

### The Customer

Ash Grove Cement

### Industry

Manufacturing

### Number of Employees

1,900

### Key Benefits

- \* Enhanced strategic HR and managerial functionality
- \* Improved employee communications
- \* Streamlined approval processes for requests and modifications made by both managers and employees

“One of our goals with UltiPro® was to make our field HR staff stronger by giving them more responsibility and accountability over their own employees. With so many locations and separate entities, Ash Grove has found that it makes business sense to let them handle as many of their own HR tasks as possible using UltiPro.”

**Jim Weaver**  
HRIS Systems Manager  
Ash Grove Cement



## Company Profile:

Headquartered in Overland Park, Kansas, with a tradition that reaches back more than 125 years, Ash Grove Cement is the sixth largest cement manufacturer in the U.S. The quality cements produced at these plants are used in the construction of highways, bridges, commercial and industrial complexes, single- and multi-family homes, and a myriad of other structures. The company represents 14 corporate entities and employs a workforce of more than 1,900 in 24 states. Although Ash Grove's operations are managed in its Kansas office, each of its satellite offices has employees with HR responsibilities.

## The Challenges:

Before switching to UltiPro in 2002, Ash Grove Cement had been using a “homegrown” solution on an AS400 platform. After completing an extensive investigation and speaking with numerous happy UltiPro users, Ash Grove selected UltiPro to help reduce manual efforts and streamline its HR/payroll processes.

## The Solution:

After an on-time, on-budget implementation with UltiPro, Ash Grove reduced the day-to-day workload of its central HR team with the solution's manager self-service.

Remote administrative staff in Ash Grove's subsidiaries can log onto the manager portal to input new hires, process terminations, attach employee photos to the company directory, and generate payroll or workforce reports—without calls, e-mails, or faxes to company headquarters. The company's HR staff now has time to accomplish other more value-added activities, like improving the salary review process.

To enable its HR team to become more strategic and more productive, Ash Grove decided to make the UltiPro portal its focal point for all employee-related information. Since centralizing workforce information with the portal, Ash Grove has dramatically improved communication, heightened efficiencies, and reduced the quantity of paper that is channeled throughout the company.

The manufacturer extended the value of the portal by tying in numerous custom applications, like expense reporting and manufacturing-specific scheduling systems, that employees can access with a single sign-on. These solutions easily integrate with UltiPro, automatically transmitting data back and forth without any manual data entry or export processes.

With UltiPro's workflow, Ash Grove's employees use the portal for more than simply viewing individual payroll, HR, and benefits information. They can update data, such as addresses and direct deposit information, as well as submit requests for paid time-off.

Workflow automatically routes these requests to the appropriate approvers, streamlining the process. Designated approvers then accept, deny, or let the request remain pending, attaching comments or questions if needed. Workflow ensures that no changes take effect without electronic approvals by the right people.

Managers use UltiPro's workflow to handle requests for salary upgrades or changes to job status, and then send these modifications to the appropriate managers or HR staff for review and approval while simultaneously notifying other people who might be affected. These notifications ensure that everyone who needs to be in the loop stays informed.

"Companies that use paper forms sometimes find that the right hand doesn't know what the left hand is doing. For instance, a job change form can be stuck in someone's in-box, so accounting may think an employee is clerical while HR has him or her classified as a manager," said Jim Weaver, HRIS manager for Ash Grove.

"The workflow in UltiPro has solved this problem for us. Now everyone touched by the change remains informed because they are included in workflow notifications."