

**MANAGE**

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# HR

**PEO**  
EDITION



**28 YEARS  
OF PEO  
SERVICE  
EXCELLENCE**

**COMBINED  
MANAGEMENT**

Robert Murch,  
CEO & Owner

\$15



# COMBINED MANAGEMENT

## 28 YEARS OF PEO SERVICE EXCELLENCE

**A**s per the NAPEO, 907 PEOs are currently active in the United States, generating an annual revenue of \$270 billion. Amidst the standard set of such companies trying to help their clients shift focus from employee affairs to business operations, some go above and beyond this goal. Companies who take the hassle out of managing payroll and human resources and take the responsibility of executing these tasks with finesse.

For these PEOs, the quality of service they provide compels their clients to recommend them, to the point where they don't need to advertise their work to garner new clients. Combined Management Inc. is such an organization.

In an interview with CIO applications, Mark Maguire, Business Development Manager of Combined Management, tells how the company goes the extra mile to ensure smooth business operations for its clients.

### **Could you give our readers a brief understanding of Combined Management?**

Combined Management has been in the PEO business for 28 years, and we're growing steadily year after year. We have clients in almost every industry. However, we have never needed to advertise in any way to gain new clients. Many of our new clients come from referrals from existing clients who are very satisfied with our exceptional Maine based customer service, where we answer the

phone and know our clients by name. We think of going above and beyond for every client every day as the standard way of doing business.

The service we provide to our clients is not a cookie-cutter, one-size-fits-all approach, it is a customized client specific approach that sets us apart from the field, which has been especially important during the last year for small businesses as they were forced to deal with a totally new way of doing business and were tasked with changing their business model in some cases almost monthly. We have helped out clients with PPP applications, meeting Covid standards in their workplace, establishing new safety programs, helping establish quarantine plans and comply with the new Covid 19 OSHA standards, FFCRA extensions, and the new EPL laws, just to name a few.

We take all the transactional side human resources off our customer's plate to allow them to focus on their business process and employee development. We also encourage our clients to reach out to us, not only in matters of HR, payroll and compliance but also on anything that can help them grow their business.

As we move forward, we look forward to helping our clients navigate the ever changing and complex world of HR and compliance in the workplace and we stand ready to assist in whatever comes next.



Robert Murch,  
CEO & Owner



Christina Colby



Mark Maguire

### What are all the PEO services that Combined Management delivers to its clients?

We are truly fortunate to have some of the best people in the industry working on our team, from our COO Christine Colby, who has been in the industry for over 21 years and is extremely well versed in all things HR and compliance to Deanna Robbins our Payroll Manager, who has been in the industry for 17 years, is extremely dedicated to ensuring an error free payroll week in and

week out. We work with some of the best people in the industry and have specialists to assist clients in all aspects of HR including a comprehensive benefits plan typically only available to Fortune 500 companies, some of the most competitive Workers' compensation insurance rates in the country, a no fee 401K Safe Harbor retirement program, a complete payroll service with multiple timekeeping options including mobile timekeeping with GPS authentication, paperless employee onboarding, online benefits enrollment, employee portal, online performance management system, and comprehensive reporting to view your payroll data the way you want. We assist our clients in putting together a compliant and complete employee handbook, we offer customized workplace safety programs, assistance with OSHA compliance and how to help avoid costly fines, we even have a team member that is a volunteer safety instructor for the US Department of Labor.

From the HR side, we can even assist clients in conducting difficult terminations onsite to de-escalate that stressful process and provide the framework to make sure our clients terminate any employees in a complaint manner. We assist employees in filing documents related to Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA), as well as file State Unemployment Tax Act (SUTA), and Federal unemployment taxes (FUTA) for our clients under our EIN number so it takes one more responsibility off of their plate, freeing up more of their time to spend on their core business.

When it comes to payroll we offer several pay solutions for employers, from direct deposit, to pay cards, to paper checks, as a client you decide how you want to submit your employee's hours from key fobs that can keep track of specific manufacturing processes and bill those times accordingly to specific cost centers to integrated timekeeping solutions to just picking up a phone a calling in your hours. We also have fax Machines for clients who operate out of remote areas that do not have a broadband connection. We file W2s and W3s for clients to help them in wage management and we do not nickel and dime our clients and charge extra for every W2, W3 or any per check charges or EFT fees. We also never

charge people by the hour for consultation on the phone and offer truly unlimited HR support and service.

