

# UKG

## Bonnell Aluminum: Strategies for Being an Employer of Choice



**In the increasingly competitive labor market, in which attracting and retaining employees can be challenging, Bonnell Aluminum wanted to be an employer of choice.**

Headquartered in Newnan, Georgia, the company is one of North America's leading manufacturers of aluminum extrusions. At its manufacturing operations in Tennessee, Michigan, Indiana, Utah, and Georgia, Bonnell Aluminum's 1,800 employees extrude an extensive range of automotive, building, construction, and specialty products.

Effectively managing this number of employees across multiple locations was difficult using a patchwork of disparate software solutions and paper-based workforce management processes. Incorrect time meant paychecks needed to be corrected. Paper time-off request forms didn't provide transparency and accountability. Ensuring compliance with bargaining unit agreements and state and federal labor laws was time-consuming and challenging. Employees, managers, and HR staff felt the strain.

**"As millennials are coming into the workforce and baby boomers are leaving, it's more important than ever for us to really focus on and ensure we keep the employees we have."**

**Kimberly Womack**  
HR Director, Bonnell Aluminum

## Challenges of Manufacturing and a Changing Workforce

The manufacturing industry is facing multiple workforce challenges: a shortage of skilled labor, a multigenerational workforce with different needs and expectations, and a perception that the industry is an unappealing career choice. Despite negative perceptions, manufacturing can offer satisfying, long-term employment that provides excellent pay.

Nowadays, employees are less likely to spend their entire careers with a single company or in one career field. They want a range of opportunities, variety in their work, and work-life balance. In a strong economy, they might have their pick of jobs, creating a shortage of qualified employees as organizations scramble to fill open positions.



**We have a lot of employees who make a decent living to start. We help to train them and work with colleges and trade schools to explore opportunities.**



**Kimberly Womack**  
HR Director, Bonnell Aluminum

## Competing for Employees

Employers looking to retain their employees need to consider new ways to attract and retain talent. Using technology can be an important tool in this process. Many workers expect to have access to technology that will make their jobs easier and allow them to be more productive. They also expect it will provide the same consumer-friendly experience they enjoy with technology used outside of work.



**Bonnell is constantly competing to retain talent, draw that talent, keep that talent motivated and engaged, and ensure that talent has opportunities.**



**Kimberly Womack**  
HR Director, Bonnell Aluminum

## Advantages of Being an Employer of Choice

Keeping employees happy and engaged is about more than just the employees. It's also a solid business strategy. Creating an engaging work environment supports employee retention and avoids the ongoing costs and disruption of continually hiring and training new employees. Being an employer of choice means applicants are eager to work for the organization and are more apt to stay longer. Employees want to feel fulfilled, be respected, have great colleagues, and be paid appropriately. Being an employer of choice can provide tremendous benefits to an organization: Happy employees are less likely to call in sick and are more apt to be productive and dedicated to an organization.

# Strategies for becoming an employer of choice

Bonnell Aluminum outlined seven key areas that would guide the organization in being an attractive place to work.

- 1 Hire the best of the best**

An employer of choice should receive scores of unsolicited résumés, see more qualified applicants, and ultimately, hire more qualified employees. Onboarding should be viewed as a continuation of the recruitment process. A streamlined onboarding process can get employees up to speed and working faster, and a strategic, consistent onboarding process can provide an organization with higher rates of employee engagement, performance, and retention.
- 2 Reduce turnover and recruiting expenses**

Employee loyalty yields not only stronger interpersonal relationships but also can reduce the hiring costs associated with staff turnover. Recruiting is easier for companies that are viewed as employers of choice. Just like retaining a current customer is more advantageous than finding a new one, retaining employees is more advantageous — and cost-effective — than constantly searching for replacements.
- 3 Create a strong, unified team**

Individual employee satisfaction plays a significant role in creating a unified, content team that works efficiently together toward a common goal. Employees who feel a sense of purpose and value are more apt to feel part of their workplace “family.”
- 4 Design a workplace where people want to work**

Create an enjoyable work environment that employees want to be part of daily and over the long term. This includes offering flexible work schedules to accommodate family needs, opportunities for personal growth, an atmosphere that fosters friendships with coworkers, and job security.
- 5 Offer career opportunities**

Construct a clear path to promotions while offering regular training opportunities and employee mentoring programs. Provide open communication that enables employees to articulate where they see themselves in the next five years, and support development plans that help them achieve their goals.
- 6 Be social**

A social media presence is a necessity. Ensure that your organization can be easily found online and your social media profiles are up to date. Many potential applicants get their first impressions of an organization from its page on Twitter or Facebook, and comments on company rating sites like Glassdoor are invaluable to job seekers.
- 7 Provide valuable, meaningful work**

Most workers want to be stimulated, challenged, and inspired by their work. Are positions challenging but not difficult and straightforward but not easy? Do they ask too much or too little of employees? Finding the right balance can be critical to having engaged, satisfied employees.

