Replicon helps Rope Courses, Inc. get a grip on time and expenses

ROPES COURSES

Customer
Ropes Courses, Inc.
www.ropescoursesinc.com

Industry
Recreational Facilities and Services

Headquarters
Allegan, Michigan

Solutions
▸ Time and Attendance
▸ CloudClock
▸ Project and Client Billing
▸ Expense management

Challenges
▸ Manual, paper based systems for capturing time and expense data
▸ Slow reimbursement cycles from inaccurate data capture and issues with maxed out payment methods
▸ Inability to detect "buddy punching" from employees clocking in on behalf of a co-worker at the start of a shift
▸ Poor visibility into employee schedules and time worked in line with existing labor regulations

Benefits
▸ Improved accuracy of project and client expenses
▸ Integrated expense entry with existing accounting systems
▸ Quicker time-to-reimbursement via mobile expense upload capabilities
▸ Automated time tracking to streamline payroll processing
▸ Compliance with existing wage and hour

Background

Ropes Courses, Inc. has been manufacturing, installing and servicing adventure ropes courses, zip lines and climbing structures since 1989. Ropes Courses, Inc. provides design, engineering, manufacturing, installation, technical course inspections to its customers, and prides itself on constantly revolutionizing adventure products by testing new design concepts and technologies.

The company strives to meet customers' needs by providing a safe product that manages high volumes of participants with minimal staff. Ropes Courses, Inc.'s products are used in locations as diverse as amusement and theme parks, camps and adventure facilities, family entertainment centers, cruise lines and zoos. The company has offices in six locations, with customers including Carnival Cruise Lines, Mall of America, Norwegian Cruise Lines, Sea World Resort (Australia) and Toronto Zoo (Canada).

Roping in a new system to eliminate manual processes

Over the last few years, Ropes Courses, Inc. has grown exponentially, adding new proprietary systems to its suite of products, enhancing its training and services, opening new offices and hiring more staff.

As the company has expanded, manual paper-based processes were no longer sufficient. On-the-road employees were increasingly dispersed across locations across the country, and traveling around the world to install courses and meet with customers. Meanwhile, manufacturing-focused workers were not accurately keeping track of hours worked, making it more difficult to track overtime hours and employee costs. Keeping an accurate record of timesheets, as well as travel expenses such as lodging, food, parking and other items was becoming an unwieldy and arduous task.

According to Molly Kinnison, HR Generalist at Ropes Courses, Inc., prompting the company's team of manufacturers, installers, project managers, retailers, admin and field-based staff to enter their time and expenses was an ongoing struggle – sometimes weeks, if not months, would pass before employees submitted their expense reports for approval.

"Our business has a unique blend of employees – our manufacturing unit has people who are very light users of mobile technology, and we also have highly mobile workers who are constantly on the road. Accounting would sometimes receive expenses that spanned a period of months to process, which would include inaccuracies and errors. We simply couldn't continue to operate in this way – we needed a faster, simpler and more accurate way of managing expenses, to support our employees, our payroll team, and our business," Kinnison said.

After actively searching for suitable options online, Kinnison discovered Replicon and decided to start a free trial to evaluate Replicon's time and expense management offerings in detail.

A comprehensive, streamlined time and expense solution

After using Replicon's free trial, Kinnison decided to implement a suite of Replicon offerings – Time & Attendance, CloudClock, Project and Cost Billing, and Expense Management.

Replicon Time & Attendance provides businesses with real-time insights and reports on time and attendance data, for easier payroll processing, labor law compliance and insights into workforce productivity. Highly configurable and intuitive timesheets can be tracked for any employee type, while supervisors can keep overtime costs in check with configurable calculation rules, review time off accruals and approve time off requests.

CloudClock is a proprietary technology that transforms any ordinary tablet into a powerful cloud-based time clock that makes punching in and out of shifts fast and easy. The CloudClock app, combined with Time and Attendance, works seamlessly with Replicon's Time and Attendance solution so that employees can use the same device to swipe their employee ID cards to start their shifts. The app deters buddy punching by automatically taking a picture of who is logging in, providing supervisors with a photo audit history of employee clock ins. Employees can also conveniently request time off and view their time off bookings, as well as gain visibility into assigned shifts and schedules.