### Can you tell our readers about the specialists that help you deliver PEO solutions to your customers?

We work with some of the best people in the insurance industry, who ensure our clients employees are coded correctly for workers' compensation and our clients are paying the lowest possible and correct amount for insurance as well as offering the best rates available in the industry.

We work with a specialist who offers group health insurance for our clients and he helps them navigate all the choices in that ever-complicated field. We not only offer benefits, but we also administer all of the benefits we offer, including handling billing of benefits, collecting payments and making those payments for our clients. We have a benefits specialist who holds individual meetings onsite (when possible in compliance with current CDC recommendations and our clients wishes) with management, owners, and their employees to make sure they have a complete understanding of all the benefits offered to them and their cost and works to sign up and manage those benefits with their employees. Our retirement specialist provides retirement options and advice from simple IRA's to a 401K Safe Harbor to our clients free-of-charge and will meet with employees on a one-on-one basis to help them understand retirement options. They also assist them in matters regarding retirement and tax implications. We offer a comprehensive, extremely secure online portal with 2 part encrypted authentication system for our clients and access to all benefits, pay stubs, reports, wage reporting, PTO requests, EPL tracking via a customized portal that is designed with our clients logo to further reinforce your brand with your employees.

### How does your staff's experience help you in steering ahead in the PEO marketplace as a company?

Everybody in Combined Management has the minimum field experience of a decade,

in some cases over 40 years of experience. Christina Colby, our COO has been in this industry for over 20 years and serves as a shining example of how hard work and dedication to your clients pays off. Her tireless commitment to going the extra mile has earned her a level of admiration and respect that you rarely see in any organization of any size.

Deanna Robbins our payroll manager has been in the field 17 years and is extremely dedicated to our clients as well and works day in and day out to ensure a perfect payroll, she is always on the lookout for any discrepancies in the payroll and works instantly to correct any issues that arise. Their dedication to providing the best service to our clients is second to none in this or any other industry. As our Business Development Manager, I have the unique perspective of having been a client of Combined Management for over 14 years getting to see firsthand how we

**“Many of our new clients come from referrals from current clients who are so satisfied with our exceptional service and the extra human touch that they send us new clients on a regular basis”**

help our clients by starting my own small business, an automotive sales and service organization and growing into the largest of its kind in New England, as well as 24 years with a Fortune 500 company.

Our CEO and Owner, Robert Murch, also brings a very comprehensive set of skills and extensive work history of running successful companies from working in estate planning and finance to starting a workers' compensation insurance company. He strongly believes that treating the client the way you would like to be treated is just the right thing to do, and he instills that in every team member every day, and it comes across to our clients. We truly believe you enjoy serving and helping people or you do not



Deanna Robbins

have that quality, it is not something you just can fake, and all of our team members and specialists are truly eager to serve our clients and it shows.

“Our team members have built this business with their incredibly hard work, day in and day out and we wouldn't be where we are today without them”-Robert Murch.

### What changes did you observe in the PEO space since the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic? How did you strategize and evolve according to it?

At the beginning of the pandemic, I wanted to see how best we can help our business community at large as well as our existing clients, so I set out for months to search out all available local grants, national grants and funding programs for businesses suffering due to the pandemic and passed out hundreds of grant applications and assisted many businesses in getting those grant applications processed. Many of them were unsure of how to implement some of the new COVID protocols in their business. Working with our legal team at Jackson Lewis, one of the top employment law firms in the country and also in conjunction with our local attorneys at Skelton Taintor and Abbott again one of the best firms in the state when it comes to employment law we worked to ensure our clients were in compliance with the everchanging rules regarding the CDC guidelines. I spent most of my time working with clients for the first eight months, helping them comply with the COVID protocols and procuring PPE for businesses. We also did Zoom meetings with our clients to ensure the smooth running of their business operation. We are also working with them to apply and adopt the new Covid NEP OSHA standards that aim to provide a safe work environment during the pandemic and going forward.

### How do you envision the next 12-18 months will be for your company?

We will be expanding our team and bringing in some key people from both inside and outside the PEO industry from sales to finance. The people joining our team will be bringing in an enormous amount of experience and a fresh perspective of the industry. Some of them have already run Fortune 500 companies, and others are highly experienced in operating regional companies and are at the top of their game. With their help, we will continue to better serve our growing list of clients that rank among the best businesses in their field. We are now also working with a specialist that will allow us to offer Long term care insurance as well as Medicare insurance options for our clients. HR

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The annual listing of 10 companies that  
are at the forefront of tackling  
customer challenges