

CASE STUDY • PEOPLE MATTERS INFINI-T AWARDS INDIA 2026

Governance by Design: 2,597 Hours Returned and Every Action Auditable

HDFC Securities

Infini-T Awards Category: Digital Transformation Impact



Executive Summary

HDFC Securities is one of India’s leading full-service stockbrokers and a subsidiary of HDFC Bank, serving retail and institutional investors since 2000 from our Mumbai headquarters. Our **3,200+ employees** span corporate, branch, sales and operations functions across India. As a SEBI-registered broker, we operate under the kind of regulatory scrutiny where HR governance is a compliance obligation rather than an administrative preference.

3,200+ Employees across corporate, branch, sales and operations	2,597 Man-hours returned a year across five governance workflows	₹30 lakh Saved annually, with HR Ops from 15 people to 10	14 Critical HR processes digitized
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Every employee lifecycle event we handled, from transfers to disciplinary actions, absconding management and employee documentation, generated a trail of emails, spreadsheets, approvals and manual follow-ups. The processes worked. What they were missing was **time taken for execution, visibility, consistency and governance** at the standard our growing regulated enterprise requires. Turnaround times depended on who remembered to follow up, and no standardized TAT existed across workflows because nothing was measured in the first place.

The decision that shaped the programme was to stop digitizing forms. Rather than moving existing paperwork onto a screen, we **redesigned the workflows with Darwinbox**, challenging legacy processes, eliminating manual intervention, standardizing approvals, and embedding compliance controls into the process rather than layering them on top of it.

With Darwinbox, fourteen critical HR processes are now digitized across our enterprise. Across five of them the platform returns **2,597 man-hours a year**, process accuracy has risen from a range of 79 to 94 percent to 95 to 100 percent, and HR Operations has gone from **15 people to 10, saving ₹30 lakh annually**. The point is not that the work got faster. It is that the work now leaves a record.

70+ Reports generated a month, 100% delivered within seconds	30+ Automated reports delivered without a human request	1,601 Governed transactions a year through the five measured workflows
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The Processes That Worked, Until Anyone Asked for Proof

Too many HR processes depended on emails, spreadsheets and manual follow-ups, making accuracy and tracking difficult and increasing turnaround times.

The machinery was email chains, Excel trackers, manual approvals, mail-merge templates, shared folders, and individual SPOC-based tracking, sitting on a system that could not build custom workflows. Because everything was tracked by hand, **standardized turnaround times did not exist**. Employee development approvals, letter generation, transfers, disciplinary reviews and absconding actions all ran on manual intervention and stakeholder chasing. That is workable on a small scale. It is not auditable on any scale.

Where manual work was costing our business

The challenge we faced	The consequence it caused
Heavy reliance on email-based workflows	Lack of visibility and accountability, with no way to see where a request had stalled or who owned it
Multiple manual trackers	Data inconsistencies and administrative burden, with the same fact recorded differently in different places
Manual generation of employee letters through mail merge	Delayed employee servicing at exactly the moments that matter most to the person waiting
High dependency on individual HR team members	Operational continuity risk, with process knowledge sitting with people rather than in the system
Lack of workflow visibility	No way to track SLA adherence, so performance could not be managed because it could not be measured

Compliance Built Into the Process, Not Bolted On

The distinction that defines this programme is between digitizing a form and redesigning a process. We did the latter. We rebuilt each workflow by challenging the legacy process, eliminating manual interventions, standardizing approvals, and **embedding compliance into the process itself**. The objective was to simplify HR operations while strengthening governance, which are usually treated as opposing forces.

We positioned Darwinbox as strategic infrastructure carrying **Core HR, Workflows, Reports, Time Management, Performance Management and Studio**, with workflows, approvals, compliance controls, automated communications and employee self-service built directly into the platform rather than run alongside it.

What makes our choice of scope unusual is which processes we picked. Most HR automation programmes start with leave, attendance and onboarding, where volume is high and governance is light. We went at the opposite end: **absconding management, disciplinary action committee reviews, transfer governance, employee development approvals, and automated documentation**. These are the policy-heavy, multi-level, audit-exposed processes most organizations leave on email precisely because they are hard.

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Five Governance Workflows, Measured

Each workflow carries multi-level approvals, policy controls, and a complete audit trail. The hours below are measured per transaction against the manual process they replaced.

Process	Hours saved per transaction	Transactions a year	Man-hours saved a year
Employee Development Plan	6	207	1,242
Absconding Flow	3	360	1,080
Merit Planning Letters	24	1	24
Disciplinary Actions Committee (DAC) Review Process, covering suspension, warning letters, show-cause and termination	3	67	201
Employee Transfers	0.4	126	50.4
Total		761	2,597

Accuracy, which is the number that matters

Process Accuracy Rate measures the share of workflow instances completed without any missed mandatory steps, missing documentation, routing errors, policy deviations or manual corrections, while maintaining a complete audit trail and adherence to the defined sequence. For a regulated broker, that definition is the whole point.

