Furniture Manufacturer Pivots HR Strategy to Enable Explosive Growth

paylocity®
Forward Together.

2,000+
hours saved per year through employee self service

300%
growth in workforce without increasing Payroll headcount

93%
of staff are now actively using the Paylocity mobile app

POLYWOOD®

www.polywood.com

Manufacturing

1,800 employees

2 locations in Indiana and North Carolina

Inspired by the progress of the US recycling movement in the 1980s, POLYWOOD's founders have spent the past three decades building a business that turns landfill- and ocean-bound plastics into beautiful all-weather outdoor furniture.

In recent years, consumers' growing environmental consciousness has significantly increased demand for sustainable products. This trend coincided with an uptick in Americans staying home to work remotely, which allowed them to spend more of their leisure time in their yards. As a result, demand for quality outdoor furniture continued to spike, pushing POLYWOOD into near-exponential growth.

This presented a huge opportunity, but it created challenges too. Two-thirds of POLYWOOD's products are made to order, so when demand increases, manufacturing needs to ramp up—and fast. To keep backlogs under control, cut production lead times, and ensure that it could deliver products to customers in days, not months, POLYWOOD looked to expand its manufacturing capabilities significantly in terms of both facilities and headcount.

"We scaled up our manufacturing operations in Indiana and opened a second location in Roxboro, North Carolina," explains Ryan Zimmerman, Senior Director of Human Resources at POLYWOOD. "But we also needed to triple the size of our workforce, from around 600 to 1,800 people. Recruiting and onboarding so many people, so quickly, was a huge challenge."

Before the HR team could hit the ground running, POLYWOOD needed a platform that could do more than just payroll—and its existing ADP solution wasn't up to the task. Shifting to Paylocity gave the business the tools and flexibility to transform its legacy HR processes and meet the needs of a much larger workforce.

> "Paylocity empowered my team to be much more effective, which allows me to work *on* the business, not *in* the business. We're no longer stuck in the weeds of everyday tasks—we have the information at our fingertips to focus on strategy as we grow."
>
> Ryan Zimmerman, Senior Director of Human Resources, POLYWOOD

Legacy Manual Processes Fail to Scale

With a limited legacy payroll system and paper-based processes for recruiting, onboarding, and time collection, POLYWOOD's HR team lacked the tools they needed to drive growth.

Recruiting and Onboarding Applicants in a Competitive Market

When people are looking for a manufacturing job, POLYWOOD needs to react fast. Candidates may send out up to 20 job applications per day, and they'll often take the first position an employer offers.

POLYWOOD's existing ADP solution required applicants to start by creating an account, which added too much friction in the process, especially for workers who may not have access to a computer at home. Moreover, POLYWOOD's HR team was not easily able to track applications, leading to manual entry errors and missed communications.

POLYWOOD had to fall back on a mix of paper-based processes and spreadsheets to manage its recruiting and onboarding, which left the HR team wading through printouts to find information and significantly increased time-to-hire.

Managing Time, Attendance, and Talent Efficiently

As the workforce grew, POLYWOOD's HR team and supervisors also faced challenges in terms of managing time, attendance, and performance—spending over 40 hours a week on payroll admin alone.

For example, the HR team had to manually transfer attendance points from each employee's paper attendance card into ADP. This process took 15 hours even when the company only had 600 employees—so it wasn't sustainable as the company grew.

Similarly, routine processes—such as making or approving a request for time off, logging a shift change, correcting a timecard, moving an employee to a different team, or giving them a raise—were all paper-based, making them time-consuming and error-prone. Supervisors at POLYWOOD's North Carolina plant also often had to send paper forms to the Payroll team in Indiana, which caused delays and made it difficult to fix problems quickly.

> **"Our partnership with Paylocity makes a huge difference to us as a fast-growth company. If there's a feature that we need, Paylocity are always prepared to discuss changes and find solutions."**
>
> Ryan Zimmerman, Senior Director of Human Resources

An All-in-One HR & Payroll Platform Drives Automation, Accelerates Onboarding, and Unlocks Insight

Shifting to Paylocity provided POLYWOOD's HR team, workers, and supervisors with the tools they need to collaborate effectively at scale.

Recruiting and Onboarding Enable Faster Business Growth

By pivoting from its legacy ADP system to Paylocity, POLYWOOD can now offer applicants a fully integrated, automated Recruiting and Onboarding experience. Instead of filling out up to 30 paper forms, candidates can apply through job sites such as indeed.com with a single click. The whole application process is tracked in Paylocity from end to end, so HR can monitor progress and respond to applicants' questions instantly. Screener questions easily filter for suitable applicants, and when POLYWOOD finds someone who fits, they can reach out quickly to the candidate by text, which has boosted response rates.

Dynamic Tools Foster a Positive, Collaborative Culture

Once a new employee comes on board, Community, Paylocity's social collaboration platform, acts as a hub for communication and collaboration with their peers and the HR team. Employees can check their pay stubs and timecards at any time via the Paylocity Mobile App, as well as give and receive peer recognition via the social feed. The intuitive nature of the app makes it easy for everyone to get involved, organically creating an employee-led culture that strengthens bonds not only between teams on the factory floor, but across all areas of the organization.

Digitization Empowers Workers and Supervisors

The Paylocity Mobile App and new kiosks installed on the factory floors now enable workers and supervisors to handle a wide range of routine tasks digitally, from enrolling for benefits to requesting time off, calling in sick, or changing shifts. It's also much quicker to correct errors—for example, if someone forgets to clock in at the start of their shift, either they or their supervisor can correct their timecard immediately. Without needing help from HR, supervisors can also initiate and manage position changes, wage changes, employee termination, and time-off approvals on their own. Leaders ultimately have much greater control and insight, helping them ensure that each shift is properly tracked and fully staffed.

