

Energy Leader Partners with Empyrean for Fully Automated Benefits Administration



After years of managing a broad collection of legacy retirement plans and a completely insourced benefits function, Peabody Energy committed to automating its benefits administration activities. Empyrean stepped in to streamline the company's benefits workflows and open enrollment processes, delivering both improved efficiency and elevated employee support.

CHALLENGES

Peabody's insourced benefits administration model relied heavily on individual members of the benefits team to conduct paper-based open enrollment and employee benefits administration support. However, the complexities of Peabody's many retirement plans, coupled with variable plan options and rates for union and non-union employees, created numerous inefficiencies.

With an almost equal number of active employees and retirees, Peabody needed a benefits administration solution that could efficiently serve the needs of both populations. In addition, the benefits team recognized that automation would create significant time savings and lead to better benefits plan management for employees and retirees. Though it was clear modernization was necessary, Peabody needed a partner who could understand the complexities of its business and deliver flexible benefits solutions to meet its needs.

EMPYREAN'S SOLUTION

To achieve full automation of Peabody's benefits processes, the Empyrean implementation team embarked upon a detailed process of creating a system of rules and exceptions for each benefits plan, many of which were grandfathered retiree and union benefit plans. The team incorporated the deep institutional knowledge of Peabody's benefits team members, and crafted a solution that automated Peabody's health and wellness plan administration, open enrollment, and the coordination of 18 carriers and vendors.

Trust and collaboration were at the heart of the implementation process. Peabody's highly knowledgeable team knew the ins and outs of all company benefits—including decades-old retiree plans—and the Empyrean team worked with them to capture the nuances of each plan, thereby enabling a positive online experience for employees and the Peabody benefits team.

A completely automated open enrollment process supported by Empyrean's dedicated call center provided Peabody's employee and retiree populations with the optimal combination of online functionality and personalized attention. Peabody also relied on the Empyrean team to implement and communicate life insurance and medical plan changes to retirees, which required both empathy and accuracy in explaining the changes.

BACKGROUND

NAME:
Peabody Energy, Inc.

INDUSTRY:
Energy/Mining

U.S. HEADQUARTERS:
St. Louis, Missouri

COMPLEXITY LEVEL:

LIVES: 10,000

Empyrean Client
Since 2019

Leading global coal supplier, serving power and steel customers in more than 25 countries on six continents.

TECH + SRVC

RESULTS

After the shift from insourced benefits management to a fully automated benefits administration solution, Peabody achieved greater transparency and consistency in plan rules and documentation. The benefits team managed exceptions with greater efficiency, improved data accuracy, and updated their benefits policies to match new, streamlined processes. The Peabody team also saved time. With Empyrean's digital enrollment solution, the open enrollment process lasted weeks rather than months.



LOOKING AHEAD: IDENTIFYING NEW BENEFITS OPPORTUNITIES

The Empyrean team continues to partner with Peabody to explore benefit options to support its workforce across the U.S. As the company identifies new voluntary benefits to support the employee experience, Empyrean offers expert advice and guidance for implementing new plans and incorporating additional vendors into Peabody's network of benefits.

CLIENT KUDOS

"[The implementation team] was fabulous. They went above and beyond, including spending extra days at our office, to make sure everything was done before go-live."

–Julie Nadolny
VP, TOTAL REWARDS

The Empyrean team was incredibly collaborative (and fun!). The team was accessible and responsive literally at all times. Our team definitely felt like we were part of the process. In fact, we view the Empyrean team as extended members of the Peabody team. The project was managed very well and the team was very efficient. Together, we were a solid operating team!

–Julie Nadolny
VICE PRESIDENT, TOTAL REWARDS

One word... phenomenal best describes the Empyrean team. Everyone knew this was going to be a difficult implementation, with a short timeline, competing projects, limited personnel, and lots of curve balls, etc... But when we encountered a situation, we worked together. You had our "trust" day-one.

– Sandy Powers
MANAGER, BENEFITS COMMUNICATION & WELLNESS

We are very pleased with Empyrean and we have the best team!... Empyrean always does what it takes to meet our needs.

– Julie Nadolny
VP, TOTAL REWARDS