



Brand and digital media consultancy Rufus Leonard centralises HR through Octopus

RUFUSLEONARD
The brand & digital media consultancy

Rufus Leonard helps its clients develop competitive, innovative and valued brands. Offerings include marketing strategy, brand, digital and print.

Established 15 years ago they have stayed ahead of the field embracing new technologies and forming and reforming the way they work to remain optimally effective. The 65 member Rufus Leonard team is made up of designers, information architects, developers, writers, strategists, art workers, production specialists and technology experts. In the organisation there is a family like atmosphere and a culture described as both relaxed and dynamic – creative and with a focus on getting the job done.

People work on client sites or in the office, where they are encouraged to communicate openly and collaborate in groups. HR support is provided by Lucy Kay in her dual role as Facilities and HR Manager. Lucy has set up the organisation's people management processes, and is responsible for maintaining the company culture and for the development, training and welfare of the people who work in the business.

Objectives

Rufus Leonard set out to put in place a centralised resource for all people-based information to reduce the time and paperwork previously involved in communicating and managing HR information. They wanted to ensure the solution is available to everyone in the business and easy to use, mirroring the open and communicative culture of Rufus Leonard and empowering managers to more effectively manage their teams.

Results

Octopus is used throughout Rufus Leonard. Individuals and managers benefit from being able to see their own information, that of people they manage, and having immediate access to any changes in company policies and procedures. There has been a massive reduction in the time spent by HR in answering queries on routine issues and in copying and distributing information and an improvement in HR processes.

Areas of particular benefit are:

- Company-wide communication
- Induction of new starters
- The appraisal process
- Communication of benefits information
- Centralisation of all HR information, whether individual or company standard
- Easy availability of documents including contracts, offer letters, change of terms, notes to meetings



Octopus
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Story

Rufus Leonard selected Octopus to provide an intuitive, communicative, accessible business management resource.

They were moving from a previous traditional software system available to a couple of HR users on specific computers, and that was not easy to use or report from. They have replaced this ‘clunky system’ with Octopus providing them with an open-access, use-anywhere solution that provides information on demand wherever it’s needed and helps people communicate more effectively and easily manage HR tasks and information..

Communication

Communication is a key element in Rufus Leonard’s offering to clients, and of its internal culture, and it needed a people management solution that supports communication of people-based information across the company.

For this reason Lucy Kay, Facilities and HR Manager, looked for a new HR solution that would put HR information in the centre of the organisation. “We preached communication to clients and wanted to give freedom of information to employees but were not able to achieve it with our existing HR system. We were using traditional HR software that was installed on our own computers at the office, for use only by a support person and myself on specific computers. That gave us a huge workload in answering routine queries such as holiday entitlement and benefits as everything had to go through us.”

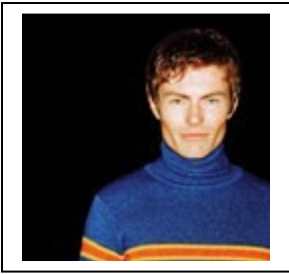
The number one priority was to find a solution that acted as a centralised resource that everyone could access. Benefits were quickly realised providing an almost immediate return on the low cost investment made in the solution.

“Using Octopus we found a way of putting HR information in the centre of the business. People appreciate the openness of knowing the information stored, and managers are empowered to manage their people.”

The nature of Rufus Leonard’s business sees people often working away from the office and Octopus allows them to stay in touch. They can log in wherever they have access to the internet, for example to book holidays or look up benefit or appraisal details at the office or from home. For the HR team, they are no longer confined to working on HR information at their desk, but can move to a quiet area in the office and work from any computer that gives them privacy when looking at confidential details.

Company procedures and policies change a few times a year, and through the Company handbook facility within Octopus these changes can be made available to the whole company instantly – saving time and money and reducing paperwork.





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Documents

Octopus can store documents attached to employee details, allowing at-a-glance retrieval of important information.

“Being able to scan in documents provides a massive time saving and is a huge benefit to everyone. The last appraisal document, a signed contract, changes to terms and so on can be seen directly on line by the individual or their manager. It saves their time and mine, replacing endless trips to the filing cabinet and photo copier to respond to information requests.”

Rufus Leonard scan and store signed contracts, offer letters, changes to terms, probation reviews, appraisals and meeting notes so responses to general requests and information for disciplinary or appraisals is delivered direct to the employee and manager. With strong focus on the welfare of their employees, document facilities also improve emergency medical response as medical data such as allergies and the location of medication is attached on employee documents. Having documents on-line also helps with security – there is no risk of confidential paperwork being left out on desks and within Octopus tight controls mean documents can only be viewed by relevant people who have been given access.

New Employee Inductions

Lucy manages the induction process for new employees and now uses Octopus as the main induction tool.

“The induction process centred around Octopus gives a very positive message to new people when they join. They feel expected, welcomed and are acquainted with relevant information to help them easily get into their new role. We see how impressed they are which is a great start.”

We go through all the employee information, show them their email and extension number information, equipment allocated, holiday entitlement and how to book it and how to find general company handbook information.





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Appraisals

Having just completed their annual review process, Rufus Leonard is very aware of the benefits Octopus has provided in this area. Annual review time is enormously busy as all employees and their managers are involved.

“Using Octopus has improved our Annual Review process. It has helped people who often work away from the office and saved time by enabling everyone to ‘serve themselves’ with relevant information such as last year’s review forms scanned into Octopus”

The heavy workload on Lucy in her HR function has been radically reduced in the area of providing information to individuals and managers for appraisals including photocopying and distributing previous review forms. Instead of typing up and filing review forms in paper files, they now scan in documents and upload them to Octopus where they are stored alongside the employee details and are available to relevant people. Managers working away from the office can see the information on line rather than carrying around folders of photocopied appraisal sheets and supporting information as they did previously.

Employee Benefits

Benefit information on pensions, life cover and medical insurance has recently been entered on to Octopus, and each employee’s details include the benefits they receive. This represents another major time-saving for employees and HR, as it removes the need to contact HR about each individual query. A further advantage is through the inbuilt auto generated alert feature which achieves significant benefit management gains between employer and the companies benefit advisers.

Lucy believes the benefit information has wider advantages as people are now aware of the full value of the rewards provided by their employer, in a simple ‘Live’ single page view ‘Total Reward Statement’. Through this on line page active links are provided directly to the benefit providers, and benefit documentation in the handbook area so employees can access further information and ‘Self Serve’.

“People always had information when they joined about the benefits on offer, but now they are much more aware of the accurate value of the package we provide. It helps with motivation of employees, and retention and helps at review time when we are managing career and salary aspirations.”



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Centralising HR information on Octopus has benefits across the business

The initial objective of providing a centralised repository for HR information has been realised through Octopus. Benefits gained extend across the business.

“Employees like using it and were very open from the start. They like the ease and convenience of being able to find information about themselves and the business and using automated paperless processes like booking leave on-line”.

“Managers are genuinely empowered to manage their teams better, because of the direct access to information about people in their teams. It helps with day to day issues like checking how many people are on leave before approving holiday, and bigger issues such as the annual review process”.

For Lucy in HR, there have been radical time savings and efficiency improvements.

“Previously I was constantly up and down from my desk to find information in files to answer queries, interrupting my workload and reducing the productivity of my time at work”.

“Octopus has helped improve efficiency, saved time, and reduced paperwork in HR, and has also made real improvements to how we work, communicate and manage our people”.

The final word of praise goes to the team behind Octopus and the support they provide.

“The people at Octopus are fantastic. Support is always there when I need it, and they are proactive and exceptionally helpful.”

