Sage HRMS-based check stock is added.

Sage HRMS Payroll, The SQL-Based Payroll Module For Sage HRMS

The SQL-based payroll module for Sage HRMS is now available as a stand-alone module, and does not require Sage HRMS to operate.

New Features-As-A-Service Gadgets Added to Sage Source

Sage is committed to providing value-added services through Sage Source and Features as a Service. Two new gadgets are being introduced as part of Features as a Service to extend the HR department out to the employee population

- » The Company Directory gadget features a search function to help you find contact and organizational structure information for one or more colleagues in the

organization.

- » The new File Cabinet gadget can serve as a repository for company forms and templates.

Subscription-Based Pricing

Business tools available on the Internet have become more powerful, while at the same time economic uncertainty continues. As a result, online business solutions and subscription-based licensing are increasingly being adopted to help companies achieve more predictable cash flow. Sage now is offering the option of subscription-based pricing for many of its solutions. While this option will mainly be of interest to prospective customers, existing customers may want to consider this option when adding a new capability, such as ERP or CRM, to their solution. Subscription pricing is an alternative to perpetual licenses, and there is no lengthy minimum term. A Sage Business Care Gold Plan is included.

Product Information Webcasts

Sage offers a variety of live and pre-recorded webcasts. If you are thinking about adding other Sage products, or expanding the capabilities of your Sage HRMS solution, this is a great place to start. Current offerings include:

- » *Sage HRMS Talent Management*
- » *Why Integrated Talent Management Matters*
- » *Sage HRMS HR Actions*
- » *Create, Route, Approve, and Save Paperless Web-Based Forms*
- » *Employee Recruiting Made Easy With Sage HRMS Cyber Recruiter.*
- » For more information, or to register, [click here](#).

Please give us a call if you have any questions about the new products and services we have discussed here. ✨



IN THE SPOTLIGHT:

New Career Enhancement Training Offers On-Demand Options

Sage has recently announced the availability of *Career Enhancement Training*, a world class, on-demand training program. There are three different options to choose from depending on the needs of your organization. Let's take a closer look.

Career Enhancement Training For Employees

These high-quality online learning courses come from the top content publishers in the industry. Sage HRMS customers can purchase them for one affordable flat rate per student. The courses remain available for a full year, and can be accessed anytime, anywhere. Sage libraries for the organization are as follows:

- » Sage Business Success—A comprehensive library of technology, management, and business skills courses to jump-start a training program and improve employee skills.
- » Sage Compliance Essentials—Compliance fundamentals training that covers important aspects of employment and compliance law. Courses include: Computer Security, Sexual Harassment, HIPAA Compliance, and Workplace Safety.
- » Sage Desktop Solutions—Desktop training content that will bring employees up to speed quickly and help sharpen their skills.
- » Sage IT Certifications and Skills—A certification and training library of over 1,800 courses for IT professionals.
- » Sage Leadership and Management—From

training and development leader Skillsoft, course topics include: Leadership, Senior Management, Finance, Entrepreneurship, Human Resources, Marketing, Career, and Self-Development.

- » Sage Safety and Compliance—Safety and compliance content from industry expert, Vivid. The library includes 135 interactive courses on topics such as: Food Safety, Workplace Safety, HIPAA, Employment Law, and OSHA 10.

For more information visit: <http://www.getsmartwithsage.com>


Career Enhancement Training For The Individual

This course library is tailored to specific individual needs.

- » HR Essentials—Designed to deliver the information HR needs in a well-balanced and comprehensive library of on-demand courses. The library includes 29 HRCI-certified courses and over 70 other courses handpicked by Sage to support HR organizations. To view this offering visit: <http://www.sageu.com/employersolutions/hressentials.html>
- » Finance & Accounting Essentials—A comprehensive resource for business professionals with a non-accounting and finance background. This library includes courses to help interpret accounting and financial information with the acumen needed to drive the organization forward. To view this offering, visit: <http://www.sageu.com/employersolutions/accesentials.html>

Sage HRMS Learning Management

Any of the Career Enhancement Training libraries can be purchased and used in the context of Sage HRMS Learning Management by Cornerstone on Demand.

Call us with your questions. 

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