



Vanderbilt Global Services, LLC: Dedicated account manager story

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Corporate Payroll Manager



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Vanderbilt Global Services, LLC



Christel Sheridan
Dedicated Account Manager,
ADP

For more than 100 years, Vanderbilt Global Services has produced quality minerals and chemicals for its customers, selling throughout the U.S. and in nearly 80 countries. In addition, the company distributes products of many distinguished companies under continuing contracts dating back to the mid-1920s.

Pia Saks, corporate payroll manager, leads a team of 13 payroll administrators, two each at six of their other U.S. locations and one working with her in the corporate office. With 420 employees worldwide, the company was eligible to have an ADP-assigned dedicated account manager to help with its human capital management (HCM) needs.

Christel Sheridan, dedicated account manager and ADP employee for more than 14 years, is FPC-certified and extremely proficient in the intricacies of payroll and HR. Here Pia and Christel share the story of their partnership.

How has your relationship as client and dedicated account manager grown?

Saks: We originally met about 10 years ago at an ADP® user group conference. It has come to be much more of a friendship between us. We're very in-sync when we're on the phone trying to hash out an issue. I think part of that is ►



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Christel's familiarity with our account, as well as the fact that we've just known each other for such a long time now. We make a great team.

Sheridan: [Pia] definitely has a more complex company setup, so I don't always know what's coming down the pike when she calls. We've always had a partnership, working together to resolve her issues. My job is not just to provide her with what I feel is the best scenario, but more like, "Let's give you several options. What's going to work best for you?" Because what I think may work might not be what is going to be the best for her long term, since she has other offices that she has to work with and I don't always know what her time constraints are.

What's the value in having a dedicated account manager?

Saks: Honestly, she just makes my life easier and my time more efficient. So thank you for that! Having one person who has such familiarity with my account and the real differences between what our setup is, as opposed to a different client, is invaluable. She understands the complexities of our multiple company codes, multiple legal entities and multiple states. When I have one person who understands that, she's just that much better at helping me attain my goals.

Sheridan: Being a dedicated account manager allows me to really understand Pia's company and their setup and spend the time learning everything I need to know to make sure that I can provide her with the best options for Vanderbilt. If I was just hearing from Pia on a daily phone call [in a call center], and then getting the next person in the queue who wasn't necessarily somebody I deal with all the time, it would be harder to get Pia the answer that fits her situation best. Or if somebody else was getting Pia on the phone — if they don't understand how her company is laid out, they may give her the correct answer for some people, but it's not something that will work for her.

Having someone who is just dedicated to Pia and her business allows that relationship and knowledge base to build. I mean, there's still stuff that I'm coming across, even having been with her this long, that I haven't seen before because of how complex her setup is — so we're constantly learning together.

What other benefits come out of your working together?

Saks: I like to think that, as a client, I'm pretty proactive. There are a lot of things that the ADP system can do. Other clients don't necessarily utilize ADP Workforce Now® to the best of its capabilities. We probably use a good 90 percent of the fields that are available, if not more. Because I'm always trying to get the most out of our system that allows Christel to pass that knowledge of better ways to optimize the system along to another client who might be looking for a similar solution to an issue I've already dealt with. ▶

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Sheridan: And similarly, I may have come across a best practice or solution with a different client that will work for Pia. There's so much available in Workforce Now, it's so robust and it's changing all the time. Every update is giving our clients new things that they can utilize. And then I'll go through the system, through all of her company codes, to make sure she's getting the most out of an update. I think that's definitely an advantage to being her dedicated account manager, because I know what she's looking for and how it will work.

What's a typical week look like when you're working together?

Saks: I would definitely say that we speak every single week and there are days we speak multiple times. It really depends on what issues I'm facing within my role. The topics that we discuss and the issues that I face as a manager change all the time. No two phone calls are ever the same. There are so many things that potentially can go wrong with all of the complexity involved in our company, and when you're trying to troubleshoot all of those, it is really crucial that I have all my ducks in a row. And that's when I'm most grateful to have Christel to help me.

Sheridan: Where she's the first line of defense for her company and her staff, I'm the first line of defense for her here at ADP; I go to bat for her. There are times when I only hear from her once a week, and there are times when I definitely hear from her several times. But it's always a pleasant exchange. If it's a new tax jurisdiction, I can help review the information, make sure she gets what she needs and set it up appropriately so it's processing properly. So it's those types of things — just making sure that she's getting what she needs for her company and trying to make her life easier.

How would you describe the relationship you have together?

Saks: There's a part of me that wants to just scream out and say, "Amazing!" But, you know, it's also efficient. Dedicated. I don't think there really is just one word that describes what her role is, the way that she affects our company, the way that she affects my job and everything. She makes me look like the hero.

Sheridan: [Pia] is great. I just want a better word than that. Even when she's having a crisis on her side, she's always been very pleasant and direct. Like, "Listen, I'm in crisis mode, just give me an answer and if there are other options, we'll talk about it at another time." Or, "I have the time, let's explore. Let's go through this and figure out what's going to be a good option for me." She's the ideal client in all honesty.