

THE NEED FOR SELF-SERVICE TOOLS IN HR TECHNOLOGY



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Employee self-service tools offer benefits to managers and employees by providing numerous ways to simplify basic HR tasks and improve the employee experience. From consolidating time and attendance tracking information in single locations, to allowing employees remote access to information through mobile apps, companies that prioritize a digital HR strategy with an emphasis on self-service tools have shown an increase in companywide productivity and improved employee experience.

Introduction

2023 has seen some volatility in company approaches to digital HR transformation and how much and where they will be looking to spend on HR technology.

Josh Bersin found that “half of companies plan to increase their spend”¹ on HR tech this year, but also noted that the spending would become more targeted with employee experience being an area with potential for substantial growth in 2023.

Overall, the McLean & Company 2023 HR Trends report noted that 58% of companies still had not undergone a complete digital HR transformation by the start of 2023 despite there being substantial benefits including a 79% increase in data driven people decisions and an 82% increase in the ability to be more strategic while involving HR in strategic decisions. They also found that a lack of digital literacy skills being the biggest obstacle to continued digital HR transformation. 88% of



companies were interested in exploring additional HR technology, and 93% of companies were interested in expanding the use of existing technology within the company with an additional 71% of companies formalizing a digital HR strategy with self-service and automation being two key areas for further investment and growth.²

Here are some of the major benefits that highlight the need for self-service tools in HR tech:

Data Accuracy

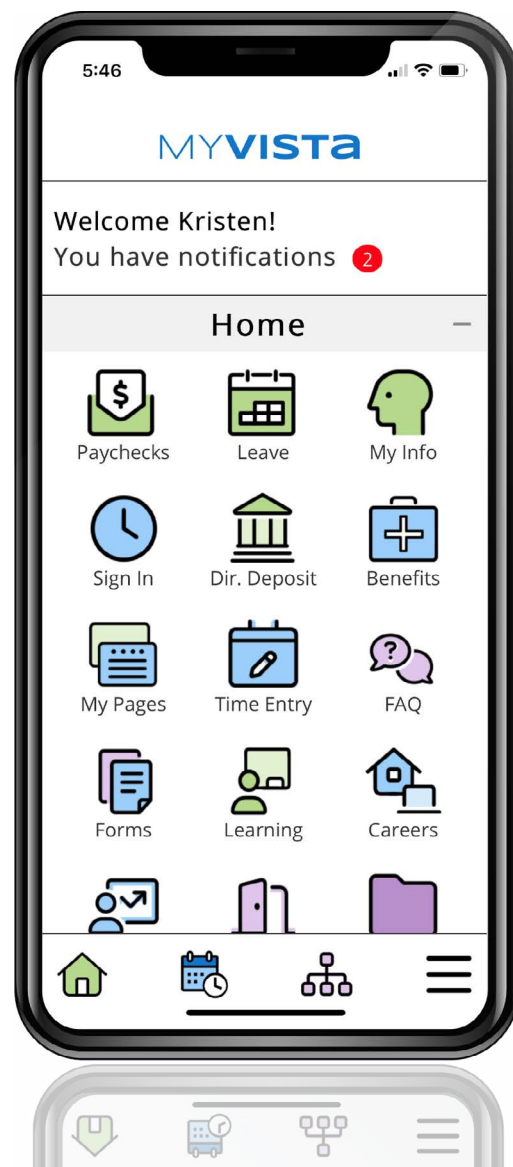
McLean & Company found that while HR departments reported a wide gap in the proficiency levels of HR departments who scored high in relationship building, while scoring very low in digital and data literacy, and as a result 14% of HR tasks are still outsourced.³ However, HR departments that featured a mature digital process with fully integrated self-service tech tools experienced a 1.5x increase in overall HR effectiveness, and a 1.8x increase in the ability to facilitate data-driven people decisions. There are several benefits that self-service tools offer with data accuracy for both managers and employees.

Time Collection

Allows employees to clock in and out and have that information updated in real time. It also allows employees to verify individual hours worked, group project hours and to identify or correct any discrepancies that exist. PDS Vista Time® provides a state-of-the-art, cloud-based time and attendance option to automate the capturing of time and help your organization comply with labor laws.

Employee Profiles

Managers will have the ability to access up to date employee profiles allowing them to identify employees for specific projects and identify employees for internal upskilling.



✓ Calendars

Allow both managers and employees access to up to date and accurate calendars for meetings, group projects and deadlines. It also allows for changes and updates to be made through self-service options by meeting organizers. Vista Time's Visual Scheduler helps generate schedules quickly and easily. Breaks and meals can be added and are dynamically controlled by payroll policies.

Access to Data

Self-service benefits exist with increased access to data for both managers and employees. McLean & Company noted that the main cause of HR professionals' stress was manual administrative tasks, with 35% reporting increased job-related stress in 2023.⁴ They also found that having manager and employee self-service resulted in multiple benefits including a 1.4x increase to overall HR effectiveness, a 1.7x increase in companywide innovation, and a 1.6x increase in providing a great employee experience.⁵

Here are some of the benefits with self-service tools for time and attendance tracking:

✓ Attendance Data

Benefits for managers & employees include the following:

- Managers can be alerted to changes in employee routines, identify periods of increased absenteeism.



