



How connected HR drives culture, operations and performance

Enrich your business operations
with connectivity

IRIS. Look forward



Introduction

HR has a fundamental role to play in keeping businesses connected. Aided by the right technology, HR departments are in prime position to bring together people and enable better working practices.

The events of 2020 have had a significant impact on the world of work. Whether employees are at home, in the office, or a combination of both, one thing is apparent: the role of HR and its ability to connect layers of a business together has never been more valuable.

Thanks to a number of challenges around systems, data, and people, HR departments can struggle to connect with the wider organisation. This has a knock-on effect for business efficiency, employee productivity, and workforce morale.

With employees physically split between work and home, cultural values get stretched and create risks. What our 'new normal' working models have taught us, however, is that effective technology and business processes can play a pivotal role in keeping everyone on track. It's time to explore how businesses of every size can use HR software solutions to bridge gaps between departments and create meaningful connections across the workplace.



SECTION ONE

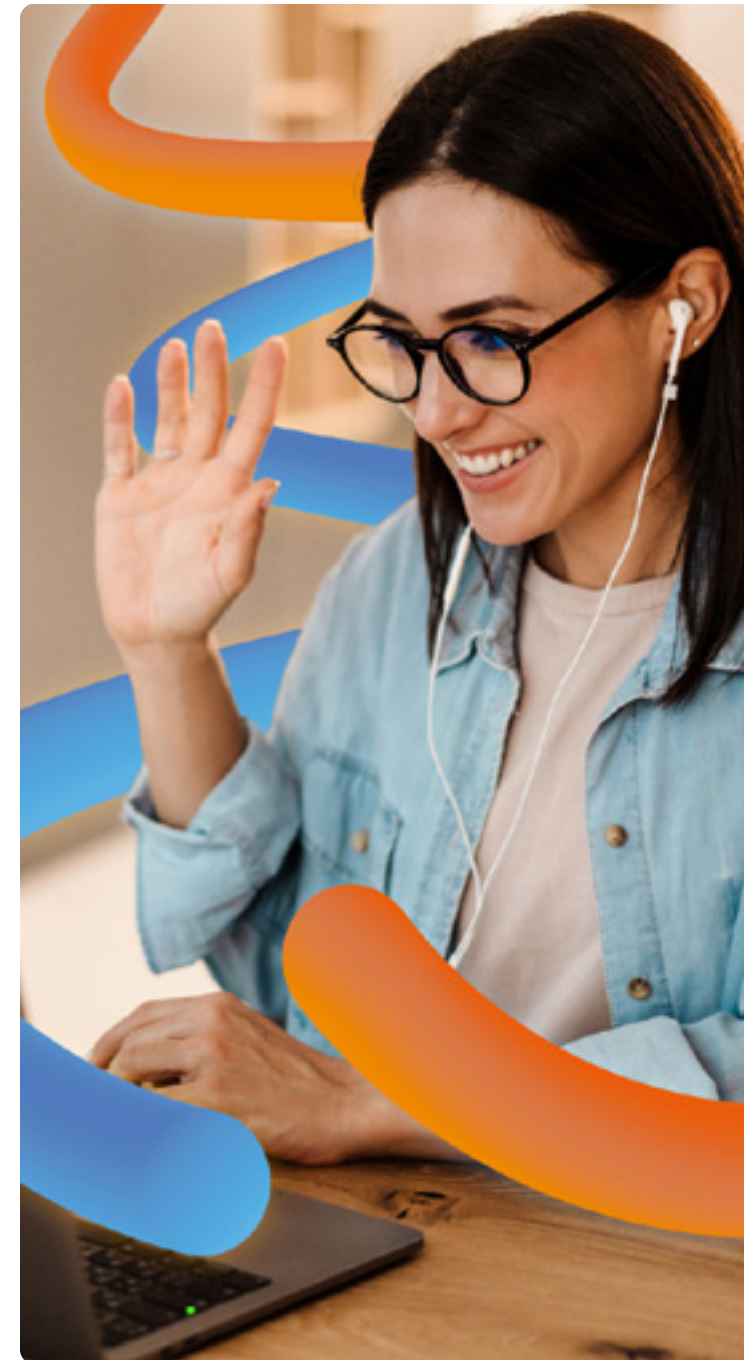
Digital acceleration

In April 2020 Microsoft reported ‘two years of digital transformation in two months’ thanks to the mass uptake of Teams. The story behind the snappy headline was exponential change and growth in how businesses were acquiring and using digital solutions to keep working life on track.

