Swim School Streamlines HR and Cuts Costs with Paylocity

100s
of hours saved per year with simpler user experience

79%
reduction in payroll processing time

5
systems consolidated to one with Paylocity

wolfies SWIM SCHOOL

www.wolfiesswimschool.com

Leisure

60+ employees

2 locations in Houston, Texas

Wolfies Swim School has been developing great swimmers since 2005, when founder Cindy Wolf Meador started offering lessons in the backyard pool of her family home. Since then, Wolfies has pioneered a unique concept among swim schools, running small classes to help people of all ages gain confidence and enjoy the water in a safe, fun, and friendly way.

It's an exciting time for Wolfies. After spending several years building its first aquatics facility in Bellaire, TX, the school is now opening a second location in Houston to bring its swim lessons, summer camps, and one-on-one clinics to even more clients.
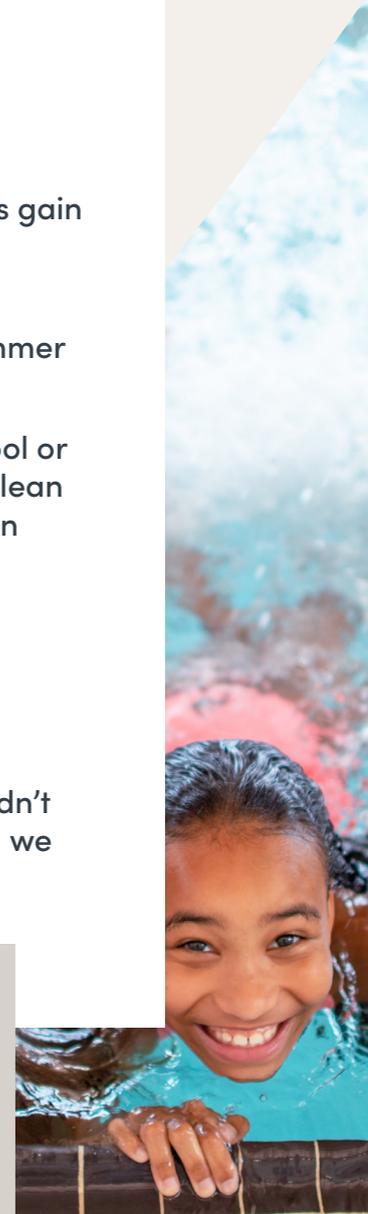
But Wolfies faces challenges, too, especially on the HR front. Many of its instructors are high-school or college students on summer break, and managing their pay and tax status can get complex. The lean HR team at Wolfies wears a lot of different hats: they could be running payroll in the morning, then arranging instructor training or recruiting for the new location by the afternoon.

To manage these tasks, Wolfies originally selected an HR tool from Rippling. But much of the functionality and support promised by the vendor never materialized, leaving the school relying on standalone solutions and manual workarounds. As a result, the HR team was submerged in administrative tasks—until Wolfies grabbed a lifeline in Paylocity.

Amber McQuirter, Director of Operations, explains: "When we started looking for solutions, we didn't think there was a single platform that could cover all our requirements. When we found Paylocity, we were surprised. It had payroll, communications, rewards—everything!"

> **"Paylocity saves our team and employees so much time since everything is integrated into one platform. As we open new locations, it will prevent any headaches for our team and ensure nothing gets overlooked."**
>
> Amber McQuirter, Director of Operations, Wolfies Swim School

Going In At The Deep End

With inefficient systems and processes creating high workloads for HR, Wolfies decided it was time to move to a more advanced, user-friendly, and integrated HCM platform.

Previous Platform Fails to Deliver

With a new location and plans for an expanded workforce, efficient workflows for recruitment, onboarding, and payroll are now essential for Wolfies. However, the company's previous HR platform was falling short in these areas. Costs were high, and support requests went unanswered by the vendor. The platform also offered limited reporting capabilities and no easy way to distinguish between temporary and full-time employees. "We were frustrated about paying so much and not getting everything that we were promised," adds Amber.

