

CASE STUDY • PEOPLE MATTERS INFINI-T AWARDS INDIA 2026

Built for the Hub, Not the Head Office: HR Productivity for a Workforce That Is Never at a Desk

Spinny (Valuedrive Technologies Pvt. Ltd.)

Infini-T Awards Category: HR Productivity Impact • Pillar: Operational Excellence



Executive Summary

Spinny, operated by Valuedrive Technologies, is one of India’s leading full-stack used-car platforms and was ranked #1 in India’s Fastest-Growing Companies 2026 by TIME and Statista. Almost none of our workforce sits at a desk. Inspection engineers, hub operations staff, sales consultants and drivers are spread across **50+ car hubs in more than 20 states**, supporting a group of roughly **6,400 employees** across Spinny, Valuedrive, Autocar and, following our acquisition of GoMechanic, a second workforce with its own systems and policy history. In a business like ours, HR is not a head office service desk. It is the operating system for a distributed frontline, and its productivity sets the ceiling on how fast the business can grow.

15 → 2 Person-hours a month on attendance reconciliation	10 → 3 Days from offer to day-1 ready for a frontline hire	8× Rise in query self-service, from 10% to over 80%	100% Attendance marked on Darwinbox, and nowhere else
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For years, that productivity leaked at every step. Attendance was tracked on **spreadsheets, hub by hub**, with no single source of truth on a distributed workforce. Our HR team chased hub managers for inputs over WhatsApp, and payroll inputs arrived late and dirty. At the hiring velocity of a frontline retail operation, every manual step multiplied by volume became a permanent tax on the team, and the errors landed downstream in payroll and in employee trust. The structural risk was plain: either we automated, or HR became the constraint on how fast new hubs could open.

Our answer was to stop designing for the head office. We built **SpinZone**, our internal name for **Darwinbox**, as the single source of truth, and re-architected HR operations around the hub employee: mobile-first, self-serve, and wired into the systems the hubs already ran on. We integrated attendance with biometric devices and with our own CRM rather than bolting it on as a standalone HR tool. Within six months, the productivity ledger moved on every line: onboarding turnaround fell from **10 days to 3**, query self-service rose from **10% to over 80%**, attendance reconciliation dropped from **15 person-hours a month to 2**, and attendance coverage reached **100%**, not by mandate, but because the platform is now the only place it can be marked. And the team that delivered it did not grow as the company did.

A Workforce That Is Never at a Desk

Desktop-era HR processes do not reach an inspection engineer standing in a car hub. That single fact shaped every constraint we were working against, and each one drained productivity somewhere it could be measured: in HR's hours, in hub managers' attention, or in a new hire's unproductive days.

The challenge we faced	The productivity it cost
A workforce that is majority non-desk: inspection engineers, hub staff, sales consultants and drivers across 50+ hubs and dozens of cities	Attendance, leave, payroll inputs and queries were owned by hub managers as an unpaid second job, which meant errors landed downstream in payroll and in employee trust
Hiring and attrition velocity typical of a frontline retail and operations workforce, with a long tail of Tier-2 and Tier-3 locations	HR Ops absorbed a continuous onboarding and exit load. Any per-hire manual step, multiplied by volume, becomes a permanent tax on the team rather than a one-off cost
Growth to roughly 6,400 employees with no matching growth in HR Ops headcount	Either we automated or HR became the bottleneck on business expansion; new hubs cannot open faster than HR can staff and pay them
No reliable way to verify who was on the floor at a given hub	Attendance had to be tracked manually to prevent cost leakage, which put a heavy load on HR Ops and left workforce numbers difficult to defend under scrutiny
The GoMechanic acquisition added a second workforce with its own systems, policies and payroll history	Two employee populations inside one company create exactly the kind of integration debt that later surfaces as payroll errors and avoidable attrition
A young, consumer-tech workforce that expects a consumer-grade app, not an HR portal	Adoption could not be mandated. If the tool were clunky, employees would route around it and HR would end up back on spreadsheets and chat messages

If It Does Not Work on a Hub Floor, It Does Not Ship

We chose Darwinbox for a reason our HR Ops lead states plainly: the commitment to help the business run efficiently, to adapt the system as business demands changed, and to help the team hit its goals on time. What we then built with it was deliberate rather than incremental. The scope that went live covers the operational spine of the employee lifecycle:

1. Time management, with attendance captured for different employee cohorts through biometric devices, CRM integration and processing rules

2. Talent acquisition, running the full recruitment-to-onboarding flow

3. Performance management, across the desk and non-desk population

4. Employee self-service, covering data updates, letter generation and expense records

5. Rewards and recognition, automated end to end with a partner rewards system

The Design Decision, continued

The design principle behind all of it was the same. We treated attendance as a **source-of-truth data problem** tied to payroll and cost control, not as an HR form to be filled in. That is why we specified the biometric-to-CRM integration while our hub network was still being expanded, rather than retrofitting it after attendance disputes surfaced, and why we wired it into systems the hubs already used instead of a standalone tool the frontline would have had to be trained onto separately.

We drove adoption the same way. There was a clear company directive on the process changes, sustained communication to employees about what was changing, and strict adherence to the new process. But the strongest evidence that adoption was engineered rather than announced is structural: the attendance system is fully automated and **employees cannot mark attendance anywhere else**. There is no parallel path to fall back on, so there is nothing to fall back to, and that closure is what makes the productivity gains permanent, because hours saved by automation only stay saved when the manual channel is shut.

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THE IMPACT

Six Months, Measured in Hours Given Back

Every figure below is measured against our own prior baseline over a six-month window and sourced from the platform’s own reporting or from our HR Ops lead. Read together, they form two productivity ledgers at once: the hours HR no longer spends producing and policing inputs, and the days a frontline employee no longer spends waiting to become productive.

Measure	Before → after
Onboarding TAT, frontline	10 days → 3 days from offer to day-1 ready, a 70% reduction over six months
HR helpdesk resolution TAT	15 → 3, an 80% reduction over six months, per the Darwinbox helpdesk report
Query self-service	10% → more than 80% deflected to self-serve, an eight-fold rise over six months
Attendance reconciliation effort	15 → 2 person-hours a month, an 87% reduction in the effort HR Ops spends capturing and validating attendance input
Attendance coverage	100% of attendance now marked on Darwinbox, with no alternative channel available anywhere in the business

The Impact, continued

Measure	Before → after
Onboarding coverage	100% of new joiners onboarded on the system, with the onboarding process fully automated
Recognition	The entire rewards and recognition journey automated, including automated mailers prompting employees to recognise colleagues. Engagement is up 50% on the previous financial year and HR Ops manual effort on recognition is down 80%.
Reach	Live across 20+ states for a workforce of roughly 6,400, split between desk and non-desk roles

The frontline side of the ledger compounds with every hire. A frontline joiner is day-1 ready in three days instead of ten; a week of selling, inspecting or driving capacity returned per hire, at the hiring velocity of a retail operation. A query resolved through self-service is a hub employee back on the floor instead of waiting on a chat thread, and a hub manager who no longer runs attendance as an unpaid second job is a hub manager running the hub.

The number that matters most to the business is not in the table, because it is a non-event: **our HR Ops team did not grow as the company did**. That is productivity impact at the level of the operating model; output per HR head rising as the headcount served climbed toward 6,400. Accurate, auditable attendance flows straight into payroll cost and manpower planning, which means cleaner cost control, defensible workforce numbers under diligence, and the ability to add hubs and headcount without adding a proportional HR Ops cost line.

The Part That Was Not Clean

Phase one was not clean. The attendance requirements of our different business cohorts had not been adapted on the system, and there was real resistance to moving off the spreadsheets people had worked in for years. Digitising a process is easy; digitising it in a way that survives contact with six different kinds of shift pattern is not.

We initially accepted the workarounds that were offered and began the digitisation journey on that basis, then pushed hard for an expedited course correction so the system matched our actual processes rather than the other way round. That push was the right call, and it protected the gains: a workaround is borrowed time, and time borrowed at hub scale comes back later as reconciliation hours.

The hardest part was timelines. Everything was needed in a short window, against a defined product roadmap. What resolved it was not heroics but sequencing: we and the Darwinbox team agreed defined delivery milestones, and we adapted our rollout to them. The lesson we took from phase one - **map the cohort reality before configuring, not after** - is now how we scope every subsequent process.

Map the cohort reality before configuring, not after.

260 Teams, 13 Cities, One Workflow

In mid-2026 we ran the Spinny Premier League: 13 cities, 260 teams, more than 3,200 players and over 250 matches, drawing in colleagues from sales, customer experience, relationship management, inspections, operations, technology and business teams. From Chandigarh to Kochi, Ahmedabad to Chennai, it is the single biggest expression of culture we run.