Some companies were so impressed by this acceleration that they took it one step further and ditched offices altogether.

“Being a fully-remote company allows us to do things that other companies haven’t been able to do before,” explains [Johnny Boufarhat, CEO of the online conference platform Hopin](#). “Ten years ago you couldn’t do this because the software wasn’t good enough, sending emails back and forth doesn’t cut it.”

But connectivity doesn’t just mean doing more video calls. Nurturing better connection between different organisational departments is about breaking down silos, encouraging collaboration, and streamlining efficiency – potentially one challenge too far for Microsoft Teams. From payroll, to time-management, review processes and wider HCM applications, how businesses connect employee needs to HR systems is as important as how they connect them to each other.



Challenging the perception of HR

Whether a one-man-band or an entire team, HR functions have to encompass a wide range of skills. HR professionals face a range of challenges: from improving time management and increasing productivity to operational efficiency. The role also involves balancing leadership's expectations with motivating employees to perform at their best. In short, a lot more than hiring and firing.

HR is the ultimate facilitator of conversation and collaboration throughout the entire business. They are tasked with running practical systems and technological processes that enable them to do their job, while also balancing the pressure for any investment to deliver a positive ROI. With employees misunderstanding the wide range of obligations HR professionals face, this can all result in a lingering negative perception.



The purpose of payroll

The function of payroll is ensuring that everyone gets paid the right amount, at the right time. However, payroll also serves as the ultimate bridging technology. It sits between HR and finance in large organisations, bringing two critical business functions together. For small and large organisations, it can also be a service that is facilitated by a wholly outsourced provider.

At a systems level it represents a comprehensive employee data set and the starting point for building out other HR applications or features.

From an employee perspective, it is the most consistent touchpoint between an employer and the workforce.

The purpose of payroll can therefore be seen as a critical bridge between business functions, a foundation layer of data and insight and a pervasive communication to all employees. While it may be considered just another technology application, by comprehending payroll a business can understand a great deal more about its organisational needs.

SECTION TWO

Mind the gaps

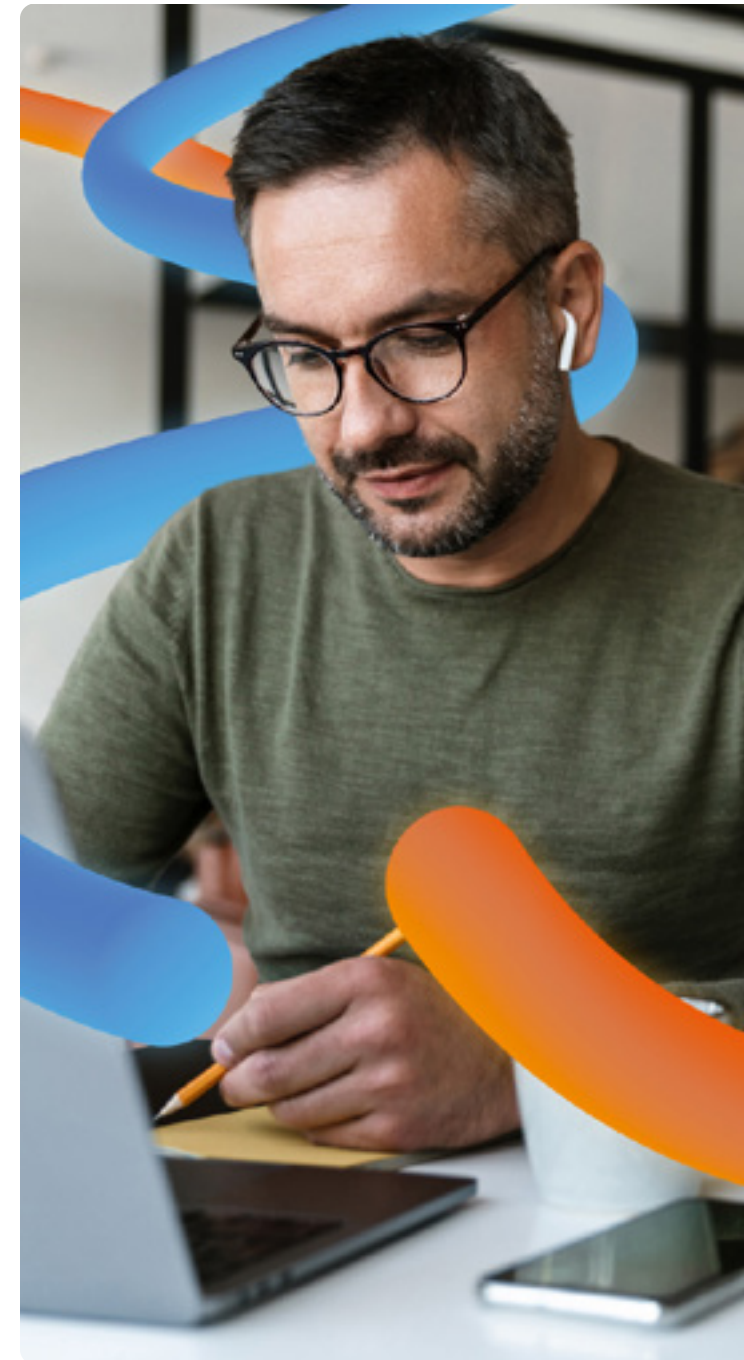
Optimising HR systems to enhance company culture, operations, and performance is no mean feat; but understanding where the gaps in current engagement lie allows companies to focus on where and how to build bridges. HR and business professionals should be considering the following points when searching for a solution.

