Paul Smith Limited Tracks Time in Style

Paul Smith

Customer

Paul Smith Ltd.
www.paulsmith.co.uk

Industry
Retail

Headquarters
Nottingham, UK

Use Case
▸ Project Costing

Challenges
▸ Found manual Excel-based time tracking too time consuming

▸ Needed a way to generate actionable reports

Results
▸ Can set accurate project timelines, and forecast and plan for new projects

▸ Robust, online system makes time tracking simple

▸ Production of reports is quick and easy

Paul Smith Limited engages in the retail and wholesale of exceptional menswear, women's wear, and luxury accessories. As chairman and designer, Paul Smith is continually involved in every aspect of the business, enabling it to retain a personal touch often lost in companies of a similar size.

Cut from a Unique Cloth

The Paul Smith shops reflect the character of Paul and his designs, an unmistakable Englishness augmented by the unexpected. Every shop is totally different — from a shocking pink building with movie set styling on Melrose Avenue in Los Angeles, to a Japanese garden at the heart of the store in Tokyo. And each shop is a showcase for diverse and eccentric jewelry, art, furniture, and antiques that complement the clothing collections.

Not content to rest on very successful laurels, Paul Smith remains laser focused on growing the business. A main strategy is to create and open more global shops, and that's the remit of the company's internal Shop Design Department, which strives to reflect the brand image of British traditional with an edge in every store design. Explains Jane Blankson, Project Support Officer in the Shop Design Department, "We create distinctive shops so that wherever in the world a customer is, they'll experience Paul Smith's eclectic aesthetic the moment they walk through the door."

A Fresh Look

According to Blankson, "People don't buy at Paul Smith shops just because they need a pair of shoes or a suit — they want items with a quirky twist. Our department is dedicated to supporting this vision."

On any given day, Shop Design Department employees can be found busily working on several different projects — all of which must be appropriately tracked and managed. In the past Blankson used Excel spreadsheets to record the time each employee spent working on each project task. The process worked, but also had its limitations. For example, it was time consuming to manually input so much information into spreadsheets, and to generate actionable reports based on the data.

They decided to take a fresh look at their processes and consider implementing a more robust system that could aid productivity and accuracy. After careful consideration, the department selected an easy-to-use automated solution from Replicon with clock in/clock out time tracking capabilities together with a powerful reporting functionality.

REPLICON™

> ❝ **We chose an automated time tracking solution from Replicon due to its user-friendly nature and the fact that it can be tailored to suit our needs."** ❞
>
> **Jane Blankson, Project Support Officer, Paul Smith Limited**

About Replicon

Replicon is the leading provider of cloud-based time tracking software. Our award-winning solutions are used by more than 1.5 million people in over 7,800 organizations across 70 countries. We help customers to better manage workforce attendance, expenses, projects, professional services teams, and shared services resources.

Our diverse customer base — from start-ups to Fortune 500 companies — trusts Replicon to help reduce compliance risk, keep costs down, and provide greater insight into business performance. Clients include: FedEx, MetLife, New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA), Novartis, Orbitz, and Xerox. Replicon is a global company with employees in Australia, Canada, India, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

A Suitably Tailored Solution

Says Blankson: "We chose Replicon not only because it's so user-friendly, but also because it can be tailored to suit our needs. We looked at time tracking solutions from other vendors, but their offerings were more static. Replicon is feature-rich, and we can start with what we need and turn on other features later."

With Replicon, employees can enter their time themselves, which is easier for everyone. "The main impact for me is that, unlike with Excel, I don't have to be working on it all the time," states Blankson. Information is available instantly, and the real-time visibility ensures accurate tracking of time and resources. "I can see at a glance where everyone is on their assignments. Now I just can dip into the system when I need information. It's nice to have all that insight at my fingertips. It frees me from doing administrative tasks, and I now have more time to focus on other things."

The production of reports is also quick and easy, and Blankson is able to get actionable data about all projects linked to the Shop Design Department. "I've gained an improved understanding of how long a particular project task or project stage takes compared with a similar task or stage, or against different kinds of projects," she concludes. "This knowledge helps with setting accurate project timelines, and with the forecasting and planning of other shop projects in new and existing markets as the company continues to grow."

At the end of the day, that's business at its most tasteful — a creative mix of traditional bottom-line goals and modern solutions that result in successful outcomes. And success never goes out of style!