

Strategic approach to mobility is boosting Santa Fe's value proposition

Solid growth across the Santa Fe Group in Q3 2014 confirms that the strategic business transformation of Santa Fe is being well received by the customers. With the best-ever quarterly result in the company's history Santa Fe is proving the value of its new global approach to employee mobility.



The recent years' strategic changes to Santa Fe's business model have successfully transformed the company from its early beginnings as a traditional moving company to a leading global mobility provider. Since 2010 Santa Fe has grown its revenue from direct customer relationships from 15% to more than 80% and transitioned from a transactional focus on moving services, to a provider of comprehensive global mobility solutions that effectively supports the customers' talent investments and compliance related to global employee mobility. As a provider of the full range of global mobility services, take up of Santa Fe's value-added relocation services has accelerated with a 24% growth recorded in the EMEA region in Q3 2014 alone. The strong results and recognition among the customers have also just secured Santa Fe in EMEA the title "Relocation Management Company of the Year" for the third time in four years.

Creating return on talent investments

Robert Fletcher is Group Relocation Services Director at Santa Fe, and he definitely sees a growing demand for the more holistic and strategic approach to corporate employee mobility.

"Obviously, getting a solution that helps you transfer your employees at a cost-effective price is important to any company. But the physical move is often just a small element in a large, year-long talent investment, where the real strategic performance extends way beyond the cost of a move. We experience that more customers are taking a strategic approach to their mobility programmes, aligning them more closely with the company's corporate strategies, and this requires a new approach to designing and executing these programmes," Robert Fletcher said. He continued:

"The direct relationship with the customers gives us a unique opportunity to analyse their situation and put together a comprehensive solution that fits their strategy, mobility policies and level of ambition. We are structured to act as a direct extension to the company's in-house global mobility function, supporting the entire lifecycle of their mobility programmes and thus adding real value to their business."

Costs and compliance are key to global organisations

John Rason is head of the Santa Fe Group Consulting Services, and he is working closely together with potential and existing customers to help developing the right solutions for their mobility needs. He says:

"Compliance is a critical part of corporate governance in today's global companies, and we advise our customers on the all aspects of managing compliance with all the legal, financial and tax-related issues of international and domestic assignments. Providing the right tools for cost projection and cost optimisation throughout the lifecycle of the assignments is another important element, when we help designing the

right solution for our customers. The total costs related to an employee relocation may well reach 4-6 times the basic gross salary, so clearly the company will have a strong interest in making the most of this investment – and we help by developing a comprehensive solution that takes all these aspects into consideration.”

Global contract prepares for the future

A recent example of a new customer, who Santa Fe helped provide a new solution for their global mobility needs is Etex, a Belgian-based industrial group producing and selling building materials. With 17,500 employees working on 120 production sites in 45 countries, global employee mobility has become an increasingly important factor in their corporate HR strategy.

Erik Mathys is Compensation & Benefits, International Mobility and Executive Pay Manager with Etex, and he joined the company just over a year ago with a clear task to prepare the company’s mobility programme for the future.

“Etex has been growing fast for the past decade, and we had reached a size and complexity, where we needed a more strategic and centralised approach to our global mobility operations. We had come from a very decentralised organisation with our individual business segments handling everything each in their own way, and with limited corporate visibility of the scale of the expat organisation and the total costs and investments related to it. So my first job was to try to achieve the corporate overview”, says Erik Mathys.

One mobility manager and 100+ assignees

“I quickly realised that it was quite a challenging job I had on my hands. With more than 100 expats throughout the organisation, very diverse salary and benefits packages and no clear overview of our compliance with visa and work permits, social security, taxes etc., my one-man army seemed rather small. So we started discussions with Santa Fe and over the coming months we had a really valuable process where they guided us through all the important aspects of a corporate mobility programme. The Santa Fe team really knew what they were talking about, and they managed to develop a solution taking into account all our specific needs and concerns, making it totally custom-made”.

“For me personally, it is a great comfort to know, that today I have a dedicated global mobility team in place with my closest colleagues sitting at the Santa Fe office in London”

Erik Mathys, Compensation & Benefits, International Mobility and Executive Pay Manager with Etex





The entire infrastructure and systems for the contract are currently being prepared and will be fully operational by 1 January 2015.

John Rason concludes: “It is a great pleasure to be able to work closely together with our customers, helping them find the right solution and being able to support them in their efforts to create the maximum return on their talent investment. And I dare to claim that our approach and the capabilities we offer are quite unique in our industry.”

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