



Alliance Data Builds Robust Incident Management Program with EthicsPoint

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Curtis Samuels
Chief Ethics Officer



Solution



Highlights



INDUSTRY

Financial Services



NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

20,000



BEFORE

Paper system for managing reports proves to be unwieldy.



AFTER

EthicsPoint offers associates safe tool for communication and improves culture.

An organization's hotline reporting system serves many purposes, such as providing:

- » A confidential place for employees to clarify policy and discuss or report concerns
- » A communications channel beyond the rumor mill
- » A way to direct employee questions to the appropriate resource
- » An opportunity to provide guidance before a poor decision is made
- » An early warning of issues or problem areas brewing in the organization
- » A last internal stop for whistleblowers before they take an issue outside the organization to a regulator or attorney

[Download the Definitive Guide to Incident Management to Learn More](#)

Challenge: Pen and Paper System Lacks Historical Context

When it came to managing employee reports, using a system that relied on pen and paper proved to be less than ideal for Alliance Data. With 20,000 associates across the company, chasing paper trails was inefficient and made it hard to manage employee reports effectively. In addition, keeping track of the historical context behind the data was a challenge.

Solution: EthicsPoint® Incident Management Software Makes it Easy to Spot Trends

Alliance Data decided to make the switch to NAVEX Global's EthicsPoint Hotline and Incident Management software, allowing them to streamline and automate their employee reporting system. "EthicsPoint is a great vehicle for our associates. They voice their concerns in the instances where they may not feel comfortable doing it in person or directly to someone in the company. I think a lot of our associates appreciate that they have the ability to be anonymous when reporting incidents," said Curtis Samuels, Chief Ethics Officer.

With EthicsPoint in place, all incident reports come through Samuels' office for review. He then partners with other business units based on the type of issue raised to investigate allegations and follow up with reporters.

According to Samuels, analytics are one of the most helpful features of EthicsPoint. With the ability to view dashboards and have visual representations of the data coming in, it makes it easier to spot trends, something that Alliance Data's board of directors is very interested in. Samuels provides the board with a quarterly update on those trends, noting the numbers and types of reports that the company receives. For example, the board was interested in looking at how the #MeToo movement was affecting the company in terms of the number of incidents it was seeing reported relating to sexual harassment – a data point that was easy to pull out of the EthicsPoint system. Looking at the trends, Samuels and the board can then identify where further employee training might be needed.

Whistleblower Hotline Intake

Trusted by thousands of clients around the world, our hotlines help employees, customers, suppliers and other stakeholders quickly and easily report potential ethics and compliance issues. Our hotlines also provide you with the E&C data you need to inform your program, helping you spot trends and take corrective action before minor issues become major.

Incident Management: EthicsPoint®

Capture and investigate E&C reports from across your organization in a centralized database. Our EthicsPoint Incident Management solution gathers data from all of your reporting channels—including your ethics hotline, web intake, and reports forms for open door conversations—to create a systematic approach to documenting case assignments and streamlining workflow.

Awareness Solutions

Raise awareness of key E&C program components, including your hotline and key training messages, with NAVEX Global's proven awareness materials.

Results: Moving Past Check-the-Box Compliance

To reinforce use of EthicsPoint Samuels hits the road to raise awareness. As he travels to different company locations, he utilizes real stories with anonymized details to give examples of issues that he sees cross his desk in the Ethics Office. He also uses anonymous focus group meetings where he asks associates a series of questions using anonymous polling devices. They talk about the results in real time and look at how their answers compare to national answers from employees across the country in other organizations. "It creates a great dialogue and discussion with and amongst the associates, which tends to spread by word of mouth. They all go back to their respective workspaces and talk to their peers or their colleagues and share the experience. It's very, very well received," he said.

For Alliance Data, having a tool like EthicsPoint in place improves culture. By promoting a safe way communicate, the company demonstrates its commitment to not simply running a check-the-box ethics and compliance program. "I am constantly going out to the various lines of business and educating both management and associations alike about the fact that we have this communication tool. We don't want to hide it. We want to make sure that associates are aware of its existence and that we utilize it and we take it seriously, and everything that comes in, we're going to look into and follow up on our part," said Samuels.

That commitment is also reflected in the designations that Alliance Data has earned as a Fortune 500 company, an S&P 500 company and a Fortune 100 Best Companies to Work For. "I think if we were just a check the box type of organization, it would be very hard for us to obtain all three legs of that stool," added Samuels. "We have tried to make this part of who we are and our culture as an organization of educating and communicating to our associates about wanting to do things the right way in all facets of business."

About Alliance Data

Alliance Data is a leading provider of marketing, loyalty, and credit solutions that uses the power of data to achieve results for its clients. Together, its three lines of business manage more than 100 MILLION consumer relationships for some of the world's leading brands. The company has spent the past 20 years zigging while everyone else zagged, and its contrarian approach to how it operates, makes its business decisions, and serves its clients and our clients' customers benefits its entire stakeholder community.

ABOUT NAVEX GLOBAL

NAVEX Global provides a comprehensive suite of ethics and compliance software, content and services that help organizations protect their people, reputation and bottom line. Trusted by more than 13,000 customers, our solutions are informed by the largest ethics and compliance community in the world. For more information, visit www.navexglobal.com.