

# Kentucky Derby Museum Scales Up for the Racing Season with Paylocity



**95%**

faster payroll processes with Paylocity

**75%**

of working week freed up for Director of HR

**10-15**

hours saved per week on recruitment



[www.derbymuseum.org](http://www.derbymuseum.org)

Nonprofit

92 employees

Louisville, Kentucky

Every year, 240,000 visitors from across the globe come to the Kentucky Derby Museum. Located next to the iconic Churchill Downs Racetrack, the Museum displays artifacts, artworks, and interactive exhibits telling the story of the world-famous horse race, run every May since 1875.

Ariel Murphy, Director of Human Resources, explains: “Our primary role is to engage, educate, and excite visitors about the Kentucky Derby. But we do so much more than that. For example, we have a large events planning department, with four dedicated spaces for hosting weddings, proms, dinners, and corporate seminars.”

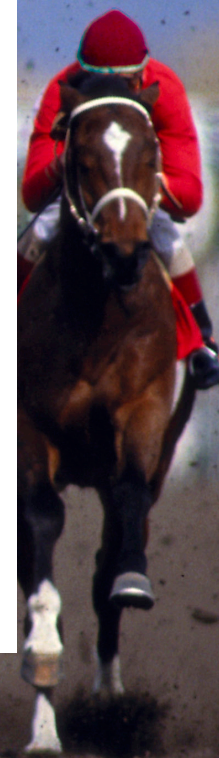
Things can be pretty full on for Ariel, especially in the run-up to the Derby when the Museum prepares for a huge influx of visitors. With help from her hiring managers, it’s her responsibility to oversee everything from recruitment and onboarding to payroll and strategic HR planning.

“We have 92 people in full- and part-time roles,” says Ariel. “Depending on the time of year, I could be recruiting retail assistants for our two merchandise stores, tour guides to lead visitors around Churchill Downs, extra hospitality staff, or facilities teams to maintain the Museum.”

In the past, the Kentucky Derby Museum used Paycor to manage HR and payroll. However, the platform was so unreliable that it became more of a hindrance than a help. It was time to find a true thoroughbred HR solution—and Paylocity was first past the winning post.

**“When someone comes into my office now, I can sit down and help them out rather than focusing on tedious admin. I can be the human part of HR instead of sitting behind a screen entering data.”**

Ariel Murphy, Director of Human Resources, Kentucky Derby Museum



## The Challenge

# Error-Prone Systems Leave HR Frustrated

With Paycor unable to handle the pace, the Kentucky Derby Museum looked for a more reliable and accurate platform that would cut tedious manual work and reduce the strain on HR.

### Seasonal Peaks Pile The Pressure on HR

The Kentucky Derby Museum is open all year round, but the racing season between spring and early fall is when things get really busy. For example, in the lead-up to the Derby meeting, the Museum hosts many celebratory events, and there's extra work for the retail team to manage incoming inventory and ensure visitors can purchase mementos. "It's all hands on deck at that time," notes Ariel. "To handle the pressure, it's vital we can recruit and onboard quickly and efficiently."

### Painful Support Processes Create Added Headaches

Managing HR using Paycor wasn't easy. As well as payroll errors and timeclock malfunctions, there was no protection against people clocking in without being on-site. Tax information was often incorrect, and on one occasion vendor errors meant that W-2 forms arrived late.

Accessing support was also a painful experience, as Ariel explains: "We would phone the contact center and sit on hold for 45 minutes, before finally getting through. We'd often explain the same issues, then get transferred between people. It was a huge headache."