1 People

HR connects to the way people think, feel, and act. However, periods of disruption can alter this relationship, and cause employees to disengage. Meanwhile, high staff turnover can lead to wider business performance issues and disconnection, as teams start to feel unsettled and uncertain about the future.

In our emerging hybrid working era, businesses are going to rely heavily on finding the right technology to support successful onboarding, and to ensure their new starters feel connected from the get-go.

While this may be especially apt for smaller companies, who benefit more from nurturing connection and relationships within their teams, larger organisations also need to consider smart ways to bring culture, operations and performance together using technology. Competition for the best talent is rife, and those without the right support systems in place, could end up missing out.



2 Process

Without the right software solutions in place to bridge the gap between HR and payroll, cohesion inevitably falls short. Using unwieldy spreadsheets to manage payroll instead of a dedicated software solution leads to an increased risk of human error, fuelling disconnection even further.

This disconnection between HR and payroll is usually a result of scattered systems that haven't kept up with the fast pace of the changing workplace. They are often a symptom of failing to understand the interdependence of workforce processes and data. Businesses of all sizes would benefit from reviewing processes, using the wave of workplace change as a lever.

3 Investment

Businesses demand a strong connection between HR systems, ROI, and wider business goals. However, when investment in this area is neglected, it falls behind the rest of the organisation, creating challenges around cohesion.

Justifying spending money on HR or payroll software solutions can be tricky when the common view is of HR as a cost centre. Cost and efficiency savings driven by automation are an important starting point for building the business case internally. This enables higher value, harder-to-measure metrics such as morale and performance enhancements to create a compelling case.