REPLICON™

> **"While converting the company towards new processes was initially difficult – particularly as we had such well-established processes and a highly diversified workforce – once the system was in place it was easy for everyone to get on board. Personally, Replicon has saved me from the wall of administrative tasks I used to do, to focusing on more strategic HR priorities.**
>
> **Molly Kinnison, HR Generalist at Ropes Courses, Inc.**

About Replicon

Replicon is the leading provider of time asset management solutions. Our award-winning solutions help customers capture, manage and optimize their most important and underutilized asset – time

Our diverse customer base – from start-ups to Fortune 500 companies — trusts Replicon to help boost productivity, improve project visibility, eliminate revenue leakage and maintain labor compliance. Replicon has over 500 employees in the United States, Canada, India, the United Kingdom and Australia, serving thousands of customers worldwide.

For more information, visit www.replicon.com

Replicon Project and Client Billing was also deployed to capture time for the company's salaried production employees who work on multiple client jobs, eliminating the need to manually enter timesheets into QuickBooks.

Finally, Replicon Expense Management gives businesses immediate visibility into all expense types, including reimbursable and project expenses - to help businesses control costs. For employees, the solution means that expenses can be easily submitted – even when on the go – through a simple and clean interface, that can be tracked to a specific project or client, and compared to projected expenses for the activity.

Kinnison oversaw the entire implementation process, so that she could be assured that all employees could use Replicon's solutions with minimal training. The technology also needed to meet Rope Course's goals to automate processes, improve time and expense data accuracy, and drive significant efficiency and productivity gains across the entire organization.

"A major driver for choosing Replicon was that it delivered a cloud-based, easy-to-use system that we foresaw as driving strong efficiency, accuracy and scalability improvements in all of our offices and to all of our employees. We knew once the system was in place and everyone became accustomed to using it, that the system would practically run itself in managing all our project-related costs and expenses," Kinnison said.

Setting up for success

Ropes Courses, Inc. has embraced the mobile capabilities of Replicon's solutions to improve workforce efficiencies. For example, Replicon's Expense Management offering has been configured to reimburse its employees for expenses weekly, improving accuracy and time-to-reimbursement within the business. Recently, the company built a ropes course on a cruise ship overseas, which incurred dozens of timesheets and expenses to review and approve.

"Previously, the process of submitting timesheets and expenses would have dragged on for months. We would have had to wait for employees to come back with their wad of paper receipts to input and submit, have multiple back-and-forth discussions regarding the accuracy of the data, then finally approve all the costs and reimburse the employee and bill the client. Sometimes for lengthy installation projects, if the expenses are significant, corporate cards can become maxed out, leaving employees with no source of payment for travel expenses.

"Now, employees can upload and categorize all expenses instantly, even from a ship, making the process a breeze. The data syncs with our accounting system for quicker payment, making the process as simple and painless as possible," Kinnison said.

Meanwhile, using CloudClock, Ropes Courses, Inc. has insight into the actual hours worked across all offices, helping with scheduling and ensuring that the company meets increasingly stringent labor compliance requirements on how long an employee should work. Ropes Courses, Inc. has been able to identify and deter "buddy punching" instances – when an employee has clocked in for a co-worker – using CloudClock's photo auditing capabilities – and has also stopped workers from working longer than their required shifts in accordance with labor regulations.

Ropes Courses, Inc. has been impressed with the insights that Replicon's solutions have delivered into the company's business performance. As the company continues to expand, it plans to keep Replicon's solutions at the core of its business operations.

"Replicon's solutions have triggered significant cultural and technological sea changes within the business. While converting the company towards new processes was initially difficult – particularly as we had such well-established processes and a highly diversified workforce – once the system was in place it was easy for everyone to get on board. Personally, Replicon has saved me from the wall of administrative tasks I used to do, to focusing on more strategic HR priorities," said Kinnison.