Multiple Systems Create Confusion

To compensate for the shortcomings of the main platform, Wolfies implemented four additional systems to cover scheduling, communications, and other tasks. Inevitably, this increased costs and impacted the user experience. "It was confusing updating multiple systems, and we worried about whether we had entered everything correctly. Our employees often didn't know which of the five apps to check for specific information," adds Jacky Medeiros, Assistant Director of Operations.

In many cases, Wolfies reverted to using slow, labor-intensive manual workarounds to get things done. For example, the HR team was recording late employee clock-ins by hand and tracking paid time off (PTO) and holiday pay using Excel spreadsheets.

Building Connections Brings Challenges

Wolfies prides itself on its culture: commitment, quality, integrity, and teamwork are its core values. However, it was difficult to communicate those values to the whole team, as many employees don't have a corporate email account. Although Wolfies was running a recognition and rewards program, this was another manual process. Achievements were tracked on paper by the HR team, and hand-written shoutouts were pinned up in the break room where not everybody would see them.

> "The implementation team from Paylocity was really responsive. Whenever we were in the system and found we couldn't do something, we would reach out and they provided a quick solution."
>
> Amber McQuirter, Director of Operations

Taking The Plunge

After narrowing the decision down to two options, Wolfies selected Paylocity as its new HR and payroll platform due to its ease of use and comprehensive functionality.

Automation Makes Life Simpler For HR

With Paylocity, Wolfies has made improvements across the board. With the Payroll module, Amber has now automated workflows that were once challenging, such as calculating earnings and deductions. She notes: "Once I figured out the codes, Paylocity has been simple to use for payroll." Employees now clock in through the Time and Labor module, with data flowing straight into payroll records.

As Wolfies scales its workforce, the Recruiting and Onboarding modules are proving vital. "We will recruit another 25 people this year, and eventually we will double our employee base," notes Jacky. "Paylocity makes recruitment and onboarding straightforward."

Flexible Tools Elevate the Employee Experience

Employees have a more streamlined experience, too. Team members on hourly contracts use the Scheduling module to swap shifts whenever they need to, while On Demand Payment enables employees to request funds before payday. "In the past, we almost gave up offering pay advances as it created so much extra work," explains Amber. "On Demand Payment in Paylocity helps us track everything and maintain tax compliance. It's very popular with our employees." The school is considering adding the fact that it offers on-demand pay in its job ads to help attract new talent.

Celebrating Great Work Enhances Culture

With the Recognition & Rewards module, Wolfies is building a strong culture based on its core values of teamwork and commitment. Employees are offering shoutouts to one another to acknowledge great work, while the HR team sends cash rewards when people hit work milestones or go the extra mile. And Wolfies uses Community, Paylocity's online collaboration hub, to bring people together with caption competitions and other fun initiatives. Employees also use the Chat function to connect with HR, as Jacky notes: "Community lets us communicate with everyone without setting up emails."

Payroll automates previously complex earnings and deductions calculations.

Time and Labor sends attendance data straight into payroll records.

Recruiting and **Onboarding** help Wolfies scale operations at its second location.

On Demand Payment gives employees flexibility on pay and helps attract talent.

Recognition & Rewards builds strong culture based on teamwork and mutual support.

Community helps employees connect with each other and contact HR with queries.

Learning supports interactive training for swim instructors and front-of-house teams.

It's All Going Swimmingly

By moving to Paylocity, Wolfies has lifted the burden of manual work off the shoulders of its HR team, helping them save time and work more productively.

