

CERIDIAN

DAVID'S™  
BRIDAL

## David's Bridal finds a match

Employees  
**10,000+**

Industry  
**Retail**

Location  
**U.S., Canada,  
& U.K.**

Solution  
**Dayforce**

**By bringing three countries' payrolls onto a single system, the wedding apparel retailer streamlines operations.**

The David's Bridal offices sit on the banks of the beautiful Schuylkill River, which flows through Philadelphia on its way to the Delaware River and the Atlantic Ocean. In the summer, kayakers and boaters of all stripes take advantage of the urban waterway. One year, the river was also the site of a true test of David's Bridal team spirit.

The test came after the finance department lost the company softball tournament, remembers Debbie Heitz, the company's Director of Disbursements. The players were disappointed, nobody more so than the department's two co-managers. That's because they'd said that if they lost, they'd take a nice long dunk in the river. Though the water was cold, the two managers didn't shy away from the challenge. And they did it in style. He searched and found a wedding dress that could accommodate his tall frame. And she put on a snazzy tux. And in they went. It was a show-stopping moment the team still talks about to this day.



Memorable moments are exactly what many brides strive to achieve on their wedding day. And finding the perfect dress is the first step.

Enter David's Bridal. The Philadelphia-based company is on a mission to make finding the perfect dress a breeze. Their unrelenting focus on meeting the needs of the modern bride has kept them at the top of the booming bridal-wear business.

“The excitement that’s present when a bride comes into the store for an appointment is just amazing.”

Debbie Heitz, Director of Disbursements

One of the ways David's Bridal sets itself apart is selection. Stores carry dresses for every wedding type, style, and budget, from \$150 sheath dresses to \$1,700 beaded designer gowns. When a bride finds that perfect dress, there's no wait: she can take it home right away. The company goes the distance for the bridal party, too, making it a cinch to outfit bridesmaids with different tastes, body types, and zip codes.

With an easy-to-use website and 325 stores in cities big and small, a bride and her bridesmaids can check out options together online, then go to their local store to try on dresses – no fuss, no muss.

“The excitement that’s present when a bride comes into the store for an appointment is just amazing,” says Heitz. “We started [a new tradition] a couple of years ago where when a bride finds her dress and says, ‘This is the one,’ staff ring the bell so everybody in the store can cheer and clap.”

## The highs and lows of international expansion

Heitz joined the accounts payable department at David's Bridal in 2000. The company was founded in 1950, and had grown from being a small Florida-based company to having 100 stores across the country. Heitz immediately took to the dynamic, fast-paced work culture.

“What I like about this company is that it's constantly changing. It's an environment for people who love knowing that they can make a difference in the company that they're working for.”

Growth has continued to be the name of the game at David's Bridal since Heitz joined. Their store count has more than tripled, from 100 in 2000 to 325 today. So has the number of countries they operate in: brides in Canada, the U.K. and, most recently, Mexico, are now able to enjoy the David's Bridal experience. The company's workforce now numbers more than 10,000 employees.



Payroll has always been centralized at the company's head office in Philadelphia. When Heitz took over managing payroll a few years ago, stores in all three countries were using the same time and attendance system, but each country was on a different payroll system. To make matters even more complicated, the distribution center was on a different system, and head office staff were still using paper timesheets and forms.

To prepare payroll, Heitz and her team had to pull all those different files and import them into the corresponding country’s payroll system. Managing all the different processes and systems was hugely time-consuming, and made responding to HR changes or mistakes tough. “I’d tell someone on my team, ‘You know the system, so that’s what you’re going to do for the rest of your life, and please don’t ever be sick or go on vacation for more than a week at a time,’” jokes Heitz.

“What we started looking for was a single system that would allow us to have all three countries on the same platform,” says Heitz. “We wanted HR all in the same system. We wanted time and attendance on the system. And Dayforce was the only place that we could do that. We looked at the software and said, ‘Wow, this is really cool. We can do everything we need to do here.’”



## The stars – and systems – aligned

Heitz and the DB project team implemented Dayforce using a phased process, starting in the U.K. and then moving Canada. Within six months those stores were up and running on HR, time and attendance, scheduling, and payroll.

The second phase of their implementation involved bringing U.S. stores onto Workforce Management, Scheduling, and HR. Again, they took a

phased approach, starting with a pilot group of 10 stores, and moving forward from there. After that they tackled the distribution centers, and corporate office.

It takes 25% less time to commit each payroll than it used to.

“Having all the info in one place has been fantastic for us,” says Heitz. Overnight processing times have been kicked to the curb. And with just one system to master and work in, staff roles can be more fluid. Heitz’s team is now able to reflect HR adjustments much more quickly and easily. Overall, Heitz says it takes 25% less time to commit each payroll than it used to.

Dayforce has created efficiencies at the store level, too. Employees no longer have to come into the store to check a printed schedule. Now they can see schedules and pay, and request time off, using the mobile app. The new system also makes it easier for managers to keep track of staff schedules and attendance, and gives them an audit trail they can use to address time and attendance issues. The project team is now looking at implementing the Onboarding module and shift trade capabilities for retail staff.

### **Putting the relationship to the test**

Another vivid display of team spirit Heitz’s team still talks about is the first real challenge they faced following their Dayforce implementation.

“We process payroll on Mondays and Tuesdays. One Monday, we came in and started processing payroll, and then we started hearing that the forecast for Monday night was for a significant amount of snow,” remembers Heitz.

“It worked perfectly! We were done committing payroll probably the earliest we’ve ever been done. That for me was the biggest plus. What I see is that things continue to get better, and we continue to have efficiencies we never had before.”

Debbie Heitz, Director of Disbursements

She knew some of her staff wouldn’t be able to make it into the office the next day, so she asked her team to bring their laptops home and get online first thing the next morning. She wasn’t sure they could do it, but they were going to try to finish payroll remotely.

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