

ASURE GROWTH STUDY

Helping Small Businesses Reach Growth Goals and Survive COVID-19

Challenge

After spending more than a decade selling payroll software to large companies ranging from 500 to 10,000 employees, John Mason-Smith decided to start Astra Payroll Services with two goals in mind:

To provide a more personalized service experience at a better price to fellow

locally-owned small businesses in the Greater Richmond Region and to stop traveling around the US for work so he could spend more time with his growing family.

He launched Astra Payroll Services in January 2019 to serve a mix of businesses with fewer than 50 employees. Today, their average client has about 10-15 employees, and include a dog groomer, CPA firms, video

marketing agencies, restaurants, and more. Because each client is so different with their own unique challenges and goals, Mason-Smith needed a versatile HCM solution that could tackle multiple situations.

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John Mason-Smith
Owner, Astra Payroll Services

Solution

When vetting which vendors were best for servicing small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs), Asure HCM for Partners came up in multiple conversations.

“There are newer, flashier HCM systems on the market that look beautiful, but that’s all they are – they missed very basic capabilities and I especially didn’t trust them to work well with my government contractors, restaurant owners, or other certain clients,” said Mason-Smith. “After reviewing several vendors, we went with Asure Payroll & Tax for Partners because it was the only one actually built on a proven, existing and time-tested powerhouse engine. We also recently licensed Asure Time & Attendance and I’m beyond impressed by how much better it is from Paychex and other national vendors!”

