

Client Project Summary

Navigating a Silicon Valley Software Company's Future of Work



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BACKGROUND

Emergent partnered with a global software company based in Santa Clara, California that develops a cloud computing platform to help companies manage digital workflows for enterprise operations. **We provided program management and strategic change management consulting to them.**

When COVID-19 hit, the company pivoted virtually overnight to a nearly all-remote workforce by using the company's own digital workflows and workplace apps. As an example, they went to 100% remote onboarding of new hires and made it easy for them to get the equipment and resources they need to be productive on day 1.

As offices slowly began to reopen the need for a new hybrid work model became apparent, where employees could easily collaborate whether they were in the office or working remotely. Recognizing the hybrid work model was here to stay, Emergent led a cross-functional program team including Workplace Services, HR, Legal, IT, and Communications to enable a hybrid workplace that equipped employees—whether remote or in the office—to do their best work.

The company continued to grow rapidly. At the time of this case study, they had over 15,000 employees working out of 74 offices in 29 countries.

BUSINESS OBJECTIVES

The business objectives of this program included:

- Keep employees informed about return to workplace policies and local guidelines
- Gain visibility into community, workplace and workforce readiness and safety
- Provide a safe, flexible, working environment for employees and visitors
- Make it easy for employees to navigate a hybrid work model

THE SOLUTION

Using the company's own computing platform, they implemented new capabilities, including:

- ✓ Clear communication of policies and workflow processes based on regional and local laws
- ✓ Digital workflows to coordinate activities across functions with full insight into enterprise-wide readiness
- ✓ Automated tracking of health and vaccination status across all facilities, in alignment with government regulations and local requirements
- ✓ Self-service and mobility to allow employees to easily complete return-to-work tasks and submit service requests.

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|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| 99% | 60K | 15K+ |
| of locations reopened globally | reservations managed in first year | employees prepared for a safe return to 74 offices in 29 countries |

Clear communication of local policies and processes

Regulations can change rapidly and vary widely by location. That's why it was critical they provided updates quickly, using multiple channels to ensure the broadest possible reach. Legal and other teams reviewed these communications to assist with accuracy and compliance with local laws.

In addition to emails and virtual briefings, the company used several online channels:

- **Unified Employee Portal** – General company information, localized content, and links to services and resources

- **Workplace Site** – The company's social site with group-specific and special interest subsites
- **Return to Workplace & COVID-19 Resources microsite** – One-stop shop for workplace-related news, resources, and tasks
- **Knowledge Base articles** – Step-by-step procedures for returning to work safely (180,000+ views in the first three months)

Digital workflows to coordinate activities across functions

The company's return to workplace involved a variety of tasks coordinated across multiple organizations. Trying to manage this effort manually was not only inefficient and time-consuming, but also increased the likelihood of human



error. The company's own platform, digital workflows, and app solutions automated and coordinated activities, enabling them to adapt quickly in the dynamic environment. As an example, as local conditions changed, the company could adjust their maximum capacities at each location to help meet physical distancing requirements, work-from-home mandates, etc.

Managing workplace personas is another example. Employees were assigned one of three personas—**remote**, **flexible**, or **required in office**—each with its own work-related procedures, policies, benefits, and guidelines. Changing personas (for example, when an office worker moves to an area without a company office) was a complex process involving multiple teams including Immigration, Compensation, HR business partners, and Legal as well as layers of approvals. The company's platform coordinated all these activities and handoffs behind the scenes, including sending reminders to keep the process moving forward smoothly.

This visibility into local requirements was tremendously helpful for travel. When an employee made a reservation to visit an office, they were notified ahead of time about the safety requirements for that location, so they could arrive fully prepared.

Ever-changing privacy regulations such as GDPR made data gathering and sharing a top priority. What data would they retain, and for how long? And while they had the data, who would have access to it? Staying

ahead of these regulations through human effort alone was asking for trouble. Here, too, the company's platform helped keep pace with regulations and manage data collection, access, and retention.

Automated tracking of health and vaccination status

Initially, contact tracing was done when someone had been exposed. When offices began to reopen, the company ramped up tracking using their own health status app. As an example, after each visit to a company facility, employees would have to submit a list of those with whom they had had contact. This allowed the company to proactively map contacts and alert employees should someone test positive.

The company used their vaccine status app to track vaccinations. Initially this was done on an honor basis, however, they eventually required employees to upload their vaccination cards. The performance analytics capabilities of the company platform provided a dashboard that gave leaders an up-to-date view of the percentage of the workforce that was fully vaccinated, in progress, or unvaccinated.

Self-service and mobility for return-to-work tasks and service requests

As consumers, we increasingly want to self-solve issues. By driving self-service, the company provided their employees with consumer-like experiences that helped them resolve issues quickly. For example, knowledge base articles provided step-by-step guidance to address common issues such as password reset.



Employees also wanted convenience, and this is where the company's mobile app came in. With a few taps on the phone, employees could reserve workspaces, report health status, report their daily contacts, and submit service requests.

Mobility also helped improve the experience and productivity of managers and operational teams. Rather than being tethered to a desk or computer, they could stay up to date and get work done using their mobile phone or tablet.

BENEFITS

Once implemented, this program yielded many benefits including the following:

- ✓ **Health and safety** – Solutions that helped safeguard employees, contractors, vendors, and guests
- ✓ **Clarity** – Employees understood their work persona, local regulations, company policies, and the steps they needed to take to collaborate in a hybrid setting and return safely to the workplace
- ✓ **Visibility** – Near real-time visibility into activities across the enterprise—which helped with day-to-day management of facilities—and the ability to track trends, such as space utilization, which enabled the company to optimize resources and plan for future needs
- ✓ **Compliance** – Because the company's return-to-work activities and data were managed on their own platform, they could, if requested, provide government entities with information about COVID exposures, local safety measures, and more
- ✓ **Employee experience** – Easy and convenient for employees to get local information and guidance and complete their return-to-work tasks, which gave them more time to focus on value-added work
- ✓ **Product quality** – As “customer zero” for their own products, the company provided feedback and recommendations to their product teams, so that the solutions that reached their customers could be the best they can be

ABOUT EMERGENT

Emergent provides strategic program management and change management solutions to help companies implement complex, high-stakes business initiatives. Our specialty is supporting large-scale business transformation efforts for Fortune 500 companies. We serve as advisors, strategists, and “doers” for our clients. If you would like more information about Emergent's services or other Fortune 500 client engagements, you may contact us via our website at www.EmergentConsultants.com