## **Bonnell Aluminum determined that utilizing a unified human capital management (HCM) solution would be the best means for implementing its strategies for being an employer of choice.**

From the company's perspective, this solution would help Bonnell Aluminum:

- Focus on attracting, hiring, training, managing, and retaining employees who can contribute effectively to the organization's processes
- Direct, invest in, and develop the company's workforce
- Upgrade the skills of employees, and help them be the best they can be
- Adapt workplace strategies — including flexible and remote work arrangements and nontraditional career paths — to prepare for demographic shifts
- Implement a change management strategy that enables adoption of automation and digital solutions that help overcome poor communication and organizational silos
- Create an agile workforce by responding to on-demand talent needs and securing the specific skills required to remain competitive in a fast-paced, rapidly changing digital world
- Make recruiting and learning a top priority by implementing nontraditional recruitment strategies to uncover new talent, including experiential, retraining, and cross-training programs; mentoring; e-learning; and college tuition assistance

**With fewer forms to complete and more efficient oversight [with UKG Ready™], managers can spend more time on the floor and building the company. I need leadership to work on the business, not in the business.**

**Kimberly Womack**  
HR Director, Bonnell Aluminum





# UKG HCM Solution Supports Bonnell Aluminum's Employer-of-Choice Strategy

Attracting and retaining top-quality talent today can depend on the employee experience an organization creates. A UKG HCM solution provides HR with tools to confidently manage the modern workforce, so organizations can build trust, increase transparency, deliver real-time feedback, and give employees an optimal experience from their first day to their last.

Prior to implementing its UKG HCM solution, Bonnell Aluminum used separate systems for applicant tracking, onboarding, benefits administration, scheduling and shift planning, and performance management. Multiple systems added to HR staff time in overseeing applicants and new hires, created a time-consuming and disjointed experience for new employees, and delivered a less-than-optimal work experience.

Centralizing its human capital management in a single, unified UKG solution has enabled Bonnell Aluminum to effectively work toward its goal of becoming a respected organization where people enjoy working.

## Bonnell Aluminum's UKG Footprint

UKG Ready Time and UKG Ready HR

- Applicant tracking
- Onboarding
- Benefits management
- Schedule and shift planning
- Performance management



Steps like using UKG as an HRIS is important to becoming the employer of choice in my area.



**Kimberly Womack**  
HR Director, Bonnell Aluminum



# How Bonnell Aluminum Is Using Its HCM Solution to Be an Employer of Choice

Utilizing the wide-ranging tools in its UKG HCM solution, Bonnell Aluminum is:



## Attracting and recruiting new hires

Using digital tools, Bonnell Aluminum can source qualified candidates for open positions. Applicants can easily apply for positions online in the UKG HCM solution on Bonnell Aluminum's website, enjoying a modern digital experience that mirrors their use of technology in other areas of their lives. This positive applicant experience reinforces the company's brand as contemporary and forward-thinking.



**To keep employees, technology is vital, not just at the location and at the job — and ensuring technology is being utilized — but away from the job too.**



**Kimberly Womack**  
HR Director, Bonnell Aluminum



## Streamlining hiring and onboarding

Bonnell Aluminum HR staff and hiring managers can actively track and evaluate applicants, and plant managers can see where applicants are in the process. With applicants' information already in the HCM solution, the data transfer from the application process to onboarding is seamless, enabling new hires to easily complete their onboarding checklist and be on the job — and productive — faster.



## Supporting development of employee skills

Employees' skills and certifications are tracked in the solution, enabling HR staff and managers to monitor when certifications need updating. HCM solutions enable organizations to auto-assign classes to employees based on job types. Training requirements and opportunities can be communicated to employees to support their development and connection to the company.



