UKG

Winner

Driving inclusion and diversity in DevOps

Recognizes diversity and inclusion initiatives for their organization to transform their business, or unique solutions to help build a more diverse, inclusive, and accessible workplace for your customer, leading to higher levels of engagement, productivity, and innovation

About

Ultimate Kronos Group (UKG) provides workforce, payroll, and human capital management (HCM) cloud solutions. It was formed in 2020 through the merger of Ultimate Software and Kronos Incorporated. The company serves more than 70,000 organizations.

Challenges

As the issues of racism and systemic bias have moved to the forefront, stakeholders are holding organizations accountable for advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). Businesses recognize that diversity is not just a moral imperative but critical to retaining and cultivating talent. Inclusive workplaces—and those that create a strong sense of belonging—foster collaboration, innovation, and customer empathy.

But scaling diversity initiatives across large organizations can be challenging, and some companies struggle to progress from intentions to results. Barriers may exist as a result of systemic bias, and dismantling them is often not straightforward.

Organizations are seeking tools that help embed the values of diversity and inclusiveness more deeply and accelerate culture change. They look for solutions to help design and implement policies that will demonstrably support their goals. Diversity touches on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, and other characteristics. Achieving greater inclusiveness requires sensitivity and persistence.

Objectives

Under the slogan "*Our purpose is people*," UKG has looked for ways to advance its own diversity and equity mission and help customers achieve greater progress in their organizations with UKG solutions.

Since its founding merger in 2020, the company has set out to amplify its impact in meaningful ways including with its technology workforce. UKG has sought to promote learning, mitigate bias, hire diverse talent, and create accountability. It has also made a commitment to combat the gender pay equity gap.

Moreover, UKG has pledged to help its customers do the same by investing in technology that supports diversity, equity, and inclusion. One key component of its Life-work Technology approach to solution design is striving to help employers demonstrate their genuine commitment to making all workers feel that they belong and can bring their authentic selves to work every day.

Solution

UKG has worked to fulfill its vision in multiple ways. Its product design process for its UKG Pro, UKG Dimensions, and UKG Ready solutions emphasize accessibility and help customers build diverse teams.

Meanwhile, UKG has focused on building its own globally diverse workforce—with development teams in Massachusetts, Florida, and India—on the backbone of DevOps practices. The company views technology as a way to enforce and support diversity and help people achieve their maximum potential.

In 2021, the company hired renowned technologist Brian Reaves as its Chief Belonging, Diversity, and Equity Officer. His vision was to lead and expand existing initiatives while working to expand a culture built on trust, fairness, and equality. Reaves ensures that DEI is part of UKG's solutions.

Cecile Leroux, Group Vice President of Research & Innovation at UKG, says, "Belonging, Diversity, and Equity (BD&E) is a business imperative for UKG. To provide solutions that have an impact for our customers, we need to be intentional about having goals to build a UKG workforce and product organization that reflects the ethnic and cultural diversity, gender diversity, and generational diversity of our customers and their people."

Reducing bias in manual processes and decision-making is another way that technology drives diversity. "UKG sees diversity and inclusion as more than a seat at the table. It's a voice at the table—a unique voice that's listened to, respected, and deemed valuable," Leroux notes.

Results
The drive for diversity has no end point, but UKG's investment has had significant impact. In 2022, the company earned 100 percent on the Corporate Equality Index, a benchmark for LGBTQ+ workplace equality, its second consecutive year with a perfect score.

UKG also received a perfect score on the Disability Equality Index. In addition, it has won awards as a best company for women and is ranked on the Forbes 2022 America's Best Large Employers list.

The company has strengthened its operational frameworks as a software developer to ensure its solutions are always making strides toward meeting the needs of all people.

For example, UKG Pro's mobile app allows visually impaired individuals to obtain their paychecks and other HR information through their phone's native voiceover assistant, an often overlooked but essential capability that impacts employees' lives inside and outside work.

"We actively promote DEI product solutions and enhancements, and we foster partnerships within UKG with our extensive employee resource groups," Leroux explains. "We're able to combine our UKG expertise with feedback from our customers to ultimately create better products that have an even bigger difference."

With its own workforce, UKG has refined its talent acquisition processes to further promote diversity including by making sure its interview candidates are more representative. The efforts have resulted in a doubling of the number of women technologists at UKG. Leroux says, "To be successful, this emphasis has to be authentic, it has to be true."

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Working with Google

Collaboration between UKG and Google Cloud is built on communication, flexibility, and a shared passion to foster strong corporate cultures around DEI, UKG says. At the start of the engagements, the Google Cloud team brought in thought leaders to meet with UKG executives to ensure alignment.

To learn more about UKG Group's successful project, check out this video.