

Restaurant and Entertainment Group Consolidates Systems and Cuts Time-to-Hire

30
mins for onboarding, reduced from several hours

8
separate HR systems consolidated to just 3

2
hours saved per day for busy restaurant managers



www.costavida.com

www.fatcatsfun.com

Restaurants and Hospitality

1,840 employees

100+ locations across Utah, Arizona, Idaho, and Nevada

When you're running a business with hundreds of locations and thousands of employees, HR is bound to be complex. You need the right systems to streamline processes, coordinate operations, and reach your strategic goals. Cumbersome legacy technologies just won't cut it.

That was the challenge facing Win Brands. Based in Pleasant Grove, Utah, the group owns and operates two flourishing companies. First, there is Costa Vida Fresh Mexican Grill, a quick-service restaurant chain that has grown to more than 94 locations across Utah, Colorado, Texas, Arizona, and Nevada, all serving freshly prepared burritos, nachos, and enchiladas.

Then there is FatCats, a family entertainment concept that combines movie theaters, bowling, dining, arcade games, and glow-in-the-dark mini golf, all under one roof. With the first complex opening in 2001, Fat Cats has expanded to nine locations in Arizona, Utah, and Idaho.

To manage HR operations, each company had their own approach: Costa Vida was using an HCM platform from isolved, while FatCats had outsourced its HR services to G&A, a professional employer organization (PEO). Win Brands found the isolved system frustrating and limited, so switched Costa Vida over to Paylocity, and soon afterwards decided to use the platform for FatCats as well, and is currently finishing the implementation phase.

Victoria Crowther, System and Benefits Manager, People Strategy Department, explains: "Several HCM providers made big promises about service, but during the evaluation process we realized they couldn't deliver. Paylocity set up multiple demos and answered all our questions brilliantly. We enjoyed the system so much at Costa Vida that it was a natural step to implement at FatCats too."

"With Paylocity, we feel we have gone from using Stone Age tools to having a state-of-the-art HCM platform. The mobile capabilities, ease of use, and customer service are exceptional."

Victoria Crowther, System and Benefits Manager, People Strategy Department, Win Brands

The Challenge

Firing Up the Grill

Relying on outdated, poorly integrated legacy systems left the HR team and restaurant managers feeling like they were running into roadblocks at every turn.

Disconnected Systems Create Effort for HR

Costa Vida operates in a highly dynamic part of the hospitality sector, but its HR systems were fragmented and struggled to keep pace. Alongside the isolated HCM platform, the company had separate tools for hiring, onboarding, benefits, and more. “One of the most disappointing things with isolated was the lack of integrations,” explains Victoria. “We were one of their biggest clients, but they would not create connections with our other systems.” Inevitably, users struggled to remember credentials for so many interfaces. “We spent a lot of time resetting passwords for our teams,” adds Victoria.

Manual Steps Make Hiring a Heavy Lift

This disconnected setup had a negative impact on many key processes, impeding efficiency and agility. For example, hiring and onboarding involved lots of paperwork and manual steps, as the HR team had to enter data and set up profiles separately in each of the applicant tracking, HCM, and timekeeping systems. “Recruiting was a real pain,” notes Victoria. “As well as the volume of paperwork, restaurant managers had no visibility of the onboarding pipeline. We had to send them email updates at least once a week to tell them when their new hires could actually start.”

Limited Mobile Tools Frustrate Managers

Another ongoing frustration with the isolated system was the lack of mobile functionality. “In truth, the isolated system was prehistoric,” continues Victoria. “They claimed there was an app, but really you could only use it on a desktop computer, and the functionality was very limited.” This was a particular problem for restaurant managers, who needed to track everything from time off requests to interviews and terminations. “Our managers had to remember or note down every request, and then after their shift go to the back office and log everything in the system,” adds Victoria.

“The other big HCM providers we spoke to were hesitant on whether they could support the key integrations we needed. Paylocity already had those connections set up and configured in their platform, with an impressive list of customer success stories to prove it.”

Victoria Crowther, System and Benefits Manager,
People Strategy Department



The Solution

Sampling the Flavors

During the evaluation process, Victoria and the HR team were impressed by Paylocity's integrated platform, the expertise of its sales team, and its strong supporting references.

