

Success Story

Sage People helps Purmo Group enter a new era

Interior climate control supplier sought an HR software overhaul to thrive in an exciting new era

“Sage People gives us access to business data in ways we never had before.”

Helen Duke

HR Manager for the UK, Ireland and US, Purmo Group



The Challenge

More than 50 years of expansion and acquisition had left Purmo Group with a collection of different approaches to HR administration across regions. With new leadership and stock exchange flotation imminent, the time for change had come.



The Solution

Following a tendering process and comparison of various options, Purmo Group chose Sage People to unify its HR management across multiple regions and sites.



The Result

Purmo Group implemented Sage People in September 2021. The reporting and data aggregation functionalities were invaluable in the run-up to its 2022 flotation. The company now has consistent and accurate data, better productivity, and an improved employee experience.

- HR reports that previously took several hours now immediate.
- Comprehensive, accurate HR data informs business decisions.
- Automation of routine tasks has released staff time.
- Data protection assurances eased implementation at unionised sites.

Sage

Company
Purmo Group

Location
Finland

Industry
Manufacturing Discrete

Sage Products
Sage People

PURMO
GROUP

About Purmo Group

Founded in Finland in 1953, and with bases worldwide, Purmo Group is among the world's largest manufacturers and suppliers of sustainable indoor climate solutions.



Becoming fit for flotation

The last few years have been very busy for Purmo Group. The heating and cooling solutions company, which operates from bases across 24 countries, sells in 100 countries and employs more than 3,000 people, gained a new CEO in 2020 and was floated on the Helsinki stock exchange in 2022.

Of course, any IPO comes with substantial transparency and reporting requirements and Helen Duke, Purmo Group's HR Manager for the UK, Ireland and US, was pleased to have Sage People in place by then. "Until 2021, we didn't have a global HR management system. As a global HR team we had discussed it and saw the value, but with commitment from both our CPO and CEO, who supported the drive to introduce HR management software, the project gained momentum," she explains, acknowledging that for a company of Purmo Group's size, it made perfect sense to standardise and streamline HR data and processes.

So, in early 2021 Purmo Group ran a tendering process and invited several providers to present at their UK Head Office in Gateshead. The HR team decided that Sage People was the best fit for the business, aligning with their priorities in progression. "As the saying goes, people buy from people, and we were impressed by the support the Sage team offered," says Helen.

Preparing for success

Having selected Sage People, Purmo Group spent several months planning and preparing for implementation. "We know that the quality of data you put in at the outset will influence how effective the system is," says Helen. So, the firm brought in consultants on a fixed-term basis to help with data gathering and to ensure that the information going into the system was accurate and consistent.

For Helen and her colleagues, this was a busy time: "Any implementation is going to be challenging. We had a lot to do as an HR team at the start, but we undertook it in a really positive fashion, knowing that once the data had been loaded into the system, we were going to have a fantastic resource," she explains.

In September 2021 the system went live, clearly branded as 'PG People', to underline the firm's intention to provide a shared, high-quality employee experience and identity across sites. Functionality, which includes self-service elements such as online annual leave booking and training, was introduced gradually. "We didn't want to overwhelm people with too much change from the start," Helen explains. The response from HR colleagues and staff across the company has been very positive.



Sage People has transformed the company's access to, and quality of, business data.

A crucial role for data protection

During the tendering process, Purmo Group had made sure that Sage People provided superb data protection, not only to ensure compliance with global data protection regulations, but also because this was a requirement for unions and employee representatives at some sites.

Helen explains: "At some of our sites we have detailed union agreements. To implement Sage People there, we had to guarantee — in writing and in detail — that particular types of data would only be visible to specific people, and that access would be strictly limited. Had we not been able to do this, it would have been difficult for us to launch the system. Data protection is hugely important to us anyway, so it was considered when we were looking at Sage People, but in this case, it carried additional weight."

Fortunately, the flexibility of Sage People made it straightforward for the HR managers involved to enforce global access rights and anonymisation of data while allowing for regional variations as required, and the system was launched without problems.

Enhancing the employee experience

Among the key reasons for implementing a new HR system was Purmo Group's desire to enhance the employee experience. Thus, their Sage People portal has various self-service options and sections where employees can see all roles available in the firm, and access training and learning resources. For the latter, the company has integrated Cornerstone learning provision into Sage People/PG People, so that staff can easily refresh and extend their knowledge from one place.

Better business data

Sage People has also transformed the company's access to, and quality of, business data. Not only has it drastically reduced the time and effort required to run reports — reports that previously took a couple of hours to prepare can now be generated with a single click, and many hours per month of staff time have been released for use on more productive tasks — but because the system and data are shared across the company, that data is more accurate, complete and actionable than was possible before.

Helen explains that this has a direct impact on Purmo Group at the highest levels: "HR has always had a seat at the table here, and now it's much easier to access and report on detailed information that is used to make important business decisions."



“Sage People has revolutionised the way we operate as a business.”

Helen Duke

HR Manager for the UK, Ireland and US, Purmo Group

Streamlined and simplified HR

With Sage People embedded in the organisation, Helen is proud of all that the HR team has achieved. “We wanted to optimise productivity, streamline and simplify administration tasks within HR, access comprehensive business data more easily and deliver a better career experience. We have achieved all of that in the last two years. We have a system where people can request holidays, conduct performance reviews. We have a learning and development portal. We’ve got how-to videos, we’ve got recruitment. Productivity is up. We’ve come a long way,” Helen explains.

Happily, staff at all levels have found that, while Sage People is comprehensive, it is also user-friendly. Perhaps unsurprisingly, Purmo Group will be rolling out more Sage People functionality in due course. “I’ve been talking to our Sage Customer Success Manager about things like competency and succession planning,” says Helen.

When asked if she would recommend the process to others, Helen answers with an emphatic yes. “Implementing Sage People has been a culture change for us, but it has definitely been worth it!” Helen explains.



Sage

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