

# Workday and MGM Resorts International

## Engaging Employees in World-Class Customer Service

MGM Resorts International made its reputation, quite simply, by being the best. Bellagio, Luxor and Mandalay Bay in Las Vegas are among its properties, and the company is rapidly building its premium brand in the United States and China. Its commitment to the highest quality guest experience is legendary in the industry.

Realising that engaged and motivated employees are the key to providing that customer experience, MGM Resorts looked for the best partner to help make that possible, and they found Workday.

### Removing Barriers to Engagement

In 2010, MGM Resorts transitioned from being a holding company and began to focus on becoming one company with one culture. The executive team conducted a company-wide employee survey to identify issues with how frontline managers engage with employees.

“Employees said that they wanted to see more of their supervisors and managers”, according to Michelle DiTondo, senior vice president of Human Resources. “When we asked managers and supervisors what barriers kept them from engaging with employees, we heard that they were spending way too much time managing attendance and payroll, keeping track of processes and procedures, and logging in and out of multiple systems.”

How could the company streamline these processes so that managers could spend less time with administrative tasks?

“We wanted managers to spend more time with their employees - coaching them, engaging with them, and rewarding their behaviour when they provided great service to guests. That way, the company could meet its mission to engage, entertain and inspire”, she says.

When DiTondo and her team first saw Workday, they knew it was the right solution for the company.

“At the time, our human capital management system was the system used by everyone in the industry”, she says. “It was the industry standard for decades.” Departing from this well-known system was a risk for the company’s leaders, but DiTondo began to put her business case together.



**MGM RESORTS**  
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### Business Case at a Glance

62,000 employees

\$9.8 billion in revenue (2013)

Headquartered in Las Vegas, Nevada

Traded on NYSE under the symbol MGM

### Workday Applications

Human Capital Management

- Absence Management
- Benefits Administration
- Compensation Management
- Performance Management
- Talent Management

Payroll

### Summary of Business Benefits

- Increased employee engagement for improved guest service
- Improved efficiency with single system for employee information and payroll
- Greater visibility into company-wide talent to boost growth and hiring
- More accurate payroll
- Greater access to payroll information for employees
- Ability to access critical information in real time on any mobile device

“We looked at all the separate systems that we were using in Human Resources”, she says. “We saw how much Workday could help us to streamline our processes and procedures, which would reduce expenses. We focused on the money that we would save by unifying these systems and becoming more efficient as an HR organisation.”

The company’s CFOs immediately saw the benefits of Workday. “They could see where this was going to lead us in efficiency, compliance and workforce visibility”, DiTondo says. “That really helped us push the business case forward. We realised that what we would gain from Workday, such as predictive analytics and reporting, would be optimised if we had Workday Payroll. The things we were selling to the company as huge steps forward demanded that we have the best payroll system, which was Workday Payroll.”

### **Benefits of a Unified, Mobile System**

MGM Resorts began its deployment of Workday Human Capital Management (HCM) and Payroll in early 2013. Workday was deployed to all properties in December 2013.

Six weeks after full deployment, Leigh Dunn, vice president of HR strategy and measurement, was impressed. “Already, our users love Workday”, she says. “We’re seeing benefits of having all the information in one place.” The legacy system, which Dunn described as “black screen, green writing”, was quickly forgotten as more and more employees logged into Workday. “The great thing is that Workday is so easy to use. You think about it as a LinkedIn or a Facebook. Users just get on and use it. That made the change a lot easier.”

In just six weeks, 94 per cent of employees at MGM Resorts logged into Workday. “It’s really helping us to get information out to employees and to engage with them”, Dunn says. “We have employees from many different countries. They were able to utilise Workday using their own language, which was a big plus and helped us make the change.”

Very quickly, the benefits of combining HCM and payroll became evident. Over 90 per cent of MGM’s 62,000 employees are hourly workers whose pay packets vary from pay period to pay period, based on factors such as overtime and tips. With Workday’s unified HCM and payroll system, Dunn says workers can now see the details of their pay packets whenever they want to.

“You don’t have to deal with the integration of one system to the other. Employees have one place to go and see all their information. They don’t have to go from one system to see HR information and to another to view payroll information. It’s all there together.”

Workday’s mobile capabilities were an important part of the team’s business case. “We wanted to get our leaders out of their offices so they could engage with their employees and with their guests”, says Dunn. “And the mobile capabilities allow that. We can use it anywhere we want to.” In fact, anyone with a mobile device can access Workday. Employees can see their payslips on their phones and managers can provide immediate feedback to employees.

### **One Company, One System**

For DiTondo, the biggest immediate benefit of Workday was access.

“With our previous system, only managers had access to information – employees had very little access to their own information”, DiTondo says. “And no one had access to the entire organisation. For example, as the HR leader of the company, I never received emails from frontline employees because they didn’t have my email address. Since we’ve implemented Workday, I’ve gotten suggestions, questions and feedback from our frontline employees. Long term, this will really help us engage with them and become a better company.”

Another plus for DiTondo is the ability to easily provide immediate feedback. “If one of the leaders is in a property they don’t work in, and they experience great service from an employee, they can log into Workday using their mobile phone or tablet and give positive feedback to an employee who is not in their direct reporting line. Things like that are really driving our one-company culture”, she says.

### Talent Management Is Key to Growth

Looking ahead, DiTondo sees how profoundly MGM Resorts will benefit from Workday’s talent management functionality.

“In the next three years, we need to hire about 4,000 leaders to open new properties”, she says. “Before Workday, we had no talent management system. The visibility that Workday gives us into our leadership – their talent, their experience, their interests, their ability to move to different locations – is really going to support that initiative.”

“In the past”, she says, “when we’ve had a vice president position open at a property, the president or HR leader of that property would send out an email and say, ‘Is anyone interested in being vice president of food and beverage at the MGM Grand? If you know anyone, have them send me their resume.’ It was a ridiculous process for a company of our size.”

“Now with Workday’s talent profile and people finder, we will be able to proactively search for candidates who have a specific degree or certain years of experience, or who’ve worked at different companies and have knowledge that we might want to gain. We’ll be able to look for them and invite them to apply for jobs. I’ve already started to use these tools within my teams to help some of our leaders staff their senior positions.”

Workday’s performance management capabilities are also a huge benefit, DiTondo says. “Workday, for the first time, is going to help us launch company-wide goal setting and performance management along with talent management”, she says. “We’ll be able to identify our highest performers with the greatest potential to determine who should lead these new properties. We can more easily decide who might grow into leadership roles in Las Vegas to backfill the people who move into those new positions.”

DiTondo is pleased at the overwhelmingly positive response to Workday from both employees and executives. She describes HR executives who attended a town hall meeting at a property of MGM Resorts. Thanks to Workday’s mobile capabilities, as issues were being discussed, they were able to bring up employee profiles in the meeting to make sure that they could follow up as needed.

“Having the employee’s picture with their job title and their position and how long they’ve worked for the company – those things really helped them to engage with those employees following the town hall”, she says.

“One executive sent me an email right away and said ‘Workday’s awesome.’ It is really helping us to engage with our workforce in a way we haven’t been able to do before.”



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