

Automotive Company Drives Employee Retention and Engagement Forward



www.gurleyleep.com

Automotive

1,200+ employees

22 locations across Indiana, Michigan, Iowa, Illinois, Missouri

Switched from UKG

Gurley Leep is an automotive sales and service franchise with humble beginnings in Indiana. With Mike Leep Jr. in the driver's seat as President and CEO, Gurley Leep continues its legacy as a family-owned and operated business and prioritizes the top-tier customer service that led to its success. After half a century in business, Gurley Leep has expanded to 22 dealership locations across five states, with more than 1,200 employees.

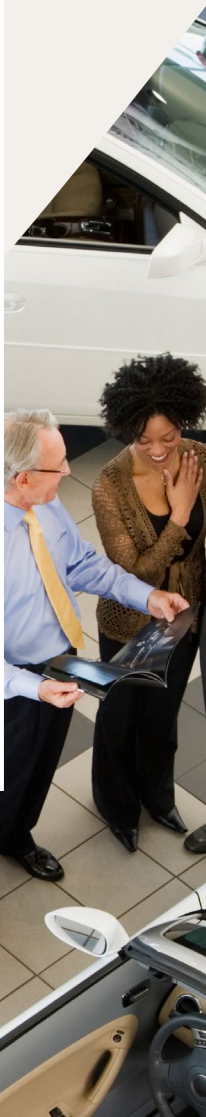
High turnover rates and greater demand for skilled trades makes life difficult for HR leaders in the auto industry. Gurley Leep's previous HR and payroll solution, UKG, met basic needs but couldn't scale with the company. In addition, the user interface was far from friendly, doing little to encourage company-wide adoption.

Plus, data analytics shortcomings made it challenging to gain a holistic view of the company's employees. As Bobbi Imel, Director of Human Resources, describes, "I needed a Ph.D. to run UKG's reports." Company-wide communication channels were disconnected, with some locations using external social media pages to connect. Bobbi and her team wanted to simplify communication from the corporate level and by location.

Gurley Leep needed an HCM platform that streamlined and automated processes, supported efforts to recruit and retain talent, and gave HR the opportunity to focus on building culture and connection. Gurley Leep's decision to shift to Paylocity helped unlock efficiencies and productivity across the business.

"Our employees embrace Community as the go-to source for communication. Each location has 30 to 50 people. They forge tight-knit groups and leverage Community for their locations, and we use it to reach all locations for company-wide communication."

Bobbi Imel, Director of Human Resources



The Challenge

UKG's Clunky System Blocks Employee Engagement

When COVID-19 hit, Gurley Leep successfully shifted recruiting back into managers' hands, but leadership struggled to keep employees engaged once onboarded.

Inefficient Onboarding Impacts 90-Day Retention Rates

The automotive industry is known for its high turnover and fierce competition for talent. Gurley Leep can have 50-60 positions open across locations at any given time, and three dedicated HR team members onboard new hires daily. However, if the recruiting and onboarding experience isn't seamless, new talent may not stick around.

Bobbi explains, "We do move people through the system very quickly because we don't want to lose them. So you are trying to keep their interest, even after they've given notice at their previous position, and making sure they don't back out or opt for a counteroffer."

Before Paylocity, a dedicated employee handled all the recruiting through UKG, but it reduced visibility for HR, managers, and new hires. Gurley Leep needed a solution that ensured all parties stayed informed during the recruiting and onboarding process.

Communication and Culture Breakdowns Impact the Employee Experience

Gurley Leep's locations stretch across the Midwest, so quick, effective, and engaging communication is imperative. Unfortunately, pre-Paylocity, company-wide communication fell to mass emails and private Facebook groups that left out employees who didn't have social media.

Without a centralized hub for communication and documentation, employees inundated HR with emails asking, "Can you send me this document?" Because their team was always on-the-go, they needed a flexible solution that didn't require computer access, and UKG fell short. UKG's mobile app had limited functionality, so employees faced limitations accessing important documents like W-2s.

