

Effective talent management supports 100% annual business growth in up-and-coming startup



C4T



Customs4trade (C4T) has standardized on a best-in-class Unit4 Talent Management platform to support a growing, diverse workforce and help sustain the business' 100% year-on-year growth.

By connecting performance and engagement insights from across the organization and throughout the employee journey, Unit4 is helping C4T make informed people decisions and improve employee experience.

Key benefits include:

- Achieved 70% employee engagement in pulse surveys – 100% in business units with strong team leads
- Resulted in extremely low annual turnover in staff
- Automation and connected insights helped the business achieve 100% growth in recurring revenue

Customs, excise, and international trade

When Pieter Haesaert founded C4T in 2004, he had a vision to create a technology platform that would help organizations overcome the complexity associated with customs, excise, and international trade. The outcome is Customs Accounting System (CAS), a zero-touch global trade management solution for enterprises that want to centralize and automate their customs and trade compliance processes.

Today, C4T is a thriving business, helping organizations of all types and geographies make customs and trade a strategic component of their growth. Indeed, the business has experienced 100% growth in recurring revenue every year since 2018.

One of the key drivers for this growth has been C4T's investment in people. More than 125 people work at the company, comprising 25 nationalities, and spanning an age range of 20 to 70. "People are our number one priority," says Ilse Vermeersch, Co-Founder and Chief People of C4T. "They are ambitious and passionate about what they are doing, and their enthusiasm is helping to drive our innovation and growth."

Industry

SaaS

Location

Headquarters in Mechelen, Belgium

Size

125 staff, 25 nationalities

Product

Unit4 Talent Management

Challenges

Faced with 100% growth in recurring revenue, C4T needed to create a reliable, automated, and rewarding means of nurturing, developing, and growing talent.

Key metrics

100%

100% participation rate in business units with strong team leads



Unit4 makes talent management scalable for current and future growth

“One of the best measures of the success of this talent management platform is that C4T has extremely low staff turnover. Unit4 has a role to play in supporting that loyalty.”

Ilse Vermeersch

C4T, Co-Founder and Chief People

However, this business growth is not without its challenges. To scale the organization and continue the next phase of growth, Ilse and her team need to attract, retain, and develop more people – and be ready for what’s around the corner. “Back in 2018, when we had 30 people, it was relatively easy to manage people in a face-to-face office environment. We are now 125 people, and that scale demands best-in-class, automated talent management processes.” The company deliberately invested in technology to guide their business through growth, rather than waiting until they hit a critical number of employees.

“As a cloud-first, digitally focused organization, we wanted a modern platform to help build the best team, develop the talent, and provide an even more engaging experience,” says Ilse.

C4T turned to Unit4 Talent Management, a powerful, automated, people-focused platform to manage performance, better understand workforce needs, and develop talent. Fully automated Unit4 Talent Management eliminated the need for spreadsheets that require constant scrutiny from managers.

Intuitive Engagement Management

The Engagement Module was the first to be implemented, using anonymous pulse surveys to understand employees, identify development opportunities, and easily spot trends. According to Ilse, the change has been

transformational. “Engaged and happy employees are at the core of our beliefs. In the past, I used to check the temperature of the team by spending time in the office kitchen listening to people’s comments. As we grew, that became unsustainable. We now create monthly automated pulse surveys comprising a dozen questions across all our engagement drivers. This way we listen to people continuously,” she says.

Ilse reads every survey response. “Earlier this year, for example, everyone’s workload was high, owing to both the pandemic and business growth. The pulse responses indicated people wanted some time off. I therefore emailed everyone encouraging them to take time off — to take a holiday, see friends, or generally relax. From that, we saw a spike in holiday bookings.”

Another automated survey revealed that people were challenged by the physical and mental experience of working from home. Based on this feedback, Ilse arranged for training sessions geared to improving health, safety, and wellbeing.

“I’m proud of the fact the average participation rate in these surveys is 70%. Some pulse teams even achieve 100% participation, which is excellent. Crucially, we are achieving a 70% engagement as well. Given we are continually growing the team, this engagement rate is exceptional,” she says.

Powerful Performance Management

The success continues with the connected Performance Module.

As C4T grew, it was becoming more and more difficult to schedule and conduct one-on-one conversations: team leaders and other members of staff were simply too busy with customer projects.

There’s still work to be done in terms of defining templates, but Ilse can already see the power of the platform. “We run formal, quarterly one-on-one conversations with every member of the C4T team,” she explains. “With Unit4 we have the flexibility to create, schedule, and conduct one-on-ones, set clear objectives, and act on the feedback we receive. The message is, ‘we are listening to you and will act upon what you tell us,’” she says.

Of the overall impact of Unit4 Talent Management, Ilse says, “One of the best measures of the success of this talent management platform is that C4T has extremely low staff turnover. Unit4 has a role to play in supporting that loyalty. By connecting insights from all aspects of the employee journey, we are improving the employee experience, which results in a more satisfied team of people.”



C4T Co-Founder and Chief People
Ilse Vermeersch and
C4T Founder and CEO Pieter Haesaert