Welcome Break: Increasing Employee Retention 15% with SAP® SuccessFactors® Solutions and SAP Jam™

The hospitality industry is fast-paced, with high turnover a persistent challenge, one that Welcome Break, a leading provider of highway services in the United Kingdom, also faced. What did staff get elsewhere Welcome Break didn’t offer? Using SAP® SuccessFactors® solutions, the company found the answer. Now retention is rising and employees who wandered have come back.
Executive overview

BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION

Objectives
• Create a distinct corporate culture
• Replace silo-based thinking with company-wide collaboration
• Empower managers to help their site and teams succeed
• Understand why people choose to stay with the company

Resolution
• Simplified HR processes with SAP® SuccessFactors® Employee Central, SAP SuccessFactors Succession & Development, and SAP SuccessFactors Recruiting Management solutions
• Awarded employees recognition through SAP Jam™ social software platform

Benefits
• Higher employee engagement
• Improved internal mobility
• Fuller leadership pipeline
• Decreased time to hire and turnover
• Streamlined HR processes
• Support for collaboration and open communication
• Access to high-quality information on recruiting, performance, and learning

“We compete to attract the best people working at the well-known high-street brands. SAP SuccessFactors solutions have made us more effective and helped us to keep our people engaged.”

Karl Jolly, Director of People, Welcome Break
A culture of employee engagement across multiple brands

Anyone who has driven a long stretch on the highway and has grown tired and hungry will remember what a relief it was to see the sign for the next rest stop. In Britain, millions of travelers and truckers look for the Welcome Break sign: they know that by stopping there, they’ll be greeted with a smile, decent food and drinks, and convenient facilities.

In order to offer its 85 million annual visitors more choice, Welcome Break made a strategic decision to include only well-known brands at its facilities, such as those from Starbucks Corporation, Burger King, and Subway IP Inc. It also began to manage the business through its 290 unit managers, instead of by its 27 locations.

These changes posed new HR challenges. The same role could have four or five different job titles, depending on the brand. Also, one day a team member might be a barista for Starbucks and the next day a sandwich artist for Subway. But they remain Welcome Break employees. The HR leadership realized that in order to engage and retain employees, it had to create a distinct Welcome Break mission and culture and a unique set of values.

“Regardless of the uniform you’re wearing, employees work for the unit manager, not for the brand,” explains Karl Jolly, director of people at Welcome Break. A solution was needed to empower unit managers. At the same time, the solution had to provide standardized HR processes and support open communication with all employees.

“To offer a unique human experience to our customers under our new operating model, we knew the managers would make the difference. We gave them everything they needed to be successful.”

Karl Jolly, Director of People, Welcome Break
Welcome Break introduced a suite of talent management solutions to gain a fuller view of employees and better understanding of issues affecting turnover and retention.

The SAP® SuccessFactors® Employee Central solution serves as the new core HR software, while the SAP SuccessFactors Recruiting Management solution puts unit managers in charge of selecting and hiring people for the first time. “In the past someone else did recruiting for the unit managers,” says Jolly. Now unit managers can perform the work and focus on candidate experience and the caliber of hires rather than administration around hiring.

With the SAP SuccessFactors Performance & Goals solution, Welcome Break introduced one consistent performance management approach. Employees have clear goals, meeting one-on-one once a month with their managers. Each unit manager has three people goals – one of which is related to training and one to compliance. The goals are captured and tracked by the software. SAP Jam™ social software platform facilitates communication and collaboration.

Each employee must complete training required by Welcome Break as well as training required by the different brands Welcome Break represents. The SAP SuccessFactors Learning solution offers all training from one place for easy access and use, with 90% of training completed on time with the new software. The SAP SuccessFactors Succession & Development solution extended succession management from senior managers to all unit managers.

“SAP SuccessFactors Performance & Goals provides an important framework to guide regular employee-manager conversations. It also supports communication across the organization.”

Karl Jolly, Director of People, Welcome Break
A culture of recognition for a stable workforce

Thanks to the SAP SuccessFactors solutions, Welcome Break has a treasure trove of data it never had before that allows it to design the kind of culture it always wanted to offer. It also understands what to do to become an even more attractive employer.

“We knew that the annual turnover of our staff was approaching 50%,” explains Jolly. “With SAP SuccessFactors solutions, we now know that one big reason people stay is the recognition they receive and are encouraged to give.”

SAP Jam Collaboration has had a transformational impact on the business by enabling Welcome Break to provide that recognition. “Recognition, including peer-to-peer recognition, is a massive part of what we promote in HR,” says Jolly. That can range from an ad hoc ‘thank you’ for helping another colleague to seasonal recognition campaigns that rally the entire company around a common goal. The SAP Jam mobile app lets Welcome Break recognize and reward people the moment they do a great job, not months later.

SAP Jam enhances learning and collaboration, allowing staff to tap into the knowledge of more experienced staff easily and share ideas. “We fell in love with SAP Jam. It gave us something the whole business could engage with, and that was cutting edge,” said Jolly.

As a result, internal promotions and retention are rising. “People who have left to work for one of the brands have returned,” remarks Jolly. “What better proof of Welcome Break’s success in creating a wonderful workplace?”

“SAP SuccessFactors solutions helped us turn things around. Instead of focusing on turnover, or why people leave, we now focus on stability, or why people stay.”

Karl Jolly, Director of People, Welcome Break
More robust data

As part of its new focus on stability, or why people stay with the company, HR will explore the possibility of training its people a bit differently to create more engagement. “Learning is extremely important for us. Sometimes lifting a few stones can make a huge difference,” says Jolly.

SAP SuccessFactors solutions have already opened up Welcome Break’s eyes to the power of data and the knowledge to be gained by correlating data of different types. Now, senior management can track time to hire, number of new hires by site, how much people contribute on SAP Jam, even if a site pays someone below the minimum wage – an oversight that is always immediately corrected. In the future, Welcome Break wants to gather more granular data, such as pay by gender and other pay gaps.

All of this will help make Welcome Break an even more attractive workplace and bring a bigger smile to the faces of its employees. And travelers will consider that when they decide: Break time. Where to stop for coffee?