Process	Before Darwinbox	After Darwinbox
Employee Development Plan	81%	100%
Absconding Flow	79%	98%
Merit Planning Letters	85%	100%
Disciplinary Actions Committee (DAC) Review Process	87%	100%
Employee Transfers	95%	100%

**Pre-Darwinbox figures are directional estimates derived from available manual records and process reviews, as formal measurement mechanisms were not in place before automation.*

For a regulated broker, accuracy is not an efficiency metric. It is a risk metric.

Reporting stopped being a request

The platform now generates **70+ reports a month**, with **100% delivered within seconds**, and **30+ automated reports** that arrive without anyone asking. Multiple manual trackers were retired outright.

The operating model changed with it

HR Operations went from **15 people to 10**, a saving of **₹30 lakh annually**. The capacity did not disappear; the transformation unlocked significant HR capacity, allowing the function to shift its focus from administrative execution to other priorities while improving efficiency and governance across processes.

The capacity did not disappear; it moved to what HR was hired to do in the first place.

The Hard Part Was Not the Software

Phase one surfaced a problem that no configuration could solve. Several of our highly customized legacy processes **required redesign and standardization before they could be automated at all**. They had evolved over the years into shapes that made sense only to the people running against them.

That meant significant stakeholder alignment before anything could move into a standardized digital workflow, and it meant telling teams that the way they had always worked was not going to survive the transition.

The hardest part was never technology. It was **changing user behavior from email-based processing to workflow-driven execution**. People do not abandon a habit because a better system exists; they abandon it when the new way is visibly easier, and someone has taken the trouble to show them why. Success came through stakeholder engagement, training, and demonstrating clear business benefits rather than issuing a mandate.

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The Moment That Mattered

One of the most meaningful outcomes of the transformation was seen in the Disciplinary Action Committee (DAC) process. Previously, case reviews were coordinated through emails, spreadsheets, and fragmented documentation, making it difficult to ensure complete visibility and consistency across stakeholders.

Following the digitization of the DAC workflow, all case-related information, approvals, supporting documents, and decision history became available within a single platform. During a case review, committee member highlighted that the ability to access the complete chronology of events, employee submissions, and management observations has been enabling.

Committee members now see everything in one single view, facts of the case, and the outcomes from previous member's review. The transformation ensured that governance became more transparent, and every case document is retained in the system.

What stood out was that the technology did not replace human judgment - it strengthened it.

Why We Believe This Stands Apart



The governance-heavy end, not the easy end

Absconding management, DAC reviews, employee development approvals, transfer governance and automated documentation, digitized inside a single integrated ecosystem. Few organizations have taken on this breadth of policy-driven, multi-level, audit-exposed HR processes, because these are the ones that resist automation hardest.



Compliance embedded, not supervised

We redesigned each workflow rather than digitizing it: legacy steps challenged, manual interventions eliminated, approvals standardized, and compliance controls built into the process itself. Governance became a property of the system instead of a thing people had to remember.



Accuracy is the proof, not speed

Process accuracy rose from a range of 79 to 94 percent to 95 to 100 percent, measured as workflow instances completed with no missed mandatory steps, no missing documentation, no routing errors, and no policy deviations. For a SEBI-registered broker, that is not an efficiency metric. It is a risk metric.



Hard to replicate because it is not just software

The transformation runs on governance logic that mirrors our own policies, approval hierarchies, and regulatory controls. Copying it would require not the technology but the organizational understanding of risk, governance and change across multiple stakeholder groups.

From Our Leadership

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At the heart of this transformation was a simple objective; to make HR work better for people. By moving away from emails, spreadsheets, and manual interventions, we created a more transparent, responsive, and employee-centric experience that empowers our people while enabling HR to focus on what matters most: creating value.

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Neetika Bhatia

Chief Human Resources Officer

CONCLUSION

The Benchmark We Set

The processes were not broken. That is what made them dangerous. Transfers happened, disciplinary reviews concluded, letters eventually reached people, and absconding cases were dealt with, all of it running on email chains, Excel trackers, mail-merge templates and the memory of whoever happened to own the file. It worked right up until someone asked where a request had stalled, or who had approved what, or whether a mandatory step had been completed. Then it did not work at all, because **there was nothing to look at.**

So we did the harder thing. Instead of putting the existing paperwork on a screen, we rebuilt the workflows and went after the processes most organizations avoid: **absconding management, disciplinary action reviews, transfer governance.** The policy-heavy, multi-level, audit-exposed end of HR, where automation is difficult precisely because the stakes are real.

The efficiency followed. **2,597 man-hours a year** returned across five workflows. HR Operations from **15 people to 10** and **₹30 lakh** saved. Reports that once had to be requested now arrive on their own, 70+ a month, everyone within seconds.

But the number that matters is the one that does not look like a productivity metric at all. **Process accuracy on disciplinary reviews went from 87% to 100%.** Every instance now completes with no missed mandatory step, no missing documentation, no routing error, no policy deviation, and a complete audit trail. For a regulated broker, that is not time saved. **That is a risk that no longer exists.**

This is the standard we set: an HR function where governance is not something people have to remember, because it is built into the process itself, and where every transaction is traceable, every action auditable, and nothing depends on who happened to be watching.