

CASE STUDY



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A mark of our relationship is that I see Reality HR as part of my leadership team.

To be able to do that – and remotely – is no mean feat.

Sean Dickinson – CEO



UC Unicard

Meet UNICARD and learn about **the challenge** they faced with their HR

Unicard is a leading provider of transport management solutions in the UK, specialising in software that supports local authorities, large cities and transport operators with smart ticketing schemes for public transport.

The business employs around 80 people on two sites. Around 30 people in the UK work on customer-facing activities including customer service and project management, while 50 employees based in Bulgaria work on software product development, research and quality control.

Reality**HR**

Since it was founded in 2000, Unicard has grown steadily, and recently more quickly – the company took on 26% more staff in 2020. Upon his appointment as CEO at the start of that year, Sean Dickinson made people management a priority, knowing that the growth of the company would underline the importance of having strong and robust policies and systems in place.

The action taken by Reality HR

Unicard had worked with Reality HR on a small retainer since 2018, and Sean chose to build on the relationship to carry out two key tasks which would set out fundamental HR principles for the business. The first was to implement a vision and values project, involving employees across the two sites. The second was to set up an automated people management system, called People HR, to help manage all aspects of HR including recruitment, induction, expenses and performance reviews.

Sean Dickinson says: “As our business grew, we realised we needed greater HR capability. Because we had grown quite quickly, we had an absence of systems, processes and structure. We needed to address that, but we also needed to make sure we were creating the right environment to attract people into the business and retain them.

“We chose Reality HR because we needed to work with people who could give us time and could own the process so that we could focus where we needed to in the business.”

Reality HR consultants Sam Dow and Emily Gent are Unicard’s key contacts at Reality HR. They worked closely with Sean to carry out interviews, surveys and questionnaires for the values exercise, gaining valuable insight from Unicard’s people and helping to shape the company’s mission and values. They also carried out the task of implementing the People HR system, setting it up to meet Unicard’s exact needs and making sure it scheduled reminders and updates for milestones such as induction and appraisal dates.



Reality HR is a great organisation, with great people. They make my life a lot easier – they do a lot of the heavy lifting and thinking for me, and I can always count on them to be proactive.

Sean Dickinson CEO

The outcome

The values exercise resulted in a clear set of qualities that define Unicard – among them are collaborative working, creativity, customer focus, and a team spirit. The outcome is that these values can now be applied across the business. “They are embedded in our objectives,” Sean explains. “For example, in performance reviews there are criteria to work to – we can ask our people, can you demonstrate collaborative working? Can you demonstrate customer-centricity? Everybody knows our collective values and what is expected of them as an individual. The people management system is now up and running, helping Unicard’s managers keep a focus on HR processes, with fortnightly one-to-ones and quarterly reviews programmed in along with mid-year and end-of-year appraisals.

“The key assets we have as a business are our intellectual property – our software – and our people,” adds Sean. “We are nothing without them. We don’t pay lip service to our people and our values. They are in everything we do, every single day.”