- Managers can view and approve overtime requests and approve paid time off requests.
- Managers can approve corrections to attendance data proposed by staff.
- Vista Time allows multiple ways to edit timecards. Notification icons and colors help direct the manager quickly to what needs to be fixed. Convenient tabs allow for quick entry of pay adjustments or timecard approvals, while summaries of hours show how much time an employee has spent on a particular task.
- Managers can track team and individual metrics for absenteeism, overtime, group project hours and vacation scheduling.
- Employees can see updated information on vacation requests.
- Employees can view work schedules and changes in work schedules.
- Employees can request paid time off.

Vista® HR offers employee engagement features that allow staff to easily search, interact, and engage with others across the organization.

HR Documents for Time and Attendance & Benefits

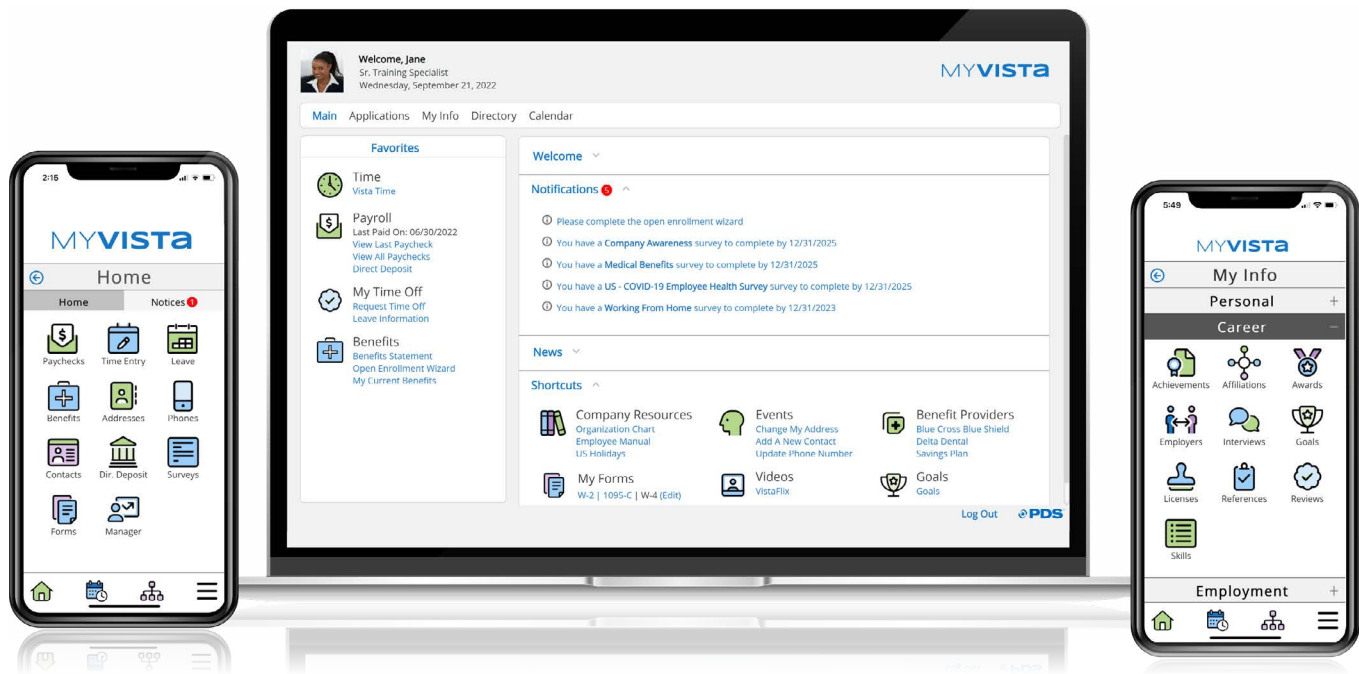
The Employee Experience has become an area with potential for quick growth in 2023 where McLean and Company noted that a focus on improving the employee experience has been shown to increase overall company performance by 1.4x and improve the ability to change quickly by 2x.⁶ Some areas where self-service tools can lead to improved company performance are with the consolidation of documents in a single location or on a mobile app, with easy access for both employees and managers. Existing policies and company documents can be accessed remotely and updated to remain current.

Here are some benefits that self-service tools in HR tech can provide:

Employee Self-Service

Empowering employees while streamlining process. View personal data, enter leave requests, apply for positions, distribute forms and documents, review benefits and when appropriate choose new benefit offering and more including:

- Employees can upload documents required by the company for certification, completed courses and training.
- Allows employees to review employer provided options for benefits and employees can make decisions based on these options.



- Employees can skip providing physical documents for benefits processing and upload electronic documents instead.
- Employees can receive pay advice and access tax documents like W-2s & T-4s.