Recruiting improves applicant flow, helping the business scale to meet demand.

Self-Service Portal & Mobile App empower employees and free HR from routine tasks.

Community encourages positive interactions and collaboration throughout the business.

Pulse Surveys reveal employee needs around housing, childcare, and other issues.

Data Insights helps HR teams, supervisors, and leaders find and fix problems fast.

Expanding the Business with Engaged, Productive Employees

Paylocity helps POLYWOOD build a positive, people-first culture that powers business growth.

Scalable Processes Enable 300% Workforce Growth

By streamlining the recruitment process, Paylocity helped POLYWOOD dramatically improve applicant flow, enabling it to hire more than 1,200 people over the past three years and triple the size of its workforce. With more than 100 new hires in the onboarding pipeline at any one time, HR teams gain complete, real-time insight into status and approvals, helping them fill open positions quickly and highlight any issues in the hiring process.

## Paylocity Mobile App Achieves 93% Organic Adoption

Today, 93% of POLYWOOD's employees use the Paylocity Mobile App daily—not only to access HR services, but also to communicate, collaborate, and recognize their peers. Critically, unlike tools that were previously implemented, the HR team didn't have to host additional trainings or push users to adopt the platform. Employees were excited to jump into Paylocity, saving HR time and resources by avoiding manual rollouts and requests. Ryan comments: "We have a great culture, and Paylocity's Community and Peer Recognition tools really amplify that. It's taken off all by itself, with no training or pressure from management. People just started using the Community feed to say 'Good job!' to their co-workers, and it's grown from there."

Automation Saves 2,000+ Hours Per Year

Eliminating paperwork, automating processes, and empowering employees via the mobile app have also unlocked huge time savings and productivity gains for POLYWOOD. Ryan recalls: "Even when we only had 600 employees, we saved 40 hours a week on payroll alone by moving from ADP to Paylocity. Today, we're able to support three times as many people with the same Payroll headcount. Without Paylocity, I don't know how we could have achieved the growth we did during the pandemic."

Real-Time Insight Enables Greater Focus on HR Strategy

Ryan concludes: "As an HR leader, Paylocity gives me the information I need at my fingertips—not just in terms of checking up on what's happening today, but also seeing where the gaps are and planning solutions for the future." Going forward, POLYWOOD is planning to expand its use of Paylocity's Data Insights and Surveys features to learn more about employees' needs and shape the business to be an even better place for people to work and build their careers.
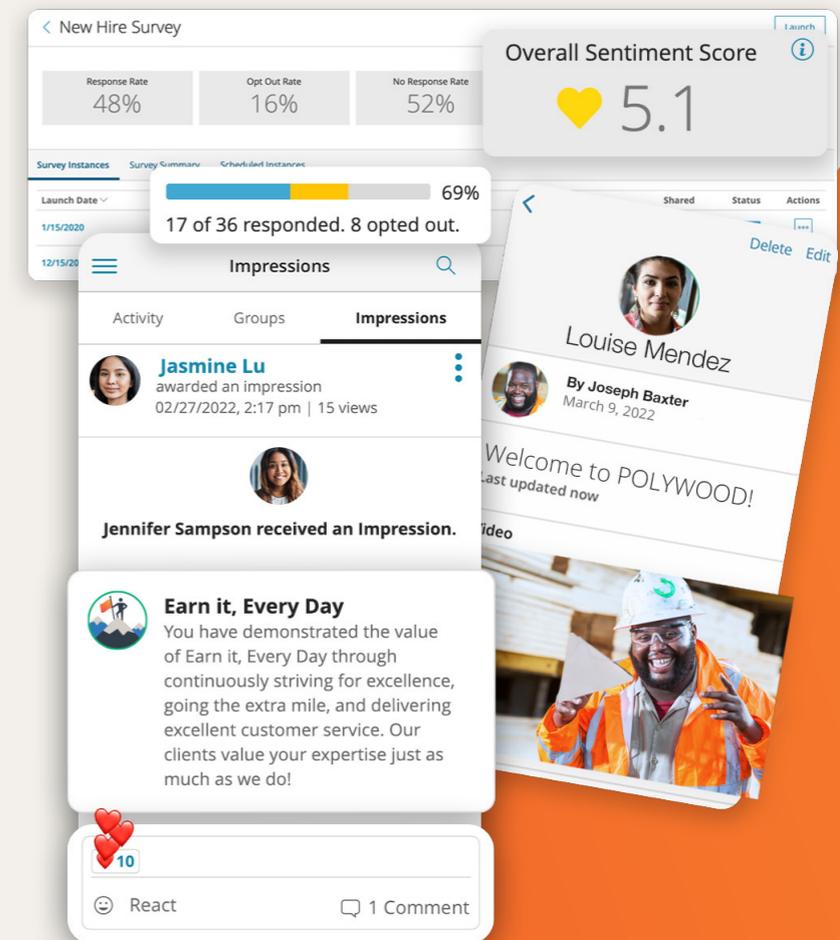
"Paylocity helped us understand our employee data so much better. Before, if we wanted to dive into our data—to understand turnover by department, for example—it would have taken 30 or 40 minutes to pull a report. Now we get that insight instantly."

Ryan Zimmerman, Senior Director of Human Resources