# Case Study:
# Co-op

The Co-op has always had a strong focus on its people, coupled with a culture of continuous optimisation and improvement. The Co-op has a dynamic HR model based on flexibility and continuously making incremental changes to its processes, operating and support model.

In line with this, Co-op implemented the cloud-based Oracle human capital management (HCM) and Payroll system, to streamline its HR processes and better engage its workforce. But when the Co-op wanted to take the service to the next level and maximise the capabilities within Oracle HCM Cloud for the benefit of its colleagues, customers, members and communities, it decided to go to market to seek out a new approach.

The large Systems Integrators currently tend to focus on large-scale HCM Cloud implementations and transformation programmes rather than optimisation and ongoing exploitation. The Co-op decided to seek out a more flexible and agile alternative to supporting and developing the product, that incorporated a more collaborative and iterative approach. During this search, Co-op opened discussions with Symatrix, a UK based Oracle Managed Services expert.

Gareth Abreu, Cloud DevOps Manager at the Co-op, explained: "We wanted to create a new approach to support, to complement our internal talent, rather than just an off-the-shelf offering. Symatrix had the capability and agility to help us do this and after shaping our partnership we selected them to support our HCM solution."

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## Working together to deliver business results

Collaborating with Symatrix enables Co-op to make changes to their HR and payroll systems on demand, with the Symatrix team augmenting their in-house HCM delivery. Two teams acting as one, across support, change and innovation.

This is proving especially beneficial in specialist areas where Co-op need to supplement their in-house skills. The model also enables Co-op to sense-check their ideas, thereby helping ensure best practice is adopted to stay at the forefroof the industry

Symatrix has also been proactive in developing new capabilities for Co-op, aiding the delivery of key strategic initiatives, these have included specialist work on new integrations and an ambitious project to rationalise payrolls. But it is in delivering value-adding, expert advice and consultancy where Symatrix has had the biggest impact – especially through the current crisis.

Symatrix supplied key support at a difficult time for Co-op with the tax year-end coinciding with the first weeks of lockdown. The Managed Services provider has also delivered sound pragmatic advice throughout and challenged Co-op's processes where necessary, making a positive contribution to Co-op's continued wellbeing during the pandemic.

Gareth Abreu, said, "Of all our partners, Symatrix made the single biggest difference to our Covid response. They provided crucial advice and consultancy on areas like furlough, tax year end, P11Ds at year-end. They underwrote tax year-end successfully. Historically this had always been a major challenge across our operational teams, trying to land change and statutory updates, while this year it happened seamlessly and against the backdrop of lockdown," said Abreu.

This kind of support, not just around COVID planning, but more generally has been key to the success of the partnership. As Abreu puts it: "We were looking to create a 'next generation support model' rather than just a managed service offering. We have achieved that thanks to Symatrix."

Symatrix has been able to flex resource to support the Co-op's business objectives, saving time and money by being able 'triage' one-off incidents quickly and efficiently and manage the information back to Oracle. That has led to quicker results and has saved Co-op's internal team time and effort.

Payroll is one key area where Symatrix support has shone. The Co-op runs a large and complex payroll but Symatrix has been quick to rise to the challenge, demonstrating its extensive expertise and capability as well as bold innovation in looking for new ways to optimise Co-op's cloud payroll teams and processes.

## Building on mutual trust

One of the most significant outcomes of the partnership between Co-op and Symatrix though is the trust that it has fostered between the two businesses and the openness of communication that this has supported.

According to Chris Brooks, Managing Director, Symatrix: "We have built a trust-based partnership with the Co-op. We have complementary positive working cultures. There has been complete transparency between our two companies right from the start of the relationship. We have 100% confidence in each other's capabilities, and we have seen 'can do' attitudes across the board.

Moving forwards, both parties are committed to continuous optimisation of the current solution and adopting new features and modules as they become available. As Abreu concludes: "This is a genuinely new partnership, exploring the potential of human capital management and payroll delivered in the cloud. We are looking forward to expanding on it still further in the coming weeks, months and years."

## About Symatrix

Symatrix is a specialist in technology and outsourcing for HR and Payroll. Our team of highly experienced HR practitioners can implement the full lifecycle of your HR and payroll needs - from best practice HR templates to the full support of your HR and payroll department as a managed service.

## Find out more

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