

## HUNT COMPANIES

UNLOCK BUSINESS VALUE WITH ULTIMATE'S TRANSFORMATION SERVICES



### INDUSTRY

Real Estate



### NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

1,600



### KEY BENEFITS

- Reduction of payroll team overtime
- Improved payroll team morale
- More efficient deployment of HR resources

## OVERVIEW

The Hunt Companies is a full-service real estate company dedicated to the development, investment, property management, and financing of real estate assets. Hunt's family of companies includes investment management, mortgage banking, direct lending, loan servicing, property management, development, construction, and consulting.

Prior to UltiPro, Hunt Companies used an accounting system to manage its HR processes, which resulted in all-paper employee files and manual, time-intensive transactions to perform most HR functions. Due to the complexity of their business model, the company administered 16 FEINs/separate payrolls. Hunt went live on UltiPro in June 2015.

## CHALLENGE

The activation of UltiPro created immediate business benefits for Hunt, with the company's 1,600 employees experiencing a greater sense of control and engagement through the solution's role-based access to job and pay details. However, structural challenges in the company's payroll department created an opportunity for people and process improvements.

Hunt is similar to businesses that grow through acquisition, with new processes often adding complexity to those that already exist. Hunt faced an additional challenge because its acquired companies are allowed to operate separately.

“Our engagement with Ultimate gave our team an opportunity to be heard, and to review our processes with a fresh set of eyes and ears. We didn't judge the way our employees did their jobs, but rather looked at the process to identify the best way for an employee's work to add value. The experience of being asked for their insights rather than being told how to do their job increased our entire team's level of engagement.”

-Ann Patrick,  
Senior Vice President of Human Resources  
HUNT COMPANIES

Regulations and business constraints often prevented Hunt from truly merging the acquired companies. And although related to real estate, the business focus of the acquired companies, which include development, investment, commercial management, military property management, and financing, differed substantially. In addition, Hunt's payroll team was organized by company, so some staff processed just a few dozen employees, while others oversaw companies with several hundred.

"Our payroll team was overwhelmed, and morale was a concern," said Ann Patrick, senior vice president of HR for Hunt Companies. "We needed some expert guidance to improve processes." Hunt Companies decided to undertake a process improvement study in order to understand its most significant stumbling blocks and to maximize its investment in UltiPro. Hunt asked Ultimate to through Ultimate's Transformation Services, with a 3P Improvement Process engagement.

## SOLUTION

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Ultimate's 3P Improvement Process is a six-to-eight-week engagement that consists of a series of onsite and remote working sessions. The engagement focuses on the three most important elements of any business: people, process, and product. Ultimate consultants address key HR business processes by identifying areas for improvement, building an actionable, detailed plan and channels for feedback, and implementing continuous monitoring.

Ultimate began its Hunt engagement with the standard three-day business process mapping workshop, held at the Hunt's shared services headquarters in El Paso, Texas. Ultimate's consultants met with the payroll team and others from HR, in order to map out the existing payroll process, identify areas for improvement, and map all of Hunt's other HR processes from recruitment to retirement.

"The mapping of our payroll process gave us a

deeper understanding of how our people and processes operated," said Patrick. "Using the process map, our consultant clearly defined what each process entailed, identified who was responsible for performing each task, and provided best practices to increase effectiveness. The workshop set the foundation for optimizing our process." Ultimate's 3P engagement includes the optimization of one key HR business process, as well as the alignment of those changes in UltiPro by updating configurations. Hunt implemented Ultimate's recommendation that some members of the payroll team become enterprise-wide specialists and go-to experts in areas such as timekeeping and tax. Hunt also put into action the suggestion that one payroll specialist manage multiple small company payrolls in order to maximize resources.

"Once we addressed our process issues, we were able to make a number of changes directly in UltiPro," said Patrick. "We began to take advantage simplified the process of finding data exceptions.

We are also gearing up to deploy other capabilities to help with the overall payroll process." Ultimate and Hunt worked together to identify metrics and other ways to engage in continuous monitoring of improvements. "We began this initiative by identifying metrics that would determine if we made an impact," said Patrick. "It's impossible to know if you have made a difference unless you have a way to measure."

## RESULTS

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The end result of the 3P engagement for Hunt was increased efficiencies, reduced overtime costs, and the ability of HR to allocate resources from payroll to strategic business initiatives.

"We learned that we were creating many of our own issues," said Patrick. "We had loose deadlines for submitting payroll, which has been addressed, and a Thursday payday. Based on the 3P analysis, we received approval to move our payday to Friday, and our team is thrilled about

gaining an entire day of processing time.”

Immediate benefits for Hunt from the 3P engagement included:

- The reduction of payroll team overtime hours during the payroll week
- More efficient deployment of payroll resources. Patrick is now able to move a processor out of payroll to support other HR needs.
- Improved payroll team morale

“Our payroll team was feeling overworked and underappreciated, and we weren’t sure how to fix it,” said Patrick. “Our engagement with Ultimate gave our team an opportunity to be heard, and to review our processes with a fresh set of eyes and ears. We didn’t judge the way our employees did their jobs, but rather looked at the process to identify the best way for an employee’s work to add value. The experience of being asked for their insights rather than being told how to do their job increased our entire team’s level of engagement.”