Moreover, it wasn't easy for employees to share their thoughts about their experience, denying Gurley Leep the crucial feedback it needed to improve recruitment and retention efforts. Bobbi shares, "Our marketing people helped put together surveys, but there was no consistency." Gurley Leep needed a system that could gather employee feedback in one place, automate surveys during employee milestones, and standardize surveys for ease of use.

"I found UKG so cumbersome and hard to maneuver; it wasn't intuitive. I couldn't write a report to save my life, which was disappointing because I had previous experience with Paylocity where I could just slide and click and move things around to write a report easily."

Bobbi Imel, Director of Human Resources



The Solution

A Modern HCM System Transforms the Employee Experience From Disconnected to Responsive

Paylocity was just what Gurley Leep needed to upgrade its employee experience.

Recruiting and Onboarding Integrate Employees in Record Time

In Paylocity, Gurley Leep found an [onboarding solution](#) that made it easy for the onboarding specialists to verify a new hire is ready to start, including double-checking all documents and squaring away the new hire's payment details. Bobbi explains, "We want to make it easy for that candidate so that they don't have to worry. We don't miss a check and they don't have to wait two weeks to get paid. Those first few days are incredibly important to get things right."

She adds, "People want to feel needed, accepted, and eased into an employment experience versus just thrown into it." She includes welcome videos from key leaders, adds employees to team groups on Community, and new employees spend their first day meeting colleagues and learning about their role instead of doing paperwork.

Community Centralizes Communication

Each dealership or service location is a community unto itself, but Gurley Leep needed a way to unify all employees. So it turned to Paylocity's Community platform, a [social collaboration hub](#) with mobile capabilities, to connect employees with the technology they keep at their fingertips. Now Gurley Leep builds its culture across state lines. Employees can put faces to names, reducing the digital divide. Bobbi adds, "Our location in Des Moines does a food truck almost every Friday. So they post updates for everyone to see."

Gurley Leep has harnessed the power of "Ask the HR Expert" Groups to provide employees with a confidential way to ask questions and build trust with HR. These groups are easy to set up, and employees can pose questions to designated group experts who can answer from an intuitive dashboard.

Paylocity Surveys Tool Empowers Employees

Bobbi and her team use [employee surveys](#) to start and keep the dialogue open with the workforce. Not only do new hires receive surveys one week into their tenure at Gurley Leep and periodically during the onboarding process—one month, two months, etc.—but established employees have additional opportunities to have their voices heard.

Surveys have become a go-to way for Gurley Leep to show employees that key decision-makers care about the issues that impact the people who keep their company functioning well.



Onboarding helps new hires feel connected from the start.



Data Insights simplifies reporting and helps leaders make informed decisions.



Self-Service Portal & Mobile App empowers employees and reduces administrative burden.



Community connects employees across 22 locations.



Premium Video engages employees with more dynamic messages.



The Results

Employee Engagement Accelerates with an HCM Upgrade

Gurley Leep prioritizes people, but it didn't always have the technology to support its people-first approach. Now it does.

Automation Activates Onboarding for 300 Employees Per Year

Paylocity's recruiting and onboarding modules perfectly fit Gurley Leep's people management goals. In one day alone, Bobbi can see six or more candidates proceed through the hiring process—interview, background check, one click-to-hire—into onboarding. Every step is automated, and employees can complete the entire process digitally. That way, onboarding can happen daily instead of needing to be scheduled in advance.

