

● Travel Center Chain Chooses Univers for the Long Haul

Client

TravelCenters of America (TA), a national chain of full-service travel plazas, with about 17,000 employees and 200 locations

Challenge

To continuously improve benefits education and enrollment for a widespread employee base, as well as integrate current and future acquisitions into the TA benefit plans

Solution

An ever-evolving solution since 2001, including: comprehensive benefits brochures; one-to-one enrollments via the Univers call center; mandatory enrollment for newly acquired employees; periodic enrollments for managers and new hires

Results

- Smooth transition of acquired employees to TA's benefits program
- Access to a benefits counselor for Q&A and enrollment for all employees
- Enrollment data can be transferred to PeopleSoft and carriers within 48 hours
- Enrollment fees completely offset by voluntary benefit plan participation



Seeking Benefits Education for Employees, Easy Administration for HR

Back in 2001, the human resources team at TravelCenters of America (TA) wanted to achieve two important goals: improve communication of benefits information to employees at over a hundred locations, and reduce the administrative burden of a manual, paper-based enrollment process. According to Lisa Pintar, HR manager for TA, "We were doing massive manual inputting every quarter, and since we were continuing to grow, we figured there's got to be a better way. We also didn't think we were doing a good enough job communicating benefits, since we didn't have someone at each site with the knowledge to answer employee questions."

TA's consultant, Dickenson Group, recommended partnering with Univers Workplace Benefits to address these challenges by providing an education-focused, paperless enrollment solution. After working with TA to perfect their enrollment solution over the past seven years, Univers was fully prepared when TA acquired Petro Stopping Centers in 2007, with an additional 69 locations and 3,000 employees to be enrolled for 2008.

Univers Enrollment Call Center Provides Complete, Year-Round Solution

Since 2001, TA and Univers have utilized many different enrollment methods — face-to-face onsite, call center, and combinations of both — while also considering Web-based options. Today, TA chooses to conduct all enrollments through Univers' bilingual call center, which has proven to be the most efficient and appropriate method for the company.

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— Lisa Pintar
HR Manager
TravelCenters of America

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Pintar explained, "We have employees who don't speak English and don't use computers, so we'll always have a need for the call center. It's important that employees understand their hidden paycheck, how much they're paying and what they're getting. We like that employees can talk to a real person instead of just filling out a form."

The following Univers services are part of TA's enrollment solution for 2007/2008:

- Open enrollment via the call center, with each location assigned specific days to call in, creating a sense of urgency for employees
- Mandatory enrollment for the acquired Petro employees (communicated that they must actively call in to enroll or benefits would be terminated)
- Easy-to-read, comprehensive benefits brochure, with an additional version adapted to include special exceptions for former Petro employees
- Monthly call center enrollment for newly-eligible managers year-round
- Quarterly call center enrollment for approximately 2000 new hires
- Voluntary insurance including buy-up STD, term life, critical illness and more
- Data uploads to TA's PeopleSoft system and insurance carriers

Regarding Univers' paperless process and data transfers, Pintar commented, "Other than testing and loading the data, there's no manual work or paperwork to be done ... we're pretty much fully automated with our benefits enrollment. It's a smooth process, we've been doing it for many years, and it's very successful."

Everyone Benefits from Long-Term Partnership with Univers

In addition to successfully enrolling the acquired Petro employees for 2008, the ongoing relationship with Univers continues to meet the overall needs of TA's employees, HR team and company alike. Employees get access to a knowledgeable benefits counselor for one-to-one discussion and decision-making support. The HR team enjoys ease of administration, communications and data management. And the company improves both its recruitment efforts and bottom-line cost savings by procuring quality voluntary plans through the Dickenson Group and Univers.

"With the voluntary plans we have a more robust benefit offering, which adds to the recruitment picture for potential employees," said Pintar. "The voluntary plans have also provided us with the opportunity to offset the fees for Univers' enrollment services for this many years, which is a big win for our company."

Regarding the future with Univers, Pintar said, "Univers has honed their processes, we've honed our processes, and we've got it working very well. They've got our business."

To learn more about Univers Workplace Benefits:

- Send an e-mail to casestudy@universworkplace.com
- Visit us on the Web at www.universworkplace.com

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