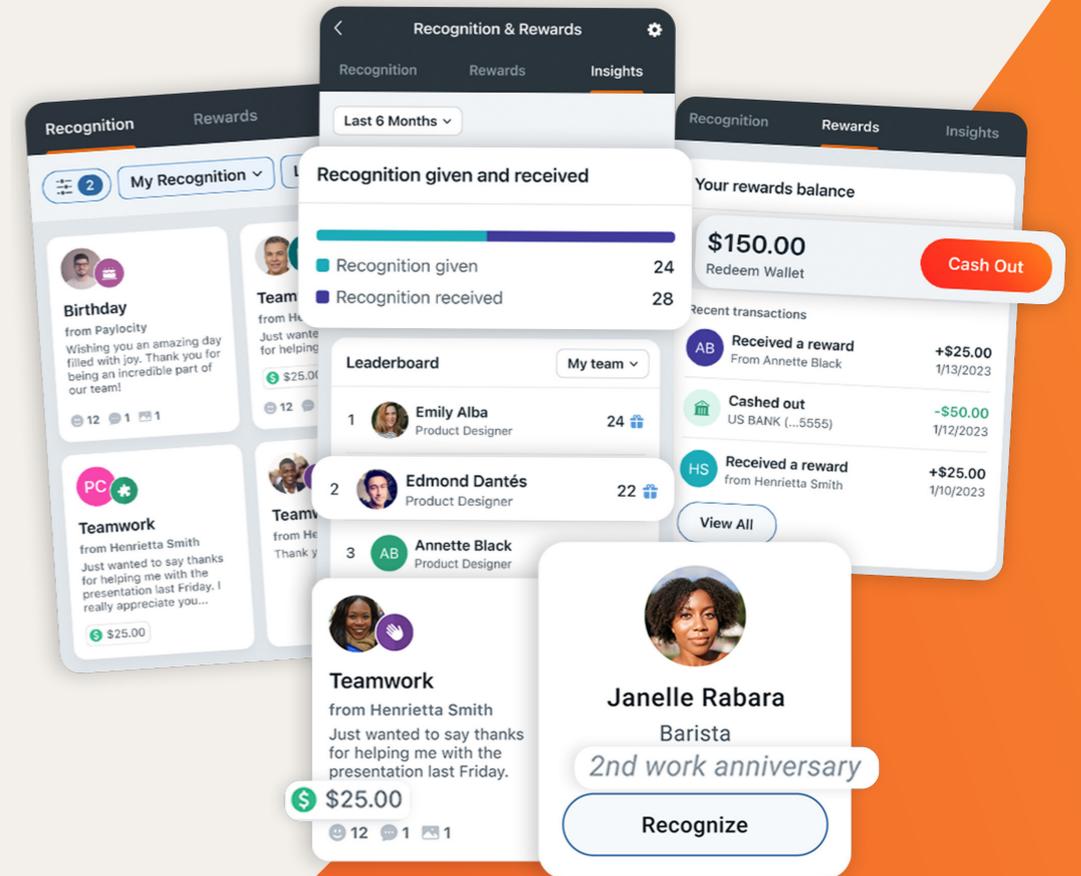## Vendor Consolidation Reduces Costs and Complexity

With Paylocity, Wolfies has replaced five separate HR systems with one integrated platform. The switch has helped to reduce costs, and employees now enjoy a much better experience, with just one login to access all HR resources. "Using Paylocity is definitely helping us save multiple hours a week, simply because we no longer have to bounce between so many different systems for payroll, scheduling, communication, and learning management. And keeping everything up to date is much easier, too, with one central platform," explains Amber.

Streamlined Processes Boost HR Efficiency

The move to Paylocity has also enabled Wolfies to accelerate key processes. For example, where payroll used to take two hours, Amber can now complete everything in 25 minutes—a 79 percent time reduction. The swim school has automated tricky manual tasks, such as managing PTO and holiday pay, and can quickly pull reports on average working hours and overtime using the Insights & Recommendations module. "We have also customized some workflows," adds Jacky. "For seasonal employees, we have created an employment status that is technically terminated but allows us to stay in contact with them in case they want to return the next summer."

Helping More Students Develop Swim Skills

As Wolfies continues to grow, Paylocity will help the team deliver great-quality swim lessons. For example, the platform automatically generates a report that keeps the HR team updated on swim instructors whose lifeguard training certifications are set to expire in the next month and require renewal. Similarly, the swim school is using Paylocity's Learning module to develop interactive training sessions for swim instructors and front-of-house teams—ensuring everyone in the school has a solid knowledge about its all-important goals and core values.

"All of our employees are using the Mobile App, and everyone is loving Paylocity. People are sending shoutouts through Recognition & Rewards, and they are delighted that they no longer have five different apps taking up space on their phones."

Jacky Medeiros, Assistant Director of Operations