Replacing Paperwork with Nimble Digital Hiring

With Paylocity's [Recruiting](#) and [Onboarding](#) modules, Costa Vida has designed and implemented streamlined digital hiring workflows. "Our recruiters and restaurant managers can handle every stage of the pipeline in the Paylocity system, from reviewing applications and scheduling interviews to sending out offer letters and storing all communications with candidates," explains Victoria. "We can also track the current status of every application, and quickly identify which candidates are referrals. This last point is especially helpful, as onboarding referrals often involves less admin."

Bringing the Mobile Experience Up to Date

The [Paylocity Mobile App](#) has proved a huge improvement on the isolated version, enabling restaurant managers to handle requests, view schedules, and see open tasks instantly. Similarly, employees can use the app to access the [Employee Self-Service](#) portal to check pay stubs, request time off, and view announcements in the Community collaboration hub. "At the moment, we are mostly using [Community](#) to post corporate communications, and for restaurant managers to share ideas and best practices with their peers," says Victoria. "Our next objective is to encourage our employees to start forming their own groups and connecting with each other in there."

Harnessing AI and Advanced Analytics

Meanwhile, the [Data Insights](#) module is helping Victoria keep a close eye on key HR metrics and trends, such as ACA compliance and employee I-9 Forms that are approaching expiry. "Our leaders, finance people, and restaurant managers can also pull customized reports," notes Victoria. "That way, they aren't waiting for HR to collate and send over the data."

The [AI Assistant](#) has also made life easier for the HR team. "We are using AI Assistant to answer queries, and it often saves us having to contact the Paylocity service team," adds Victoria. "Also, employees are using AI Assistant to check our handbook, instead of sending us questions."



Recruiting and Onboarding accelerate and streamline hiring, saving time for HR.



Paylocity Mobile App delivers a modern, optimized, and intuitive mobile experience.



Employee Self-Service gives employees a single source for key information.



Community connects restaurant managers and allows them to share guidance and tips.



AI Assistant gives HR and employees near-instant answers to their questions.



Data Insights offers detailed reports on turnover, benefits, ACA compliance, and more.



The Results

Cooked to Perfection

Both Costa Vida and FatCats now benefit from a best-in-class HCM platform, which has received great feedback from the HR team, restaurant managers, and employees on the ground.

Reducing Complexity with an All-in-One Platform

By implementing Paylocity, Costa Vida has moved from fragmented HR systems to a modern integrated platform, while FatCats has left behind the costly PEO model. The switch has enabled Costa Vida to consolidate eight systems to just three, reducing operational complexity. With fewer logins to manage, HR no longer receives countless requests to reset passwords from frustrated employees. And instead of having to collate data from multiple systems for reporting, Victoria can pull insights with a few clicks. “It’s easier to stay on top of turnover and other trends,” she adds.

Saving Hours Every Day with New Workflows

With the Paylocity platform, hiring and onboarding now run much more smoothly, with no need for back-and-forth emails, paperwork, and data entry. “Our recruiting and onboarding process used to touch four different systems,” says Victoria. “Now, the whole process is managed in Paylocity. As soon as we send offer letters, we slip seamlessly into onboarding mode. That has enabled us to reduce our time-to-hire significantly. We now complete in 30 minutes what used to take several hours, and our restaurant managers save up to two hours every day.”

Improving the Experience for Managers

Paylocity’s mobile capabilities have also relieved the pressure on busy restaurant managers and empowered them to manage tasks more efficiently. Rather than stepping off the line to handle HR tasks on a desktop PC, they can now do everything with a few taps on the app. “Even the most basic requests were complicated with the old system,” explains Victoria. “Paylocity’s app eliminates those frustrations and improves the experience for managers.”

She concludes: “We’ll continue to optimize with Paylocity. We will look at the [Learning](#) module when the contract for our current tool ends, as well as extending our use of [Time & Labor](#) and [Performance](#) across both Costa Vida and FatCats. There is so much potential!”



“Our Paylocity service team have been responsive and transparent. The communication is always excellent, and we can reach out to them and get a solution to our question very promptly.”

Victoria Crowther, System and Benefits Manager,
People Strategy Department