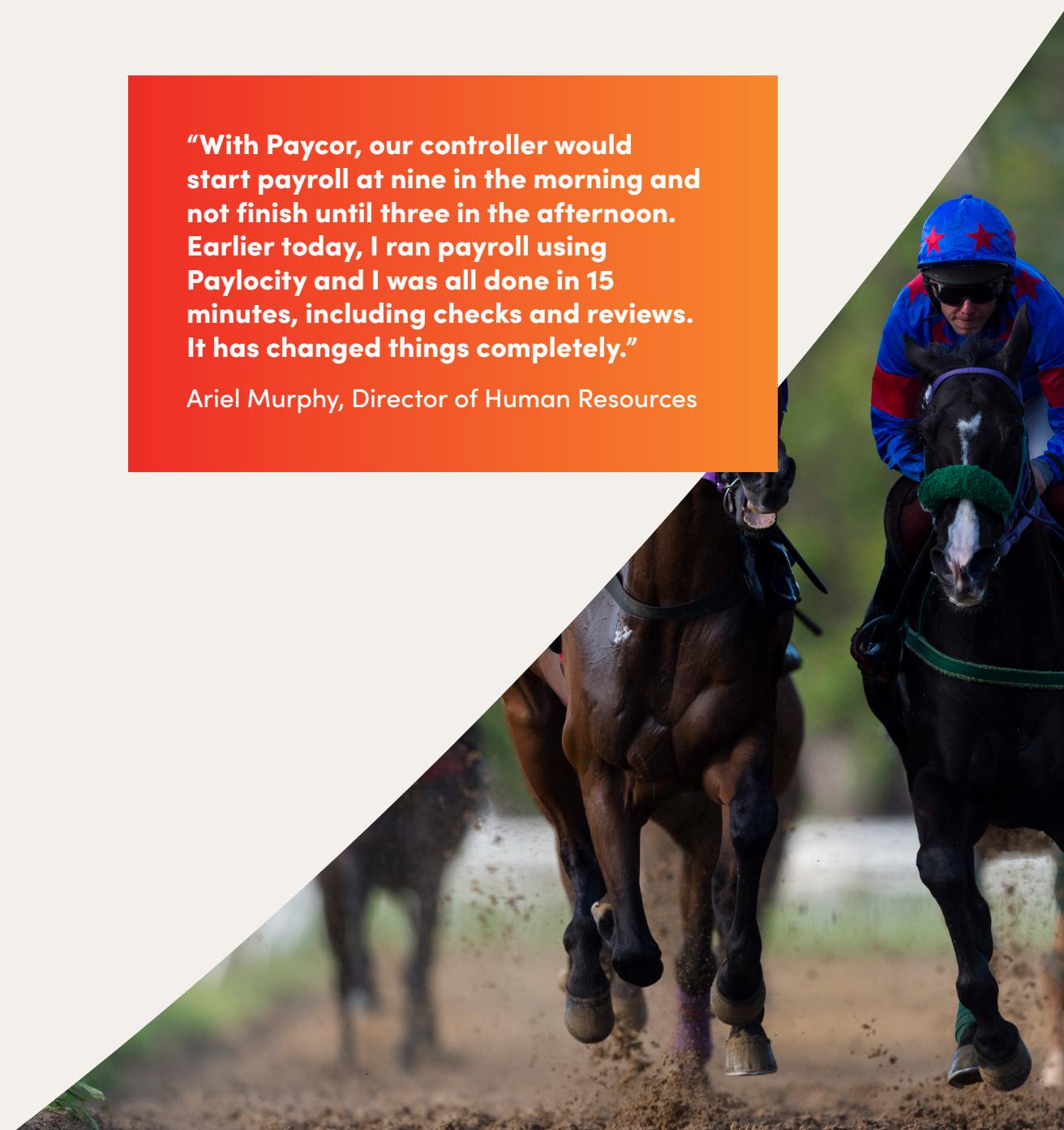
### Manual Working Takes Extra Time and Effort

Limited systems functionality also left Ariel relying on time-consuming manual workarounds. For example, preparing offer letters for successful candidates was a labor-intensive process, requiring back-and-forth communications with hiring managers. Similarly, managing benefits enrollments involved pulling reports and cross-checking data from three different systems.

"Running open enrollments was a nightmare," adds Ariel. "I had to manually check the health and dental insurance plans that employees signed up for, and compare them with the previous year. It was two weeks of double- and triple-checking, and there was always room for errors to creep in."

**"With Paycor, our controller would start payroll at nine in the morning and not finish until three in the afternoon. Earlier today, I ran payroll using Paylocity and I was all done in 15 minutes, including checks and reviews. It has changed things completely."**

Ariel Murphy, Director of Human Resources



## The Solution

# Betting on a Thoroughbred HR Platform

By switching to Paylocity, the Kentucky Derby Museum has automated key HR workflows, eliminated payroll and timecard errors, and enhanced collaboration across the organization.

The Kentucky Derby Museum assessed several major HR platforms, and Paylocity emerged as a frontrunner. “Where other vendors tried to buy our loyalty, Paylocity offered a more genuine conversation. And we loved the social collaboration and analytics tools,” notes Ariel.

### Digital Processes Simplify Recruitment and Onboarding

With Paylocity’s [Recruiting](#), the Museum has created standardized screening templates, email and SMS responses, and offer letters to accelerate hiring. Paylocity’s [Onboarding](#) also enables new hires to sign electronic documents in their own time rather than spending their first day working through paperwork with HR. “One of the coolest things is that people can enter personal details like their uniform size and gender identification online, which means they don’t have to worry about awkward conversations on their first day,” adds Ariel.

### Integrated Workflows Remove Errors and Stress

The Museum harnesses Paylocity’s [Payroll](#) system to manage biweekly payroll, and [Time & Attendance](#) for time collection, with geofencing preventing punch card errors. Ariel also uses [Workflows & Documents](#): “We recently needed employees to sign our racing license, so we uploaded it to Paylocity for everyone to sign,” adds Ariel. “That probably saved me two weeks of chasing.”