**UKG has helped me reallocate labor. It has helped me and my team reduce the need to shuffle paper and time consumed by labor-intensive processes in my area. These time savings have allowed for real value adds, like evolving the culture and preparing for the demographic shifts.**



**Kimberly Womack**  
HR Director, Bonnell Aluminum



### Increasing employee engagement

Using the mobile app's self-service tools, Bonnell Aluminum employees can check their schedules, see their punch times, view their paid time off and sick leave balances, and verify their pay information — from anywhere. They also can submit time-off requests and check the status of their requests, increasing their productivity by eliminating time spent tracking down managers to request time off. Managers use the same tools to view and approve employee requests while they are on the manufacturing floor and when away from the plant, providing greater flexibility and autonomy.



### Improving payroll accuracy

When employees know their paychecks are correct, they can focus on their work and productivity. The automated UKG HCM solution helps ensure that Bonnell Aluminum's employee time is accurately captured so employees receive perfect paychecks, building their confidence in and engagement with the company.

**We have been able to reduce overtime hours through improved scheduling and labor analysis. We now have reports that alert leadership to take action to prevent undue overages, thus reducing costs.**

**Kimberly Womack**  
HR Director, Bonnell Aluminum



### Providing value-added HR services

With the automated UKG solution creating a paperless HR department and streamlining HR tasks, the department's staff is freed up to focus on value-added activities.



### Improving workforce management

With labor costs being one of Bonnell Aluminum's largest expenses, effectively managing the workforce and its associated costs is critical to the success of the organization. Now, with real-time visibility into employee time, managers can better control labor costs.







### Reducing compliance issues

Adherence to bargaining agreements and federal and state labor laws and regulations is simplified now. Union rules for overtime, sick pay, vacation pay, and meal breaks are built into Bonnell Aluminum's UKG solution, so employees know they are being treated fairly and the company is confident it is in compliance. The audit review process is also simplified.

UKG has changed the process so Bonnell Aluminum can be transparent as an employer.

Kimberly Womack  
HR Director, Bonnell Aluminum

## Benefits of Working with a UKG Customer Success Manager

Bonnell Aluminum has utilized the responsive support of a UKG customer success manager to help maximize use of its HCM solution. The manager has delivered a proactive, personal, and proven experience by providing the company with the training, thought leadership tools, and data necessary to succeed. At the start of the process, the manager sought to understand Bonnell Aluminum's issues and perspective in order to create plans to help the company successfully achieve its defined goals in becoming an employer of choice. This relationship continues with ongoing support from the UKG customer success manager.

UKG took the time to listen, ask questions, and assess our goals and objectives from all angles and proposed an actionable solution. They always made Bonnell's needs a top priority and focused on how they could help us accomplish our goals.

Kimberly Womack  
HR Director, Bonnell Aluminum



## Positioned for Success

Using its HCM solution, Bonnell Aluminum is able to plan for demographic shifts in the workforce and make recruiting and employee development top priorities. With an agile workforce, the company is prepared to anticipate and respond to on-demand talent needs and secure the specific skills needed to remain competitive in a fast-paced, rapidly changing digital world.

I look forward to the future of Bonnell Aluminum. ... We are super, super strong in terms of using all of our valuable resources, our people. When we do this, our future looks bright.

Kimberly Womack  
HR Director, Bonnell Aluminum



## About UKG

At UKG, our purpose is people®. As strong believers in the power of culture and belonging as the secret to success, we champion great workplaces and build lifelong partnerships with our customers to show what's possible when businesses invest in their people. One of the world's leading HCM cloud companies today, UKG and our Life-work Technology™ approach to HR, payroll, and workforce management solutions for all people helps more than 75,000 organizations around the globe and across every industry anticipate and adapt to their employees' needs beyond just work. To learn more, visit [ukg.com](https://www.ukg.com).

To learn how UKG can partner with you in using a human capital management solution to work toward becoming an employer of choice, please call or visit +1 800 225 1561 [ukg.com](https://www.ukg.com)



**Our purpose is people**

© 2020, 2021, 2023 UKG Inc. All rights reserved.

For a full list of UKG trademarks, please visit [ukg.com/trademarks](https://www.ukg.com/trademarks).

All other trademarks, if any, are property of their respective owners.

All specifications are subject to change. MF0294-USv3