

Driving Digital Transformation in HR and Payroll operations



Customer profile

A leading national retailer, operating 800 stores and employing over 8,000 staff across South Africa, faced significant inefficiencies in its Human Resources and Payroll operations due to reliance on paper-based workflows. Large volumes of employee records and payroll documents were stored physically, consuming valuable office space and increasing administrative overheads. The manual nature of these processes led to slow onboarding times—often taking between 14 to 28 days—causing delays in getting new employees into the workforce. Furthermore, compliance with industry regulations and internal governance requirements was difficult to enforce consistently.

Business challenge and opportunity

The retailer's paper-intensive HR processes created significant operational bottlenecks. Manual document verification during onboarding delayed new employee productivity by 14-28 days, whilst consuming valuable office space for physical storage across multiple locations.

The lack of integrated workflows between HR and payroll systems resulted in duplicate data entry, increased errors, and compliance risks. Document retrieval for audits or employee queries was time-intensive and inefficient, directly impacting administrative costs and employee satisfaction.

Our approach to enabling Digital Transformation

Altron Document Solutions collaborated with the retailer to modernise its document management and workflow processes. Our team designed a solution leveraging intelligent document processing (IDP) and a digital workflow platform to streamline HR functions, reduce manual intervention, and ensure compliance with regulatory requirements. The project was executed in two key phases:

- 1. Back scanning and digital archiving:** A large-scale digitisation initiative converted historical paper records into an electronic format, significantly reducing reliance on physical storage.
- 2. Work low automation:** An advanced workflow platform was integrated to seamlessly connect HR onboarding with payroll processing, ensuring structured document verification and compliance enforcement.

Solution implementation

- **Digital archiving:** Secure, indexed digital storage of employee records for instant retrieval and audit readiness.
- **Automated workflows:** Enforced business rules requiring mandatory document verification before onboarding could be completed.
- **Seamless integration with payroll systems:** Ensured validated employee data was transferred directly into payroll with minimal manual input.
- **Space optimisation:** Freed up prime office real estate by eliminating physical storage needs.

Measurable impact & business Benefits

The transformation delivered significant improvements across multiple business areas. The solution provided an ROI of approximately 360% over a three-year term, saving the retailer over R2.1 million annually and yielding ROI within the first 8 months.

Tangible benefits:

- **Cost savings:** By eliminating physical document storage and reducing manual processing effort, the retailer achieved monthly savings exceeding R150,000.
- **Reduced onboarding time:** Accelerated new employee onboarding from an average of 14-28 days to as little as 24 hours.
- **Operational efficiency:** Streamlined document handling and retrieval, reducing administrative workload and increasing HR team productivity.

Intangible benefits:

- **Compliance and governance:** Enforced structured verification processes ensured all required employee documents were submitted before onboarding.
- **Employee satisfaction:** Faster onboarding enabled new hires to start work (and receive salaries) much quicker, improving employee experience.
- **Scalability for future expansion:** The digital document management infrastructure laid a strong foundation for future automation and expansion into other business areas.

Conclusion

Through a well-executed digital transformation strategy, Altron Document Solutions enabled the retailer to overcome legacy inefficiencies, improve compliance, and drive operational excellence. The success of this initiative underscores the potential for further automation and innovation across other business functions, solidifying the retailer's competitive edge in the digital era.