



Transforming Workforce Management with Cloud-Based Solutions

How Idaho's ERP upgrade triumphed over legacy systems while modernizing payroll operations



Idaho's legacy payroll and scheduling systems complicated the lives of state employees for decades. Relief arrived via a cloud-based workforce management (WFM) application that streamlined and automated key processes. The solution gave leaders powerful tools for projecting future workforce needs and tackling everyday issues before they grew into larger problems.

The new WFM application was part of a statewide transformation of all enterprise resource planning (ERP) technology, including financials, supply chain, procurement, budgeting and human resources. A closer look at the WFM phase of this project illustrates the potential of modular, cloud-based platforms to drive genuine benefits for state employees and the people they serve.

The Challenge: Updating Obsolete WFM Technologies Statewide

Mountains, forests and farmland define the mostly rural terrain of Idaho, with a population just under 2 million people. Before Infor, more than 80 state agencies had to navigate through a tangled set of ERP technologies, some from the 1980s. Updates over the years added web interfaces and other modern accessories. It worked, but not well.

"We basically had bailing twine and duct tape keeping it together," says Josh Whitworth, Idaho's chief deputy controller.¹

The system was incompatible with the needs of one of the nation's fastest-growing states, so elected leaders approved an ambitious plan to replace the entire ERP system with modular, cloud-based software in one continuous engagement. It was a huge undertaking because the old back-office system was a house divided. Finance, budget, procurement, HR and payroll all operated separately.

There was no single source of truth, making it difficult for decision-makers to know what their counterparts

Thanks to automation, adjustments that once required elaborate manual processes happen instantly.

were doing. Change fatigue plagued state government during projects to centralize HR and IT operations.

And there were payroll issues. The old system lacked real-time calculation for employees' paid time off, requiring a fair amount of guesswork and causing much confusion. Tracking overtime and schedule changes was convoluted and error-prone. Lack of flexibility meant new hires might have to wait an extra two weeks to get paid.

As Whitworth notes, most state employees are millennials with different expectations for streamlined work and pay.

"They grew up with a cellphone and mobility," he says.

The Solution: Multi-Tenant, Cloud-Based WFM

Idaho partnered with Deloitte Consulting LLP to implement the Infor suite of modular ERP applications in a multi-tenant architecture operating in a secure cloud. The reinvention was substantial.

"I like to equate it to going from a 1957 Chevy pickup with an eight-track player and a manual stick shift to a car that can eventually drive itself," Whitworth says. The new WFM module provides:

- ▶ **Governance and communication.** Single-sign-on creates consistent identity verification, and a central information hub provides a unified source of truth for analytics and reporting.
- ▶ **Labor cost management and improved business processes.** Labor models have been standardized,

identifying opportunities to boost productivity and reduce expenses. HR, payroll and labor processes were optimized for compliance.

- ▶ **Advanced automation.** Solutions have simplified timekeeping, attendance, scheduling, fatigue management, accruals and paid leave. Data analytics helps allocate labor productivity while robotic process automation and artificial intelligence/machine learning (AI/ML) have eliminated manual processes.
- ▶ **Accessibility.** With the software's self-service portal, employees can quickly swap shifts, record meal breaks and request time off. A shift billboard helps managers create and adjust schedules. Skill and certification confirmations ensure people are qualified for their assigned shifts.

Whitworth acknowledges that change management was mandatory: People had to be trained to understand the nuances of the new system. Quick-reference guides were created to help ease the transition.

"It just gets smoother and smoother for employees as they get more confident in how to use the suite," he says.

The Results: Faster and Safer Workforce Oversight

The new WFM capabilities drive value across the workforce:

- ▶ PCs and mobile devices provide always-on access. People can check their timesheets whenever they choose and see their summaries.
- ▶ An off-cycle option ensures that employees don't have to wait two weeks to get paid if something unexpected happens during a pay period.
- ▶ Thanks to automation, adjustments that once required elaborate manual processes happen instantly.

- ▶ Alerts and notifications keep managers and staff coordinated when schedules change.
- ▶ Timesheets can be preset for future work schedules. Built-in policies for variables like holiday time off and contract employees simplify a variety of complex variables.

"We are proud and privileged to have partnered with the State of Idaho on their modernization journey enabled by Infor's multi-tenant cloud ERP solution," says Gautam Shah, principal with Deloitte Consulting LLP. "Infor's market leading WFM solution, integrated with their ERP solution across HR and Finance, empowers the employees to access, view and modify their time records and schedules at their fingertips while allowing managers to manage by exceptions and enabling the timely and accurate processing of payroll. Infor's integrated platform helps organizations drive efficiencies while taking care of their true asset, their workforce."

The new system lets managers quickly adapt to new challenges that require workforce intervention. "We had an infestation of a species into one of our rivers, and we were able to adapt our processes within about two weeks to track the cost of our response to that infestation," Whitworth says.

Implementing a WFM application with so much functionality required substantial training and preparation. With that foundation built, Idaho has the tools to evolve with its ever-changing workforce. The training staff received will continue to help them as the state adopts more modern technology.

"We knew we needed the flexibility to look at the future in the right way," Whitworth says. The state has only begun to tap advanced functions like robotic process automation and AI/ML. With those functions built into the Infor WFM application, the state is right where it wants to be.



1. <https://event.on24.com/wcc/r/4375017/39765A5463F90CB72EF2D66C7A41EA3B?sf182563953=1>

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