Paylocity’s [Integrations](#) tool has made benefits management much easier, with accurate data flowing from insurance providers directly to the Museum’s broker. “Open enrollments are now plain sailing,” says Ariel. “Paylocity removes the manual checks and improves my working life.”

### Company-wide Communications Drive Engagement

Using Paylocity’s [Community](#), the Museum announces employee birthdays, merchandise giveaways, and educational information for employees, such as an inclusive history of thoroughbred racing during Black History Month. Ariel also tracks diversity and inclusion by pulling reports via Paylocity’s [Insights & Recommendations](#) and runs stay interviews using Paylocity’s [Surveys](#). “We have high completion rates,” Ariel notes. “Surveys lets us pick up feedback and gives our employees a voice.”



**Recruiting and Onboarding** accelerate hiring and enhance the day-one experience for new starters.



**Payroll and Time & Attendance** ensure timecard accuracy and remove the need for remedial work and support calls.



**Integrations** simplify benefits enrollments and eliminate time-consuming manual checks.



**Community** enables announcements of employee birthdays, perks, and educational information to help build camaraderie.



**Insights & Recommendations** enables tracking and analysis of diversity and inclusion metrics.



**Surveys** gathers employee feedback through regular stay interviews.





## The Results

# Galloping Towards Greater HR Agility

Using Paylocity, the Kentucky Derby Museum saves huge amounts of time on recruitment and payroll, and ensures that it is ready to handle the pressures of the racing season.

### Streamlined Recruitment Secures First-Choice Candidates

More efficient recruitment processes have had a big impact. For example, standardized email and SMS templates have made it easier to connect with applicants. “We now hire more first-choice candidates, rather than losing touch with applicants and having to start again or cold-call people,” notes Ariel. This helps to ensure the Museum is fully staffed for the racing season, and recently enabled Ariel to fill facilities management roles when there was a shortage of available talent.

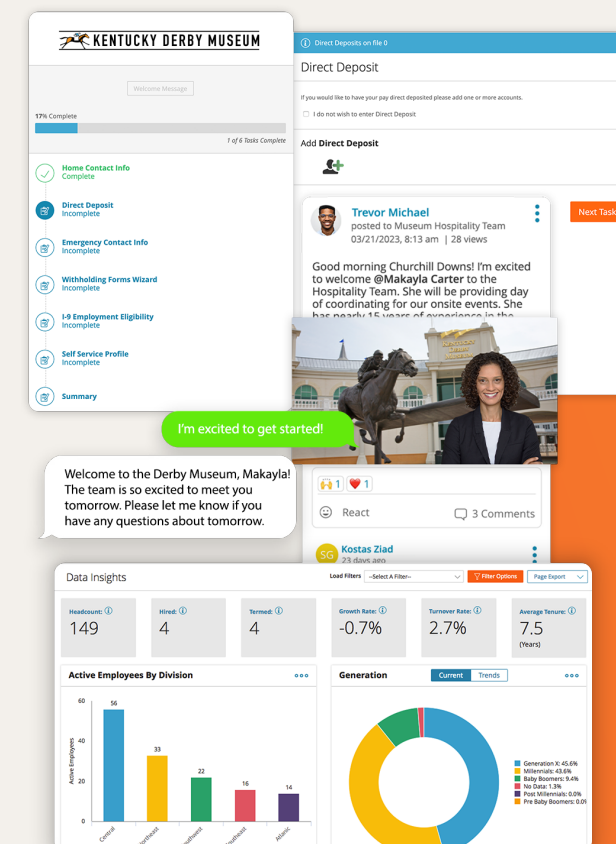
### Robust HR Systems Unlock Major Time Savings

The move to Paylocity has also improved the speed of many processes. In recruitment, Paylocity saves 10 to 15 hours every week during the busiest periods. Likewise, payroll now runs 95% faster, as Paylocity cuts the need for remedial work and frustrating support calls. Community plays a role, too: employees grow more familiar with Paylocity when they log in to see announcements, and know where to find their HR documents without guidance from Ariel.

### Enabling a More Impactful Role For HR

Ariel estimates that Paylocity has freed up as much as 75% of her week. That’s time she now spends on more valuable work, such as re-writing the organization’s HR handbook and connecting with colleagues. “Now, I have time to do the things that were always pushed back. I feel people are more comfortable approaching me as they know I have the time to really engage with them. I definitely feel more of a resource to both organizational leaders and employees.”

Ariel concludes: “There’s so many things that I want to do with Paylocity. Even in Community, where we see great engagement from our frontline teams, there are lots more opportunities. I want to work towards utilizing everything on offer in Paylocity.”



**“The support from Paylocity is great. When I called them this morning with what I thought was a tricky question, it was no more than a five-minute conversation. I didn’t have to sit waiting on hold, and the support agent gave me a solution straight away.”**

Ariel Murphy, Director of Human Resources

