



University of Wisconsin-Madison

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"Helping Industry Gain Competitive Advantage Through E-Commerce and E-Business"

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Project Report
(Abridged Version)

Leading Practices and Software Tools For Workforce and Productivity Management

Project Sponsor

Uniek, Inc.

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Executive Summary

Uniek is a company that is a designer, manufacturer and marketer of home furnishing and craft products. The company's current time and attendance software system is not satisfactorily meeting its needs. The current system is limited in its capabilities, requires considerable manual effort, and is outdated. Hence, the objective of this project was to assist Uniek in researching and evaluating a new software solution and leading business practices to address their time, attendance and workforce management needs from HR, payroll, manufacturing/DC and IT perspectives.

Our team took a three-pronged approach to conduct this project. First, we interviewed key stakeholders at Uniek (representing HR, payroll, manufacturing, DC and IT) to gain insight into issues and challenges with the current system, and to gather requirements and evaluation criteria for the new solution. Second, we researched the vendor landscape to identify a set of companies offering solutions for time and attendance and workforce management. A comprehensive Request-for-Information (RFI) instrument was then developed – It comprised of 6 sections and 99 questions in all. The RFI was sent to six vendors and we received responses from five of them in time for us to conduct our analysis. Third, we also conducted interviews of five leading companies with significant manufacturing and/or warehousing operations. The interview questionnaire comprised of 16 multi-part questions covering 5 categories of issues. Although none of these companies mirrored Uniek's operations, the interviews provided useful insights into leading practices for time, attendance and workforce management.

After compiling information from the RFI responses from vendors, our team systematically compared the capabilities of the vendors and also evaluated them on the basis of Uniek's specific requirements and assessment criteria. We also took into account information regarding vendor experiences that was gathered from the interviews with other companies. Overall, based on our analysis, RedPrairie and Kronos emerged as front-runners with a suitable solution for Uniek. Another vendor, namely ADP, also scored high in our evaluation, but appeared to be relatively weaker than the others in the area of training – The ease of training is an important factor for Uniek to consider due to employee communication issues (many understand Spanish only) as well as workforce turnover issues.

While RedPrairie and Kronos appear very comparable on time and attendance functionalities, RedPrairie offers a broader and more enhanced set of capabilities beyond time and attendance tracking. In particular, RedPrairie's differentiation and edge may lie in its ability to support workforce and productivity management, and thereby in assisting executives in charge of manufacturing and DC functions to gain visibility into workforce performance and operational improvement opportunities and to effectively utilize their workforce to maximize productivity. This viewpoint regarding the broader benefits of the software's ability to provide workforce and productivity management was affirmed in the interviews we conducted with other manufacturing companies.

In light of these findings, we recommend that Uniek reconfirm its vision and scope of use for the new software solution, and accordingly further evaluate the solutions from RedPrairie, Kronos and possibly ADP to identify the one that best meets the company's needs.

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- Jeff Armstrong

Other Members of Uniek Project Team

- Jeff Foresman
- Ed DeMeo
- Josh Graves
- Marge Crossman

Project Advisor

- Raj Veeramani

Thank you all for your time and support.

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