



Rapidly rolling out a global HR system

i-PRO embarks on a global HR transformation with Workday solutions and IBM Consulting

IBM Consulting
8-minute read

Panasonic i-PRO Sensing Solutions Co., Ltd. offers advanced sensing technologies and AI solutions for intelligent surveillance, public safety, and industrial and medical imaging. To help create a better world, i-PRO supports professionals who protect and save lives.

i-PRO became independent from its parent company Panasonic Corporation in October 2019, formed by the merger of three separate group entities in Japan, the US and China. To ensure a smooth and successful merger, i-PRO looked to unify and standardize operations, and HR was a top priority.



To unify its people strategy and enable collaboration across borders, i-PRO engaged [IBM® Consulting](#) to roll out

a global, cloud-based HR system based on the [Workday Human Capital Management](#) solution.

In the past, there were communication gaps between the research and development function—responsible for refining the company’s products—and sales teams, who best understood customers’ pain points. As a result, i-PRO decided to rearchitect its company structure. The aim was to optimize core business processes for all geographies and teams, and shape a future-ready organization. Today, the company is also targeting global integration for its employee compensation platforms.

i-PRO looked for a cloud-based HR system that covered everything from core HR to performance management to learning. The company targeted a solution with a simple, intuitive user interface—a critical factor for driving user adoption and unlocking self-service efficiencies.

i-PRO rolls out global
HR system in

7

months

Workday Human Capital
Management supports
employees in

3

countries—Japan, China and the US

Flexibility was another key consideration for i-PRO. By following a fit-to-standard implementation approach, the company aimed to roll out the core functionalities of its global HR system in a short period of time, with the option to integrate additional capabilities in the future.

Furthermore, i-PRO was keen to implement the successful continuous performance management strategy used in its US business—whereby employees set goals each week and managers provide regular feedback—for its operations in Japan and China. The company was confident that standardizing on global best practices for performance management would enhance the productivity of its global teams, sharpening competitiveness.

Ms. Sachiko Okamoto, Chief Human Resources Officer at i-PRO, says: “In

the United States, we used a SaaS performance management tool to help managers and employees set and collaborate on weekly objectives and key results [OKR] targets. We decided to replace the tool with a global process for reviewing weekly OKR targets. Rather than follow a fit-to-standard approach, we had in-depth discussions about what the new approach to performance management should be, and what it would mean for our business.

“We reviewed our objectives, and saw that Workday solutions offered the high degree of flexibility that we wanted. Workday Human Capital Management enables us to configure process flows to meet our performance management needs without a lot of development effort. More generally, we were impressed by the simplicity of the Workday user experience.”

Ms. Okamoto adds: “We wanted to switch to OKRs for performance management as soon as possible, so we set our sights on a go-live in April—the beginning of the financial year. To achieve a successful global rollout in a short period of time, we decided to operate with only the minimum necessary core HR functionality at first, and add modules to expand the functionality later. Workday Human Capital Management acts as the central repository for employee data and is the foundation of our HR function.”

i-PRO engaged IBM Consulting to support its HR transformation. [IBM Workday consulting services](#) helped the company to ensure that the HR system went live in Japan, China and the US simultaneously—on schedule, in just seven months.

Remote deployment

In phase one of its HR transformation, which began in September 2020, i-PRO deployed Workday solutions for performance and talent management—a prerequisite for enabling an OKR-based approach to employee performance management.

Using the Workday solutions, i-PRO has adopted as many standard process flows and best practices as possible. The company applied a custom template from IBM Consulting containing prebuilt workflows for Japan-specific HR processes, including employee information registration for job transfers. This helped to accelerate the deployment.

The company was impressed with the speed of the implementation. It took



just seven months to go from initial engagement to go-live in Japan, China and the US. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, IBM Services® completed the deployment entirely remotely.

i-PRO took advantage of [IBM Services Dynamic Delivery™](#), a remote model of service delivery, to keep its HR transformation on track despite COVID-19 restrictions.

Key stakeholders from i-PRO were involved at every stage of the project and followed progress closely. Daily communication with IBM helped to keep the deployment on schedule. Despite not being able to travel onsite, the IBM team kept in close contact with i-PRO through regular video calls, emails, texts and instant messages.

With the HR system now live, i-PRO is now in the process of training administrators how to maintain the Workday solutions, with support from IBM Consulting.

Ms. Mariko Shishikura, HR DX Manager at i-PRO, says: “When we were defining the requirements during the design phase, IBM explained the Workday process flows in great detail. Sessions for our business units in the United States and China were also reassuring, and made possible by IBM’s international footprint.”

“We now have access to organizational charts and employee profiles for the entire global workforce. The org charts have been set up so that we have full visibility of all employees’ roles, their job descriptions and their goals.”

Ms. Sachiko Okamoto, Chief Human Resources Officer,
Panasonic i-PRO Sensing Solutions Co., Ltd.

Unified overview of a global workforce

Following the successful go-live of the Workday Human Capital Management platform in April 2021, i-PRO is now embarking on the next phase of its HR transformation journey.

Ms. Shishikura says: “Thanks to support from IBM, we have built up a good internal knowledge base about the Workday solutions, and the administrators are able to provide hypercare services following go-live, as well as proactive maintenance services. We are comfortable with checking and adjusting settings in the Workday solutions ourselves.”



The organization charts and employee profiles are now available in the new HR system, providing full transparency of who is responsible for what. If

someone has a question such as who is in charge of an activity in a particular country, they can find the answer quickly and easily. Each

person's OKR targets are visible to the entire business, thanks to a structured approach to talent management that enables all employees to understand each other's roles and goals.

Looking to the future as an independent company, i-PRO strives to bring its employees together to build on their strengths and sharpen its competitive edge.

Ms. Okamoto concludes: "Our new HR system gives us visibility of roles and goals across the business. Even though we are a global company with standardized processes, there is still room for individuality. We encourage each employee to think hard about what they want to contribute to the business, and what kind of person they want to be. Each employee may take their own individual steps, but we're all moving in the same direction."

“ We believe that improving the quality of feedback cycles between development, manufacturing and sales functions is essential to improve our competitiveness—empowering our customer-facing sales teams in the United States and other countries, development teams in Japan, and manufacturing teams in China to work together as one global company.”

Ms. Sachiko Okamoto, Chief Human Resources Officer,
Panasonic i-PRO Sensing Solutions Co., Ltd.

i-PRO The Power of Truth

About Panasonic i-PRO Sensing Solutions Co., Ltd.

Established in 2019, [i-PRO](#) (external link) was built on a legacy of more than 60 years of innovation at Panasonic. The company is a global leader of advanced sensing technologies in the fields of intelligent surveillance, public safety, and industrial and medical imaging. i-PRO employs approximately 1,300 people across sites in Japan, China and the US.

Solution components

- IBM® Consulting
- IBM Services Dynamic Delivery™
- Workday Human Capital Management

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