Around **80% of participating teams registered through a workflow on the platform** rather than through HR collecting entries by hand across 13 cities. That detail is the whole thesis in miniature: our biggest cultural event ran on near-zero marginal HR effort. The same system that takes a biometric attendance punch at a car hub in a Tier-2 city also ran the registration for a company-wide cricket tournament, not because HR wanted a showcase, but because that is where our employees already are. A platform the frontline opens is a platform on which every next task costs HR almost nothing to run.

The company's biggest cultural event ran on near-zero marginal HR effort.

From Our Leadership

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This team is the backbone of how HR runs day to day. They took a hard look at the processes we'd long accepted as 'just the way things work,' and they rebuilt them around what actually creates value. The impact is real and measurable, faster turnaround, cleaner workflows, and time given back to the entire organization. Operational excellence isn't flashy, but it's what everything else depends on.

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Harsh Satija

Vice President, Spinny

Why We Believe Our Productivity Impact Stands Apart



Scale that does not add HR headcount

The model is hub-replicable: a new hub inherits the existing attendance stack on the day it opens, rather than triggering a fresh manual process or an added HR Ops hire. Sub-linear HR scaling is the purest form of productivity impact, more workforce served per HR hour, by design.



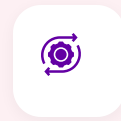
Attendance as a data problem, not an HR form

We specified the biometric-to-CRM integration while the hub network was being expanded, not bolted on after attendance disputes surfaced. Treating attendance as payroll-grade, auditable data from day one removed the reconciliation argument entirely: 15 person-hours a month became 2.



Designed for the hub, not the head office

Every process had to pass one test: it must work for someone standing on a hub floor with a phone, or it does not ship. That inverts the usual sequence, in which HQ processes are designed first and the frontline adapts afterwards, and it is why the gains held because saved hours only survive where adoption does.



Four sources of operational pressure at once

Frontline-majority, multi-city, high-velocity hiring, and a live acquisition integration, running simultaneously. HR productivity gains are commonly won against one of these constraints at a time; ours were won against all four.

The Hub Is the Unit of Scale

Because the attendance stack, the onboarding flow and the self-service layer are configured at the hub level rather than per employee, expansion no longer carries a proportional HR cost. Opening a hub is a **configuration event, not a hiring event** for HR Ops; the marginal people-operations cost of the next hub is held close to zero. That is the single design choice that makes the rest of our growth plan affordable from a people-operations standpoint.

Our forward path is to extend the same source-of-truth discipline from attendance across the rest of the frontline lifecycle (onboarding, productivity, exit) so hub workforce data feeds planning and cost forecasting directly rather than being reassembled after the fact. With attendance automated, we have already shifted from tracking who was present to working on what the data says about how the frontline is deployed: from producing workforce data to acting on it, which is the transition from transactional HR to operational strategy in its most literal form.

**Opening a hub is a configuration event, not a hiring event.
The marginal people-operations cost of the next hub is
held close to zero.**

CONCLUSION

The Benchmark We Set

HR productivity is usually measured where it is easiest to see: at head office, in the hours a process saves the HR team itself. We chose to be measured somewhere harder, on both sides of the ledger at once. The question we hold ourselves to is whether a hub associate in a Tier-2 city gets paid correctly, gets onboarded fast, and gets an answer the same day, and whether HR can deliver all of that without growing as the company grows. Everything here follows from taking that question literally.

The mechanics are unglamorous and deliberate. We wired attendance into the biometric devices and CRM the hubs already ran, so it became data rather than paperwork. We automated onboarding end to end, taking a frontline hire from offer to day-1 ready in **three days instead of ten**. Self-service went from a tenth of queries to more than four-fifths. Reconciliation work fell from **15 person-hours a month to 2**. We automated recognition to the point where engagement rose **50%** year on year while the manual effort behind it fell **80%**. And the team that delivered all of this did not grow to match the company that did.

The standard we set: HR productivity judged not by the effort saved at head office but by what it returns on a hub floor; a new joiner productive in three days, a query resolved without chasing anyone, attendance that is a fact rather than an argument, and an HR team that scales the business without scaling itself. The benchmark is not the elegance of the process. It is what it gives back to the person furthest from the people who designed it.