

Efficient Pay Reviews: From Weeks To Minutes

Time is a precious commodity in the world of Global Mobility. A common problem we hear from many clients is that they never have enough of it; it's taken up by too many repetitive, manual administrative tasks.

One of those tasks is the salary review round, which comes around at least once, often twice, a year, and will take up weeks or even months of the team's time. Many of our clients implement pay reviews in January, and most of those with a manual process will be up to their necks in updating and reviewing packages for weeks before, simply because there are so many components of a package that potentially need updating.

If we think about updating a typical long-term assignment package, common factors to consider include notional home salary pay rises, changes in tax and social security rules, shifts in cost of living indices and exchange rates, and possibly revised allowances. Updating all of these components manually, calculation by calculation, is very labour intensive; even more so if the ratio of global mobility professionals to assignees is high. Beyond the time lost, companies find that errors are easily made, and assignees are likely to be informed about their new packages at the last minute, giving them little to no time to understand the changes or ask questions before the new pay comes into effect. This doesn't make for the smoothest experience, for either global mobility or assignees.

But, it doesn't have to be like this.

Enter batch processing, a simple functionality that can be built into a global mobility management platform. It is a type of automation that enables users to run mass updates by instructing the system once to run a task over and over for multiple instances. It can be employed in a variety of ways, but for most, the pay review process is where batch processing has proved truly indispensable. In just a few clicks, all (or a specific part) of the assignee population will have updated salary packages. Review calculations are created, new data pulled through, new home salaries uploaded, and calculation reports downloaded en masse. One of our clients cited an 85% reduction in the time it took to run their annual salary and bonus review after leveraging batch processing, and that human error dropped to less than 1%.

This is a world away from the days when companies did these tasks step by step, assignee by assignee. Now, they find that several weeks or even months' worth of work is completed accurately in just a few minutes. Costly errors are all but eliminated. And global mobility teams can inform assignees about the changes to their packages earlier, allowing plenty of time to reassure them and address any concerns before the changes take effect.

Not only does the global mobility team save time by automating the process, but your employees are updated as quickly and securely as possible, improving their experience

Companies with a portal or an app for their mobile employees can take this a step further. Distributing pay review letters and new calculations manually is a painfully slow process. Typically, files are emailed to each employee one at a time. This is, of course, both tedious and time-consuming, and employees can get frustrated waiting. Moreover, emailing these sensitive documents is not good practice, as it is a very unsafe way of sharing information and risks exposing the data to wrong people and breaching GDPR, and putting your company's

reputation at risk. Not only does the global mobility team save time by automating the process, but your employees are updated as quickly and securely as possible, improving their experience.

BEYOND PAY REVIEWS

There are many other transformative ways in which global mobility teams are leveraging batch processing. Here we'll take a look at some more examples:

Managing Exchange Rate Fluctuations

One way that companies protect their assignees from exchange rate fluctuations is through reconciliation payments. When assignees are paid 100% in home or host currency, they remit some of their pay into the other country and currency each month. The global mobility team calculates whether currency shifts have caused assignees to lose out in any months and typically reimburse assignees for the total shortfall once or twice a year.

The major downside of this approach is how laborious it is to keep on top of fluctuations and run these calculations month by month for numerous assignees. Unsurprisingly, we've seen companies struggle to keep up with their reconciliation calculations, leaving assignees out of pocket and unhappy for longer.

With batch processing, mobility teams can calculate the monthly shortfall using the latest exchange rates for all (or a specific section) of their assignee population in next to no time. Again, a typically time-consuming affair has been turned into a simple and time-efficient task, relieving the team to spend their time doing more value-added work.

Policy Reviews

It can be a huge challenge to know what the impact of changing certain pay components would be on your population and global mobility programme. The vast number of calculations involved means companies have implemented policy changes, such as mobility allowances or cost of living index types, blindly, without knowing the consequences until the damage has been done. Companies that have adopted batch processing functionality to run the policy change scenarios found that they could calculate and analyse the impact of a policy change -

for overall cost implications and individual cases - during the policy review. This is a huge strategic advantage and means that you can make well-informed decisions and avoid costly mistakes.

Document Generation

Creating a high volume of documents and reports is another area where many mobility teams face time-consuming, error-prone work, but together with document generation functionality, batch processing is used by companies to create reports and documents for all of their employees (or for a specific subset of them) all at once. For example, we've seen cases where a company's policy change results in changes to all employees' packages under that policy type. Manually updating all of the necessary assignment letters would be a huge, painstaking task and that comes with the risk of errors in what are legally binding documents. Fortunately, companies using batch processing and document generation only need to tweak the assignment letter template, and then simply batch generate all of the new assignment letters in one click. With advanced systems, those letters can be automatically distributed to the assignees directly.

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Long overlooked and underappreciated, batch processing - an unsung hero of automation - has proven its worth. Over the years, organisations have turned to this hidden gem, experiencing significant time savings and a remarkable reduction in errors, particularly in crucial processes like salary and policy reviews. Embracing batch processing has empowered companies to redirect their focus from labour-intensive tasks to more strategic and assignee-centric responsibilities, and the results speak for themselves.



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