SECTION THREE

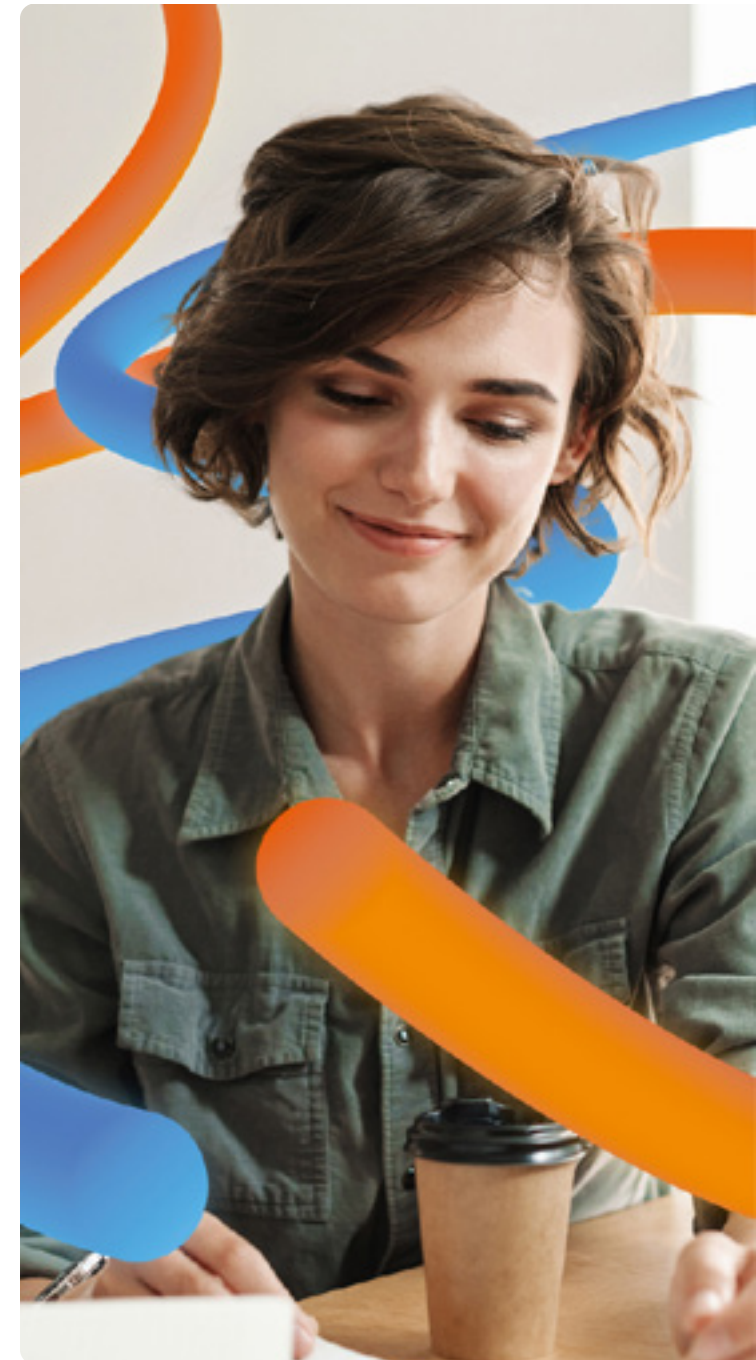
Keep calm and get connected

Despite the multiple challenges and hardships faced, there is an answer. Getting connected starts with finding solutions that bring people together, and provide flexible, agile ways to help HR drive businesses forward.

1 Inspire employees

People are what makes a company successful. Cloud-based software solutions put them at the centre of technological transformation by creating the right foundations for employee engagement. From onboarding to offboarding, having sufficient support can strengthen the connection between employee and employer.

Crucially, this software can be used anytime, anywhere, meaning staff can align their processes regardless of location. This forms a simple connection between HR solutions and employees, from payroll services to talent management, by offering a centralised platform for communication and engagement.





Employees are increasingly able to proactively manage their own data with self-service HR functionality. By giving people appropriate levels of autonomy over information, they feel more valued and trusted.

2 Accelerate efficiency

By switching to a cloud-based solution, organisations can streamline operations and drive efficiency across different teams.

Integrated software solutions can help build efficiencies further by bringing all employee-focused processes into a single solutions or portal environment. The important point to consider here is making sure foundation technologies are secure and highly interoperable with other HR solutions. The end-user benefits are intelligent, personalised, employee experiences leading to improved engagement, while the business benefits from saving time, better data and insights, as well as less admin errors.

3 Drive performance

Between focusing on ROI for the here and now, and looking to long-term cost savings, the right HR solution can help preserve cash. The business model and savings can vary, but there are some simple formulas businesses can apply to decision making:

- Would it be beneficial to outsource the solutions entirely, allowing team members to focus on core capabilities? This can be especially relevant for admin-focused services such as payroll.
- Is there an integrated solution available on-premise or via the cloud that meets every business process and all cultural needs?
- If more than one solution is needed, how easy is it for the core HR system to work alongside other business applications?

Finding a solution that is completely scalable will also fuel wider business goals, adapting as they grow and evolve. And by automating certain processes, more time can be spent on developing business objectives.



CONCLUSION

Think connected

By creating the right connections, businesses can bring together culture, operations, and performance. And the simplest and most cost-efficient way to do this is by putting employee needs and engagement first.

Combining dedicated support with tailored software and services helps businesses inspire employees, accelerate efficiency, and drive performance. It also enriches HR and payroll operations, strengthening relationships and laying the foundations for future business improvements.

The HR function can transform the way a business works, and the software and services HR relies on are critically important to ensuring this happens. From outsourced services, to integrated platforms tailored to your needs, the right systems will ensure HR and the workplace stay strong, smart and connected.

Learn more about how software solutions can help connect your business.



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IRIS offers the greatest range of specialist accountancy, financial management, human resource management, payroll and education solutions, delivered as a choice of integrated on premise and cloud-based applications.

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