

Boden

ORION CASE STUDY

Boden



ORION
Transforming HR

“We are a fast-moving business with an ambitious people agenda – we needed help to cut through the complexity and select a technology solution that was the equal of our ambition – Orion were the partner who helped us to do that”

Karen Rooney, HRD

The Boden story

Boden is a great British success story and one of the country's best loved and most successful clothing brands. From modest beginnings in 1991 when Jonnie Boden launched the company with only eight products, it has grown to become an international business with an annual turnover in excess of £350m.

"We need creatives, buyers and merchandisers with digital skills more than ever before. And yet we are fishing in an increasingly small pool. We need to respond much faster to deliver the right skills and capabilities"

Paul O'Leary, CFO

Now as the business heads towards its 30th birthday, it is engaged in a five-year plan to become a \$1bn company by 2023 which will include significant expansion in the US markets, streamlining fulfilment operations and doubling the current number of employees.

"Our agenda is all about growth and expansion – in terms of territories, channels and people. We need to put the Boden vision at the centre of our people strategy and that means we need the systems that have the right cultural fit"

Karen Rooney, HRD

The problem

Such rapid growth inevitably comes at a price. When Karen Rooney took over as HRD in 2018 she recognised that legacy systems were acting as a brake on their strategic ambitions. The current people systems had been in place for over ten years, they were old, clunky and inflexible. Basic operations like payroll were at risk, compliance was poor and there were limited tools to support an ambitious talent strategy.

“Our payroll was run on paper with no audit trail, no joined up process and a single point of failure for everything. We needed to do the basics better before we could move forward”

Steph Videlo, FD

Karen and her team recognised the urgent need to replace HR and payroll systems and were committed to managing the change themselves – but with a crowded people agenda to manage and limited knowledge of the HR technology market, the HR team felt they needed some help with the task. Late in 2018, Boden took the decision to work with Orion Partners, to cut through the mystique surrounding the technology market and identify the best solution to take them forward for the next ten years.

How Orion helped

Orion started by working with the HR team and others in the business to establish what Boden needed to meet current and future needs in core HR, payroll, talent and workforce management. Armed with this knowledge, Orion led a comprehensive review of the market, quickly ruling out suppliers who could not offer the required functionality, who lacked critical integration between core systems or who showed a lack of investment in the future roadmap.

At the same time, Orion helped the team to prepare a comprehensive business case that allowed Boden to model the costs and relative benefits of each solution. With a multitude of complex costing options on offer, Orion's approach helped Boden to establish a clear and honest assessment of the true financial and strategic benefits of each solution.

“Orion allowed us to stay in control of the process but they stripped away the complexity and made the issues clear – they kept us honest and made sure we could justify and stand by our decisions”

Karen Rooney, HRD

The results

The final evaluation considered two very different solutions, each with their own merits. However, the detail of the business case and the unique insight that Orion was able to offer allowed the team to make the case for Workday as the solution that would best meet their strategic needs.

“The analysis was comprehensive and we could clearly see the additional capability that Workday offered us.”

Jill Easterbrook, CEO

If you would like to know more about how Orion can help you to cut through the complexities of the technology market and select a solution that will deliver what the business really needs, contact us on partners@orion-partners.com.