

HRD

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“WE’RE REINVENTING HOW WE ARE STRUCTURED AND HOW WE WORK... BP WILL BE A VERY DIFFERENT COMPANY BY 2030”


KERRY DRYBURGH
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT PEOPLE & CULTURE
AND CHIEF PEOPLE OFFICER
BP

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ARTICLE BY TONY MACHIN, CEO - TRUSTID

DIGITAL HAS NO BORDERS

UNDER IMMIGRATION LAW, BUSINESSES ARE OBLIGED TO ENSURE THAT ALL EMPLOYEES HAVE A RIGHT TO WORK IN THE UK. TRADITIONALLY, GUIDELINES HAVE RECOMMENDED THAT EMPLOYERS ASK APPLICANTS TO SHOW PHYSICAL IDENTITY DOCUMENTATION TO PROVE THEIR RIGHT TO WORK (RTW) IDENTITY - AND EMPLOYERS HAVE BUILT THIS INTO THEIR APPLICATION PROCESSES. IT'S LONG-WINDED AND PRONE TO ERROR, SO SURELY A DIGITAL OPTION WOULD STREAMLINE THE PROCESS?

As we adjust to post-Brexit parameters, there are many questions that are posed about how we approach many new processes, one being, should employees have to go through the same process of presenting physical documents every time they change jobs? Or could some sort of RtW identity, based on an original single set of rigorous and trusted document checks, be the future? Is a Digital Right to Work feasible? It's likely that a robust RtW check will always need to be based primarily on physical documents - but that doesn't mean that those documents need to be seen each time an applicant demonstrates their right to work in the UK. The temporary relaxation in Government guidelines - brought in to allow for social distancing measures and the increase in remote recruitment due to COVID-19 - has clearly shown that RtW checks can be carried out safely without in-person checks. Indeed, statistics showed no reduction in the detection of identity fraud during the period of remote recruitment - proving that employees can share their documents remotely, without increased risk of fraud. This is further backed up by evidence from the Home Office's on-line Biometric Residence Permit checking service, which also clearly shows that a digital identity can speed up RtW checks. So, what are the implications of a digital RtW identity

for employers and, of course, the HR teams that have to manage them?

The digital route could provide multiple benefits for your HR team and foremost is convenience. The need to present and check physical documents adds extra complexity and time to an

“DIGITAL RTWS ARE FEASIBLE AND CAN BE CONDUCTED WITHOUT AN INCREASED RISK OF FRAUD. BUT LIKE ANY TRANSFORMATION, THE MOVE TO DIGITAL RTW MUST BE GRADUAL AND INCREMENTAL”

already complex application process. A digital RtW identity could be shared instantly - either remotely, or in person - simplifying the process and making your team more productive. An RtW identity would still need to be based on physical documents, but the advantage is that, once a digital RtW identity is created, it can be used multiple times. If an expiry date was built into it, it could be used for

as long as it was valid, which would dramatically speed up the identity checking process and onboarding new recruits more quickly. Another benefit is security, where once a digital RtW identity is created, the applicant can store it securely on their phone - avoiding the need to send documents by post or store sensitive data in the cloud. Once shared, the employer has a clear, digital record that they have seen proof of RtW identity.

This is not something that can happen overnight. In the first place, there would need to be some sort of agreed governance and Government would need to understand the technology involved and provide guidance for its use. There would also need to be trust between all parties - the applicant, the employer and the Government. That trust would require agreement as to who could create digital RtW identities and what standards they would need to adhere to. However, this could mean a simpler, faster and more robust RtW checking process. But like any process of digital transformation, the move to a digital RtW will - and should be - gradual and incremental. All parties - including employees, HR teams, identity providers and the Government - need to be part of the process.

FOR FURTHER INFO
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