



How HCM Software Enables Construction Companies to Build a More Productive, Engaged Workforce

Despite 2020's impact, Deloitte is forecasting growth for the trillion-dollar U.S. construction and engineering (C&E) sector. So what steps can C&E companies take to optimize hiring, training and workforce management to remain competitive? Deloitte noted several key trends to help better prepare this sector for the future, including the use of digital technologies to manage projects, people and processes, and boost workforce training and development to improve performance.

Today, companies that leverage HCM software will be at the front of the pack, enabling smoother management processes and more engaged and productive employees. Using digital tools to successfully coordinate and manage the diversity of projects, people, and costs not only optimizes performance, it can maximize profitability.

Pepper Construction and the Criterion HCM Platform: Building a Better Foundation

To see this exciting new trend in action, we looked at Pepper Construction. This billion dollar general contracting company has five offices across the Midwest and a workforce exceeding 1000 employees. Mission-committed to high performance and best practices, Pepper builds marquee and specialty projects using sustainable material, and efficient systems. The firm is a telling example of leveraging a state-of-the-art digital HCM platform to improve how it manages its workforce, and its wide range of functions.

Top 5 Challenges for Workforce Management: Construction and Engineering

Criterion's Cloud HCM platform has been deployed by over 500 customers, including dozens of construction, engineering, and contracting firms. Criterion's capabilities are proving instrumental in addressing their most pressing human capital issues — including:



Hiring and retaining a qualified workforce.



Boosting employee engagement while reducing turnover.



Improving worker safety and minimizing risk.



Effectively managing/reducing worker compensation costs.



Managing changing regulations and compliance.

Criterion's HCM software platform delivers a Human Capital Management solution with superior useability, powerful enterprise functionality, and hundreds of critical HR, payroll, talent engagement, and workforce management services. Criterion was also awarded a 95+% positive customer satisfaction rating.

The platform is helping construction, engineering and contracting firms build the best workplace rosters, radically boost engagement, improve safety, better tackle the costs of worker compensation, and get ahead of regulations and compliance — all while managing the myriad aspects of their workforces with ease.

Pepper Construction: Managing Complexity and Growth

As a billion dollar plus construction firm employing a hybrid workforce of over 1100, Pepper Construction was due for a change. At the time, they were using a limited benefits administration system, and over time had also added several modules to their heavily customized software. Pepper then implemented an industry-specific ERP used by a number of architectural, engineering and construction organizations throughout North America. But while the ERP included a payroll module, it did not provide any administrative or HCM support — and could not address many of the workforce and labor complexities faced by the company.

As with other midmarket companies, Pepper Construction was required to comply with the Form 1095 requirements instituted by the Affordable Care Act starting in 2015. At the time, the firm had more than 500 employees, plus an additional 500 trade workers, and was a signatory to local unions in various markets. The benefits administration process they were using wasn't going to be sufficient anymore, and their existing HR administration processes were already badly strained. As Julie Kellman, then-Director of Compensation and Benefits at Pepper Construction, recalled, "My assistant was threatening to send me to HRIS Anonymous."

HCM Solution: Flexibility, Power and Usability

I needed a state-of-the-art HR system — and the required integration with the ERP payroll module was a conversation-ender with everyone else but Criterion. They were willing to engage with us, and partner with us to deliver what we needed.

**— Julie Kellman, Vice President, HR,
Pepper Construction**

Pepper Construction began the search for a better solution in early 2018. Kellman spearheaded the effort, approaching 24 different vendors with the company's requirements: a customizable platform that could integrate with the company's existing ERP payroll module and included enterprise-level capabilities. But she was concerned about the potential disruption an entirely built-from-scratch HCM program would cause, as developers descended on Pepper's busy company headquarters to build and retool. It would be far better to find an existing platform with the flexibility to adapt to Pepper's needs.

In discussions with Criterion, Kellman found the solution. Criterion's HCM platform ticked all the boxes with minimal disruptions to workflow, the workplace, and even the workforce. Further, it was able to provide the kind of partnership the construction firm would need. "Pepper is known for leveraging the most advanced technology available to deliver real value," said Kellman. "I needed a state-of-the-art HR system — and the required integration with the ERP payroll module was a conversation-ender with everyone else but Criterion. Criterion was willing to engage with us, and partner with us to deliver what we needed."

Outstanding Results

Since Criterion HCM went online, employees at Pepper Construction love using one unified portal for everything HR. “They don’t have to go to four different places to do something, whether it’s to update their list of dependents or watching training-on-demand videos,” said Kellman.

HR teams appreciate that the platform is completely customizable, with drag-and-drop dashboards that make any process easy. “It takes five minutes if I need to add a message screen,” Kellman said. “We can do it all. We don’t have any need for programming or development beyond the things we’ve asked Criterion to add.”



The Power to Deliver

Criterion’s combination of enterprise power, user experience and responsiveness made it ideal for Pepper Construction. Like so many employers today, the company required full-scale capabilities, but on a platform that managers and employees could thrive on, regardless of location. The results were uniformly positive — and Pepper has taken the next step of initiating parallel payroll processing using Criterion.

Kellman noted that working with Criterion was not the usual vendor experience, but more like a partnership that supported performance and growth, with support and service people that made all the difference.

“I’ve learned that with a software vendor, you’re not just buying the application, you’re buying the people behind it. Sometimes you focus on the application and forget you need the people behind it. And that’s their secret sauce,” she said.

The HR, Payroll and Talent Engagement Features Companies Need

Leaning on the efficiency of the Criterion HCM system means Pepper Construction is in a far better position to successfully recruit, onboard and engage its workforce as it continues to grow. Criterion HCM’s features have helped Pepper Construction continue to engage its employees, increase retention, and manage its HR needs — positioning the company for future growth with the ability to maintain its competitive edge in the C&E industry.

Learn how your company can boost its employee engagement, performance, and HR success with the Criterion HCM Platform.

CONTACT CRITERION



Criterion is a global provider of Simply Powerful Human Capital Management software. For midmarket business users and HR professionals, the Criterion HCM cloud platform delivers superior useability first, combined with powerful enterprise functionality to automate hundreds of critical HR, payroll, talent engagement, and workforce management services. Awarded a 95% plus customer satisfaction rating and recipient of Hearst Top Workplaces 2020, Criterion is trusted by hundreds of leading organizations in construction, nonprofit, government, education, franchise, and financial industries. Criterion HCM is available direct to customers and through a global partner network in over 10 countries. Learn more at www.criterionhcm.com