



Packback Picks Launchways Over a PEO to Streamline HR and Improve Benefits Program

Launchways improved Packback's payroll processes, implemented modern HRIS technology, and enhanced their benefits offering and employee satisfaction without increasing their benefits budget.

Executive Summary

As Packback continued to scale, they sought a full-suite HR solution that would eliminate the need for an internal HR team. However, Packback was very concerned about the high mark-up costs and lack of scalability with a PEO (Professional Employer Organization) solution. Instead, they chose Launchways for a cost-effective, all-in-one solution for HR, payroll, employee benefits, and business insurance. Launchways improved Packback's offering and employee satisfaction without increasing their benefits budget.

Company Overview

Packback is a thriving, Chicago-based education technology company dedicated to fueling the lifelong curiosity in every student. Their platform, Packback Questions, is an AI-supported online discussion platform that supports student curiosity, communication and critical thinking skills by empowering them to ask big questions. Packback employees themselves are furiously curious - focused on building a company that best supports lifelong learning. They've come a long way since their start, partnering with the largest publishers in America and having their platform in use across the country by more than 50 universities. They've helped more than 120,000 students save money on their books with services like Packback Price Comparison and Packback eTextbook Rentals and have had more than 100,000 curious questions and answers posted on Packback Questions.

Concerns about high mark-up costs and lack of scalability of a PEO

Prior to working with Launchways, Packback was strongly considering a PEO (Professional Employer Organization) to manage their Human Resources needs. With 60 employees at the time, they sought a solution that would eliminate the need of an internal HR resource. Previously, they were using multiple suites and tools to manage their HR, so the prospect of a single full-cycle HR solution with a PEO was enticing to them. However, due to concerns about the PEO cost model and the lack scalability to support their growing team, they decided to explore PEO alternatives before making a decision. Nick Currier, Packback CFO, was tasked with the decision of how to solve Packback's HR issues and he said:

"We were considering a few PEOs. I was pretty sold on going the PEO route with the hesitation on the scaling of the cost model. I was about to sign with a particular PEO when the Launchways team interjected and opened my eyes to the flaws of the PEO model. My conversations with Launchways convinced me not to go the PEO route and go with Launchways."

Case Study Highlights

Challenges

- Concerned about high mark-up costs and lack of scalability of a PEO
- Lack of benefits strategy and hands-on support from benefits broker
- Disjointed technology systems
- Manual data entry and time-consuming payroll processes

Solutions

- Implemented a cost-effective all-in-one solution for HR, payroll, employee benefits, and business insurance
- Selected and implemented a streamlined HRIS platform with seamless new-hire onboarding and built-in employee benefits administration
- Rolled out hands-on employee benefits education and enrollment support

Results

- Time spent on bi-weekly payroll reduced from 12 hours to just 30 minutes
- Approximately 80% of Packback employees selected a high deductible health plan, reducing Packback's annual benefits spend
- HR operations centralized and streamlined
- Employee satisfaction with benefits program increased
- Ability to attract and retain top talent improved



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Before making the switch to Launchways, Packback was experiencing several HR and employee benefits challenges. Packback had a very tight budget for employee benefits, causing many challenges in balancing cost and quality of care. Additionally, the different tools (i.e. HRIS, Payroll, and benefits administration) they were using before provided an “okay” process, but were isolated from one another with no method to integrate to create a cohesive employee experience. Packback was experiencing a significant amount of fatigue and wasted time due to manual data entry. Having to use multiple applications to keep all their employment documents together created internal frustration and large potential liabilities in terms of mismanagement of employee data.

Implementing a cost-effective all-in-one solution

It was clear that Packback needed a cost-effective, all-in-one solution. Launchways was able to provide services for all lines including employee benefits administration, managed payroll, HR, and business insurance. Launchways' custom all-in-one solution providing all the benefits Packback was looking for in a PEO, yet at a lower cost, with greater flexibility, and a higher standard of customer service.

Immediately, implementing Launchways' support provided relief to the frustrations caused by Packback's old decentralized system of HR management. The next critical task was select a new HRIS. Launchways selected and implemented a streamlined HRIS platform with seamless new-hire onboarding and built-in employee benefits administration. Packback's team found the system to be easy to use and intuitive, requiring little to no training. For Packback, the user experience of the new HRIS just made sense and was a perfect fit for the culture of the company.

Nick said “I love the new HRIS. It's incredibly easy to use. A lot of the other software we use as a company kind has a similar modern feel, so it fits the culture of the company very well. Before Launchways, I was sold on another HRIS.

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Additionally, with Launchways' guidance, Packback rolled out a new benefits program with a hands-on approach employee education and enrollment support. Launchways' dedicated benefits experts proved an effective way to educate employees about their benefits and created a tremendous amount of value for Packback employees.

Nick raved about his experience with Launchways' benefits team: “The benefits experience has been fantastic. Without adding a huge impact to the budget, we were able to work together to put a plan in place that really upped the value we were adding through our benefits.”

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Streamlined HR processes and improved employee satisfaction

Through its partnership with Launchways, Packback has been able to save time, reduce costs, and begin better educating its employees on their benefits. Launchways has streamlined Packback's HR operations and improved their employee experience. For example, with the new payroll processes Launchways implemented, time spent on bi-weekly payroll was reduced from a day and a half of work to just 30 minutes. Nick mentioned, “This has been my favorite part. I just send a payroll representative a list of changes that we need to make, they kick me back a report, I review it and we're done.”



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As the company continues to grow, Launchways has been able to guide their efforts and ensure that Packback maintains a proactive, forward-looking approach to employee benefits. From the very beginning Launchways took a fresh approach to how Packback structured and contributed toward benefits plans. Through impactful employee surveys and leveraging analytics, Launchways identified the most desirable plans and restructured contributions in a way that increased employee satisfaction, without impacting benefits spend.

As a result of this fresh approach to benefits, Packback has also seen fantastic survey results on employee satisfaction. With Launchways' new approach to employee benefits education, every new hire class that comes on to the team receives in-depth, hands-on benefits education.

A Launchways representative presents to the team about how to enroll and offers hands-on education about the plans Packback offers – a level of employee education and hands-on dedication Packback had never received from any other broker.

Nick said “The most notable outcome for the company has been the improvement to the benefits. It has helped us attract talent and it's helped us retain talent in a way that we wouldn't have been able to do if we had stuck with our old broker.”

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