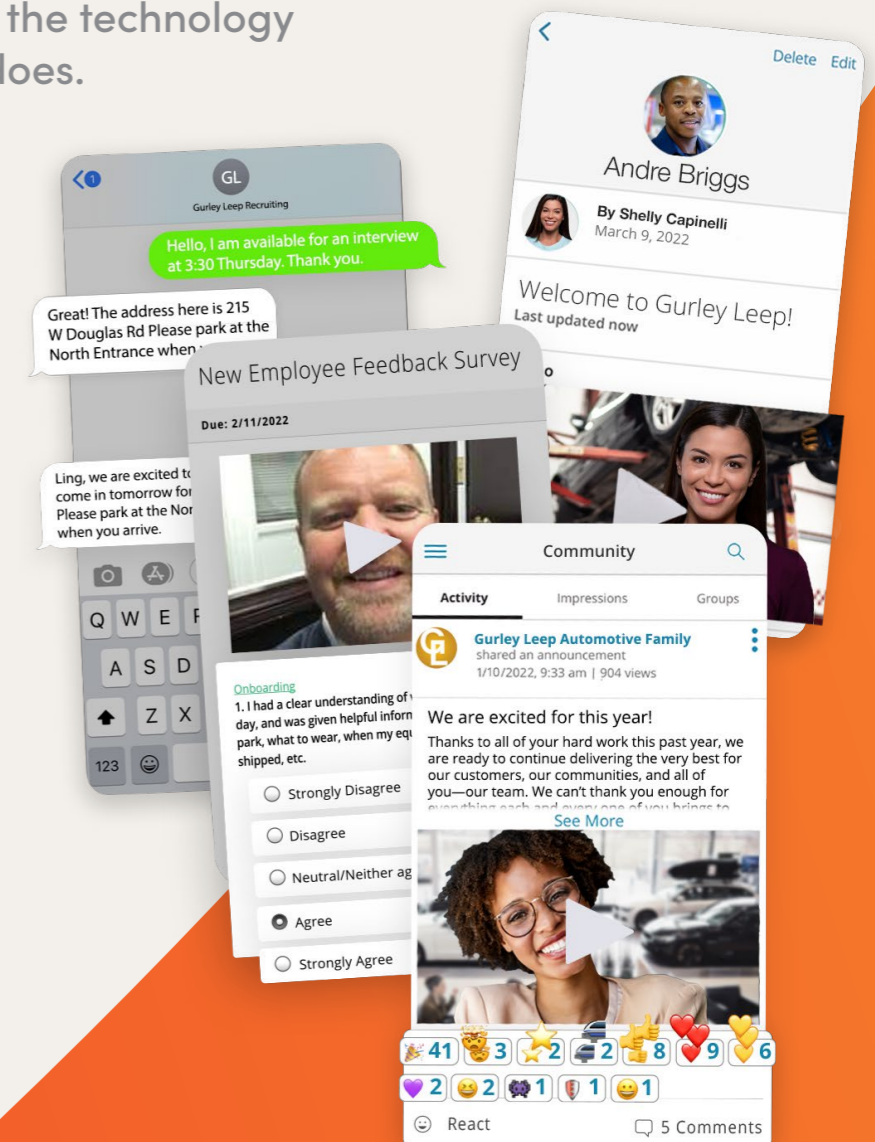
Mobile App Energizes Gurley Leep Employees

In switching to Paylocity, Bobbi and her team noticed the difference in employee engagement immediately. She explains, "When we first switched to Paylocity, our employees said the mobile app is way more intuitive than what we had with UKG." Bobbi adds, "We push everyone to Paylocity's [mobile app](#) for just about everything," including time tracking. Bobbi notes, "The [self-service portal](#) is so much easier than what employees had before because the documents were hard to find. Now all the benefits documents are in one place. Plus, you can pull them all up on your phone."

Surveys Yield Over 70% Response Rate

Integrating a simplified and consistent survey process increased employee participation to more than 70%. Bobbi shares, "We had used pulse surveys to gather employee feedback. So now we're working on updating our fringe benefits. And our CEO is working on a video to share those updates." CEO Mike Leep Jr. embraces asynchronous video communication and leverages the embedded video functionality in Community. Mike says, "When our leadership team posts on Community, the reactions and responses from employees go up exponentially. But what I like most is the honest feedback and truly authentic interaction. I'm not sure we'd ever get that level of employee participation from a typical All-Hands or companywide email."

With Paylocity, Gurley Leep has the tools it needs to stay competitive in a fast-paced industry plus a people-first HCM platform that makes it easy for employees to put their energy into customer service.



"Two-way communication is what drives business results and given how easy it is to post an executive video or respond with an emoji, it's something I can do that pays big dividends."

Mike Leep Jr., President & CEO

