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Learning Care Group

Human Resources
Accounts Payable and Accounting

❋ "We're continuing to expand Perceptive
Content because of the cost savings it
brings us and the advantages of having
greater visibility of documents up front."

Lisa Wagner
Technology Coordinator
Learning Care Group

▶ Learning Care Group, Inc., provides early education and care services
to children between the ages of six weeks and 12 years under its umbrella
of brands: The Children's Courtyard, Childtime Learning Centers, La Petite
Academy, Montessori Unlimited and Tutor Time Child Care/Learning Centers.

The organization has more than 1,100 schools in the U.S. and internationally,
creating a large volume of human resources and accounting paperwork
flowing back and forth between these sites and the central headquarters
in Michigan. These paper-based processes were inefficient, expensive
and made compliance with regulatory guidelines challenging.

Knowing a document management solution could improve efficiency
and reduce headaches, Learning Care Group implemented document
management, imaging and workflow software from Perceptive Software.
Perceptive Content integrated seamlessly with Learning Care Group's
existing PeopleSoft system in both accounts payable and human resources,
allowing the company to leverage its existing technology investments for a
cost-effective solution that gives employees access to the documents they
need with a single click from their PeopleSoft screens. In less than a year,
the efficiencies gained have resulted in several bottom-line benefits.

Streamlined HR Processes

Managing several compliance documents for various states, the
human resources department used to fax a large volume of documents
to and from each facility, creating a mountain of paperwork on both ends.
The human resources staff now uses Perceptive Workflow to process
compliance, benefits and compensation documents, W-2s, direct deposit
forms and other employment documents for more than 20,000 employees
at more than 1,000 child care sites. Without piles of papers on desks
and duplicates on each end, the process is cleaner, more efficient and
more secure.

"We had an enormous amount of HR paperwork being faxed back and
forth," Lisa Wagner, Learning Care Group technology coordinator, says.
"Moving all of that into Perceptive and using workflow has cut down on
the time and money we spent with paper."

Improved Document Management for AP

For the accounts payable team, Perceptive Content provides visibility
of invoices earlier in the approval process, avoiding the possibility of
one getting lost or forgotten in a stack of papers. In addition, the ability
to instantly reference an invoice from a particular transaction in PeopleSoft
eliminated what used to be a time-consuming search through file cabinets.

"Rather than having invoices stuck in a desk drawer or stored off-site, we have them at our fingertips in Perceptive," says Craig Harry, senior accounts payable manager. "That has a big impact on our efficiency."

Invoices are received and scanned at the central accounts payable office, creating immediate visibility of the transaction. The invoices are sent through Perceptive Workflow to the appropriate manager for approval. As invoices arrive in their workflow queues, managers can review and simply stamp the document approved, moving to the next item in their queue.

"Using Perceptive for invoice approval saves time for our facilities managers," Harry says. "What used to be a big burden now takes just a few minutes."

The biggest time savings may come in the form of AP staff that no longer have to waste time filing, searching or waiting for documents. Improved productivity allows the group to do the same amount of work with fewer employees. As AP staff gradually left the company, managers did not have to replace them, eventually reducing the team by 9 percent.

"Using Perceptive saves us the cost of replacing three full-time employees in accounts payable," Harry says.

Improved Information Sharing

For employees who have their hands on documents all day, Perceptive Content has proved to be a significant time saver. Sharing documents is now as easy as a few clicks of the mouse, simplifying the auditing process.

"We don't have to hunt down paperwork for audits; we simply give auditors access to the documents in Perceptive, and they can see what they need online," Harry says.

Bringing visibility of documents to the start of the AP process lets managers see at a glance which documents are where in the process. Perceptive Content gives managers the information they need to respond to their staff's needs and to better balance their workloads, Harry adds.

Managers soon expanded workflow across the accounting department to capture journal entries that were once stored in binders and filing cabinets. This also allowed everyone in the accounting department to access invoices and checks immediately, greatly reducing research time that had been mostly spent looking for physical copies.

Ease of Use and Expansion

Learning Care Group's implementation began in human resources, and soon after expanded accounts payable. The transition from traditional practices met initial resistance, but Harry says it wasn't long before staff members became big fans.

"Once employees have Perceptive, they love it," Harry says. "It's so easy to find what they need, and having a clean desk makes the job less stressful."

Learning Care Group will continue to expand the solution, multiplying the returns on their original investment.

"We're continuing to expand Perceptive Content because of the cost savings it brings us and the advantages of having greater visibility of documents up front," Wagner says.

With the time and money saved, Learning Care Group has improved internal processes, allowing it to operate more effectively and efficiently while serving nearly 166,000 children in the U.S. and internationally.

Learning Care Group

Quick Stats

- Headquarters: Novi, Michigan
- Number of facilities: 1,100
- Teachers and directors: 22,000
- Children served: 166,000

The Challenges

- High volume of paperwork faxed between more than a thousand facilities
- Volume of paper slowed processing and led to document loss
- Employees spend hours filing and searching for paper documents
- Routing paper creates a slow invoice approval cycle

The Results

- Eliminated need for duplicate paper copies, reducing confusion and expense
- Perceptive Workflow streamlines processing and reduces risk of loss
- Instant document access directly from PeopleSoft eliminates time-consuming searches
- Electronic workflow facilitates faster invoice approval and lessens the burden for approvers

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