



Expert advice and tools for workplace efficiencies

Smart Start is Canada's premier provider of services and technologies that is Setting the Standard in Alcohol Monitoring Technology® with ignition interlocks and portable devices. Smart Start strives to provide a superior product with a focus on customer service. Since its inception, Smart Start's Ignition Interlocks have prevented 11 million engine starts where alcohol was present on the driver's breath.

Darla Selles, controller at Smart Start Canada, oversees the accounting and finance department. She also works with the director of operations and human resources department to manage the performance of the company as a whole. We recently spoke to Darla about her experience using ADP Workforce Now® Comprehensive Services and the process efficiencies it has created:

Life before ADP



When I started with Smart Start, leadership in the Texas division of our company decided to outsource payroll — and it's going to sound crazy — to a U.K. company. So the U.S. company signed the contract for the Canadian company to outsource to this U.K. company. It was complicated. You've got three different currencies going and it was just not ideal at all. We basically got manual timesheets from the U.K. company, we would have to fill them in, email it to a manager and then it gets emailed back. It was a really complicated, inefficient process. I stuck with it for a little bit and I said 'OK, we really need to change this,' and that's when we engaged ADP.

When we switched to ADP, truthfully, I thought it seemed a little bit more than what we needed at the time, but I knew that the growth we had planned was going to get us to a point where it was something that we definitely needed. We grew into the ADP Workforce Now platform, and what ADP had to offer in terms of services. ADP was able to meet our needs with the various provinces we were operating in, managing all the different and complicated tax rates and legislations. There's no manual work. Everything is in ADP and it's night and day from where we started to where we are now.

Darla Selles,
Controller



Quick facts

-  **Company:** Smart Start Canada
-  **Headquarters:** Sherwood Park, Alberta
-  **Industry:** Services and technology
-  **Employees:** 90
-  **Product:** ADP Workforce Now Comprehensive Services

Learn more about Smart Start Canada at smartstartcanada.ca



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Adapting for a younger workforce

Our workforce is fairly young, and they're used to doing everything on their phones or laptops. With ADP, everything they need is right there at their fingertips. They don't have to do anything manually. Our employees can check their time off balances, they can check their pay; everything is right there. They don't always have to come back to the payroll accounting staff to ask questions. The payroll staff can also check those same items, so this makes things easier on them as well. The managers can get ahead of a lot of performance and absentee issues — everything is there if they choose to use the tools.

Valued HR and payroll support

Having a certified HR partner has been very valuable. I love working with John and Elle and being able to bounce ideas off another HR professional. Getting advice on legislation, having them pull resources or give me some best practices so I can make informed decisions has been very valuable for me personally.

One example of our partnership that comes to mind is our employee handbook. I started it in 2015 as a basic template, but because we grew fast, adding new provinces, I was constantly going back and making changes. In 2019, we decided to take a fresh approach and really dig in with our ADP HR partners. I relied on them heavily for pulling legislation and getting a format together that would be dynamic so we could readily edit it if there was new legislation or if we added a province. Working together to get to this final product was a very positive experience. I couldn't have done it on my own. If I outsourced it and involved a lawyer or another consultant, I know it would've been much more expensive and probably taken a lot longer.

I also know that having an ADP payroll specialist is very valuable to our payroll staff as well. Our payroll partner was such a big help especially during the early days of the pandemic. We knew we needed to establish how to treat this time off should employees need it. Was it sick time? Was it leave time? What was available to the employees that we don't cover? Then we needed to figure out processing should an employee be off for an extended period. It was nice having somebody else to discuss it with, to look at legislation with and to bounce ideas off. I think this support was very helpful.

Help and guidance through a difficult year

There were a couple of times in March of 2020 where things were a bit panicked. This is a big thing, and we're not just going to be working from home for a week or two. When reality set in, I emailed John and Elle asking what information they had. They were honest and explained that this is what we have right now, but this is going to change. We'll get in contact as we have more. They were very responsive. I understood that they didn't have all the answers, but I appreciated the teamwork approach and being able to share some thoughts and work out a plan going forward.

In the early days we were all just trying to figure out what it meant on the payroll side, what it meant to businesses and how we operated. Once we got a bit further along in 2020, Elle and John would communicate what they were seeing in terms of best practices. ADP was also sending out general messages to keep us up to date. As each province was changing legislation, best practices or recommendations, we were getting updates and then we could go and do some of our own research and implement what we needed. I felt like we had a lot of good communication along the way.



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Finding time-savings

In 2019, we went through a bigger growth phase and thought it might be time to hire someone specifically for HR to take some tasks off my plate. Instead, we ended up relying on ADP a little bit more. Rather than hiring another person, we were able to free up some of my time by relying on ADP for the research part of HR or some of the additional tasks that needed to be done.

Finding efficiencies with reporting

Before ADP, we basically had no reporting. We could barely get the timesheets sorted with that third-party company. There was nothing in terms of reporting so that was something we were really excited about with ADP. Now the different operations managers can pull statistics and reports on hours worked or shift work that didn't match the schedule.

Because of the reports available to us, we can make more informed decisions. For example, we were at our headcount for the year but there was a good portion of employees who were not working full-time hours for a variety of reasons. In terms of the dollars available in the budget, even though people-wise we were at the max and it looked like we couldn't hire anybody else, it made sense that there was some budget there and that we could probably either increase the staff that we had, increase their hours or hire another person and still meet our budget. We were able to pull some reports from ADP to evaluate and look at how many hours were worked and not just the number of employees. We found we were actually able to hire a couple of people within our budget constraints and still meet our operation requirements.

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