

case study

Auto Group Steers into the Future of HR and Payroll



Baxter



The auto industry is changing rapidly. In a time where consumers can buy a car from their phone and have it delivered to them, employees have come to expect the same on-demand, mobile-friendly, self-service experience in the workplace. Family-owned Baxter Auto Group needed a solution that could give that consumer experience to their 2,000 employees. Shifting gears, they partnered with Paylocity to get access to cutting-edge HR and payroll technology.

The Challenge

Baxter Auto Group started out with one store in 1957 and grew steadily over the last 63 years to more than 20 locations. In 2018, they hit gridlock with their payroll provider and decided to make the shift to Paylocity.

Staff in the large dealership group includes service, sales, inventory, and more. Many have limited access to a work computer and do not have a company email address. Benefits and Wellness Manager Kathleen Flynn says, "Reaching them with important announcements was tough, and ensuring they had access to their documents was a struggle."

Linear and diagonal growth and career mobility are common for employees in the auto industry. At Baxter, many people try out different positions during their career, moving from Service to Sales among different dealership locations. Prior to the switch to Paylocity, these changes meant a lot of manual processes to update employee files and move records to the appropriate groups.

Data and reporting are critical components of HR, but Baxter experiences an extra layer of complexity with multiple business segments operating across state lines. With their previous provider they struggled to get the reporting they needed at the store and employee levels.

Managing new hire data was also a hassle with even more manual work. There was little collaboration between the sites and start dates were all over the place.

"We needed something easy to use. Our employees really like the Paylocity mobile app and how easy it is to navigate. Paylocity has been a springboard for us from a technology standpoint. We've put new processes in place, and now we have more of a roadmap." says Kathleen.

Company

Baxter Auto Group

Industry

Auto Dealer

Location

Omaha, NE

Size

2,000+

Customer Since

2018

Challenge

With the auto industry changing rapidly, Baxter Auto Group needed an HR and Payroll technology provider that could simplify processes and improve communication across their 20 dealerships and three body shops.

Featured Solutions



Results

Paylocity helped Baxter connect across dealerships, drive more strategic decisions with data insights, and improve onboarding processes.

Share

paylocity.com/Baxter



“We needed something easy to use. Our employees really like the Paylocity mobile app and how easy it is to navigate. Paylocity has been a springboard for us from a technology standpoint. We've put new processes in place, and now, we have more of a roadmap.”

Kathleen Flynn, Benefits & Wellness Manager

The Results

Connecting Across the Dealerships

When dealing with multiple locations that run as separate businesses, there are often silos, which is what Baxter was experiencing among their 20 dealerships and three body shops. The disconnect can also happen based on positions, especially those that aren't tied to computers or desks. Paylocity's social collaboration and internal communication tool, Community, helped them tackle this disconnect head-on. “We've grown quickly because now we're using it more and we've been able to get employee feedback — both positive and negative — quicker,” says Director of Communications and Engagement Aaron Filipi.

The environment of social unrest and a global health emergency in 2020 made a tool like this even more important, says Aaron. “It's so helpful to get in touch with employees quickly and be able to communicate transparently. With all the ways of the world right now, it's been very helpful to get information out fast to employees. We can see how employees are feeling and comment and connect immediately.”

Baxter had previously relied on emails and bulletin boards with printed announcements, which meant they had no way to measure the reach or impact of each message. “My goal is to communicate effectively with every single employee,” says Aaron. “While I understand it's a two-way street, I want to at least get word out to everyone and know they've seen it.”

Personalized Onboarding Experience

And the benefits keep rolling in. “Before we moved over to Paylocity's Onboarding, we had a lot of data entry, and there were a lot of mistakes,” says Kathleen. Now each new hire's experience with the onboarding website is branded by the specific dealership logo (eg, Baxter Chrysler, Baxter Dodge, etc.) with photos of their dealership and a letter from their general manager, giving the new employee a more personalized experience even before their first day. Paperwork rolls directly over from the Recruiting module into their onboarding file. “We recently put the orientation online. So now people can watch it on their first day, regardless of which location. The employee can enter all their information at home, and when they come for the first day, all the paperwork is out of the way. It flows nicely,” says Kathleen. “There is more communication, a better employee experience, and a better foot forward for Baxter. Now we can send tasks in the self-service portal. Employees can now report to their own dealership and meet their teams right away and still get the full experience online. Their first day is a lot smoother.”

But it doesn't stop there. Baxter keeps providing a positive employee experience with ongoing learning opportunities. While Baxter uses an industry-specific Learning Management System (LMS) that provides targeted automotive trainings, it lacked a few key things, including tracking. Baxter tested out Paylocity's LMS. “I know our Recruiting team really likes it a lot,” says Kathleen. “They love the tracking capability and the ability to send reminders. Employees love that it's right in the same platform where they go to clock in.”

Diversity in the Data

Driving decisions with data allows for a more strategic approach. "I'm excited to take the client training on Data Insights," says Kathleen. "We've been using Data Insights a lot; it's amazing how much information is in there and easy to access without even having to really run a report, just basically filtering. We're also working with Paylocity to make sure the store managers have access to see the data for their stores," says Kathleen. "Diversity and Inclusion remain critical, so I've been running reports on gender and ethnicity. I was able to pull a turnover report for service for one store to see what the issues were there. We're definitely leveraging it more now, and with the training I can learn even more." Aaron agrees, "Because things are changing so quickly, especially with regard to more accountability on diversity and inclusion. We need to be able to access the data and understand it quickly. Paylocity's innovativeness enables us to make quicker and better decisions. And these decisions are strategic for the long term."

"We've been using Data Insights a lot; it's amazing how much information is in there and easy to access without even having to really run a report, just basically filtering."

– Kathleen Flynn, Benefits & Wellness Manager

Partners Paving the Way Forward Together

The COVID-19 pandemic and local unrest have revealed the full value of the platform and partnership Baxter has through Paylocity. Not only were they able to communicate quickly and effectively (and track that communication), timely enhancements like the Emergency Contact Dashboard helped them identify employees with missing information to make sure they updated their records accordingly. The impossibly difficult job of reducing workforce was even relieved of unnecessary burdens like extra paperwork.

Aaron says, "Using Paylocity became mission critical, and email is very limited. It became a matter of safety, not just related to COVID-19 but different protests that were turning violent around our stores. I found myself saying for the first time, 'I am so glad we have this tool.' Before, it was just a nice resource, and it quickly became 'How would I have done this without this tool?'"

In the past two years the Baxter team has learned a lot about what Paylocity's platform can do and are excited to keep exploring. "We love that Paylocity has the ability to work collaboratively not only with us but with other vendors as well," says Kathleen.

Aaron agrees, "Paylocity's customer service is at the top for reasons we chose this partnership. There is responsive and knowledgeable communication. We're constantly growing, seems like we're evolving with Paylocity. I feel like we have a true partnership."



"I found myself saying for the first time, 'I am so glad we have this tool.' Before, it was just a nice resource, and it quickly became 'How would I have done this without this tool?'"

Aaron Filipi,
Director of Communications & Engagement