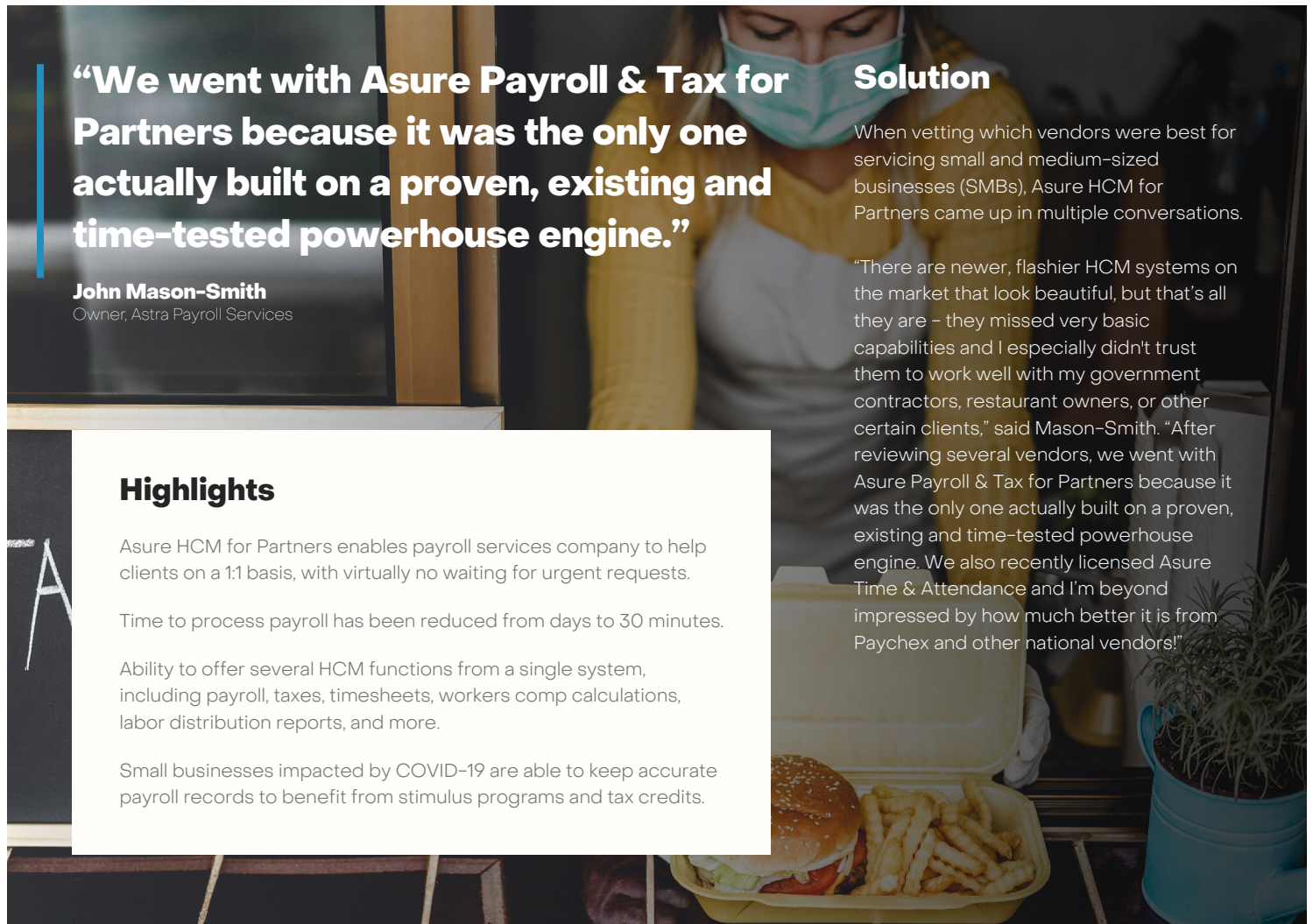
Highlights

Asure HCM for Partners enables payroll services company to help clients on a 1:1 basis, with virtually no waiting for urgent requests.

Time to process payroll has been reduced from days to 30 minutes.

Ability to offer several HCM functions from a single system, including payroll, taxes, timesheets, workers comp calculations, labor distribution reports, and more.

Small businesses impacted by COVID-19 are able to keep accurate payroll records to benefit from stimulus programs and tax credits.



Impact

"Asure HCM for Partners has allowed us to meet our clients where they're at, in terms of technology," said Mason-Smith. "We're able to easily program workers comp calculations, labor distribution reports, and more. Not every client needs everything, but having these functions readily available in my toolbelt has been huge. We don't convince them to use software they don't want to use; I give them the tools they're comfortable with so they can spend less time handling technology and more time on maintaining and growing their businesses."

This is also one of the reasons accounting and CPA firms that are usually using QuickBooks or doing payroll manually defer payroll to Astra. "Before working with us, it's like they were mowing a baseball field with a push mower. Sure, they could do that, but it'd take them two days. We're able to mow two of those hypothetical ballfields in a single afternoon," said Mason-Smith. "With Asure, I can knock out processing payroll for 10 clients in 30 minutes. It's great!"

Asure HCM has also allowed Astra to help small businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic keep up with all the paperwork required to be compliant with new regulations. In one instance when a client had to furlough employees, Astra was ahead of the curve in determining tax credits that allowed the business to continue paying employees. This let their client focus on how to keep the business alive rather than waste time and energy trying to understand what to do with the forms they received for some of the relief programs.

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What's Next

Yes. Time savings has been a nice bonus for Astra's clients, but it's also one of the last reasons they like working with them. "Our clients come to us because they want to work with another small business walking in the same shoes. They like that we're responsive, get to know them well, and can trust we'll help them when they're in a pinch," said Mason-Smith. "For example, when I got a call from the owner of our Chinese restaurant client at 9:00 p.m. on a Friday that they made an error when running timesheets that caused some employees' paychecks to be less than expected, I was able to quickly re-run the corrected timesheets and get them paid accurately - that same night. They know they would've had to wait until the next Monday if they were working with a bigger, national vendor," said Mason-Smith.

Astra Payroll Services would like to eventually also use Asure HR Services, but will continue to support its customers with Asure's versatile payroll and time and attendance solutions as they get through the COVID-19 crisis.



Asure (NASDAQ: ASUR) sees Human Capital Management (HCM) through the lens of entrepreneurs and executives with an owner's mentality. We help more than 60,000 small and mid-sized businesses develop their "Human Capital" to get to the next level, stay compliant, and allocate their time, money and technology toward growth. Asure HCM solution includes Asure Payroll & Tax, Asure HR, and Asure Time & Attendance. Our Asure HR Services offering ranges from online compliance tools to a fully outsourced HR department.

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