Manager Self-Service

Intuitive manager self-service tools allow managers the opportunity to review employee self-service data. Managers can identify employee's growth potential, review personal data updates, and review and approve leave requests.

- Managers can access employee profiles to easily identify employees with needed skills for specific projects.
- Managers can access employee profiles to easily identify employees for potential upskilling based on previous enrollment in internal courses, required training and certification courses.
- Features of Vista Time and Attendance include easy online and mobile time entry, project tracking, time review and approval workflow, full integration with Payroll and meaningful reports and analytics.

Trends, Potential Problem Points and Areas for Growth

Several areas have emerged as potential problem points in 2023 for self-service tools in HR tech. Research conducted by Sapient in their 25th Sapient Insights HR Tech survey found lower company satisfaction with platforms that market themselves as trying to do everything, with average satisfaction scores sitting in the 3.5/5 range.⁷ They noted higher satisfaction for platforms that focused their services more narrowly and targeted specific aspects of self-service for employees and management.

Stacey Harris of Sapient found that another major issue with self-service tools for HR when it comes to company use and satisfaction was a lack of training and knowledge: “Over 25% of our annual survey respondents this year told us a lack of systems training and knowledge is one of the top reasons their HR applications are not meeting their business needs.”⁸

✓ *Self-Service Internal Employee Development*

Several areas for growth do exist with self-service tools for HR tech with internal employee development being at the top of the list. Research from SHRM noted that “75% of HR professionals who reported difficulty in recruiting say there are skill gaps in job candidates”⁹ while McLean & Company’s HR Trends Report for 2023 noted that 2 of the top 5 company priorities for 2023 mentioned internal employee development.¹⁰ One way to address this is with self-service HR tech tools that provide upskilling options for employees. Some benefits that self-service tools can offer include:

- Employees can see different study options for certification.
- Employees can complete assigned courses directly through integrated learning management systems modules.
- Employees can search for companywide training options and internal training initiatives including leadership courses or training modules.



Digital Transformation of HR

One area that remains a work in progress for many companies is the complete digital transformation of HR and Payroll departments. Obstacles include lack of training and knowledge and 33% of HR departments reporting a lack of a clear digital HR strategy and 41% indicating that they're still relying upon legacy processes and systems.¹¹ However, McLean & Company noted that 65% of companies supported the continued digital transformation of HR and that 78% of highly effective HR departments reported that upskilling employees in digital literacy and self-service tools was a priority.¹²

PDS' Vista® Payroll component provides powerful tools to accurately pay U.S., Canadian, and Caribbean employees and streamline the entire payroll process. Capabilities include complete payroll administration, on-demand check calculation and creation, tax maintenance service, retroactive pay, reciprocity, labor distribution and general ledger. "Go Green" with electronic delivery of check statements, W-2s, 1095-Cs and T4s. Extensive standard reports and filing includes U.S. Reporting (Federal, State, W-2s), Canadian Reporting (Federal, Provincial, T4, T4a), and an optional tax filing service.

The following self-service tools for HR tech were noted by Josh Bersin as categories that are on the rise for growth in 2023:

▶ EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE PLATFORMS

The goal of collecting employee feedback, with tools and topics ranging from anonymous surveys, onboarding feedback, career development paths and opportunities. McLean & Company noted that of companies that were high performing in their designing of the employee, 80% indicated they were high performing in innovation, 89% indicated they were high performing in workplace productivity and 84% indicated they were high performing in overall organizational performance.¹³

▶ EMPLOYEE LISTENING SYSTEMS

The goal of collecting data and analytics passively through tracking email traffic, calendar schedules, voice, or video feedback, and help measure employee engagement.

▶ WELLBEING AND REWARDS PLATFORMS

The goal of collecting employee feedback on potential wellness initiatives, to allow employees to search for wellbeing programs and courses, to allow employees to search for internal rewards programs and other incentives.

► COACHING AND LEADERSHIP PLATFORMS

The goal of allowing employees to register to become coaches, register for coaching sessions, search for and register in leadership courses, for managers to track employee progress with coaching and leadership initiatives.

► PAY EQUITY TOOLS

The goal of collecting employee feedback on pay equity, allowing employees to search for resources on pay equity.¹⁴

Conclusion

The need for self-service tools in HR tech continues to grow. As companies continue to invest in the digital transformation of HR and Payroll departments, it is clear that highly effective HR departments are utilizing self-service tools to improve the employee experience, increase employee and manager access to up to date data, and to help simplify HR staples like benefit processing and employee upskilling. By reducing the workload for HR and Payroll staff and improving the accuracy and accessibility of HR data and documents, self-service tools within your HR software system can ultimately lead to a more efficient and effective HR department.

About PDS

PDS is a leading developer of HCM solutions that offer complete all-in-one HR and Payroll management through leveraged technologies and world-class client support services in the US, Canada, and the Caribbean. Recruiting and onboarding, full benefits management, cross-border payroll capabilities, analytics, and more - fully designed with you in mind. PDS works to keep their community informed on all HCM-related issues that may affect the workplace. Contact their team of experts today and let them revolutionize the way you work.



Endnotes

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