Benefex ™
A Zellis Company

snowflake

One year into a global benefits rollout;

Providing a consistent employee experience for tomorrow's ambitions

## In conversation with Jennifer Burnett, Director of US Benefits at Snowflake

As a rapidly-growing software company with employees spread across 10+ countries, Snowflake needed a benefits platform that could provide a centralised employee experience for their current employees, with scalability to support their future headcount. To hear how Snowflake did this, we spoke to Jennifer Burnett, Director of their US Benefits division.

> **Jennifer Burnett, Director of US Benefits**
>
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# What were the key objectives Snowflake wanted to achieve with new global benefits tech?

"We had a few objectives in mind, largely that we needed a global solution to a series of local problems. We wanted technology that would deliver local flexibility with global consistency."
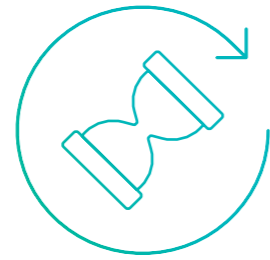
Automation to support rapid growth

"With Snowflake's rapid growth, maintaining a manual benefits and communication process was just not sustainable. We knew we needed to implement a digital solution that would transform all these repetitive, manual tasks."

"For tickets, we wanted to have robust processes in place. There are lots of easy-to-repeat questions that the team were spending a lot of time on. Outsourcing this support to Benefex was a no-brainer for us."
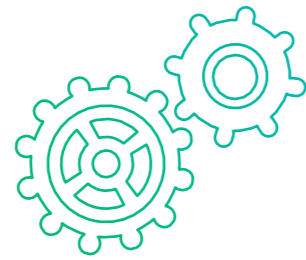
Elimination of manual processes and risk

"Beyond that, we wanted access to real-time analytics – we wanted to know how many people and dependents we were insuring in our programmes, so we could understand the cost globally, at any point in time. Previously, we only had access to point-in-time reporting, but we wanted to know what was doing well when, where, and with who."

Enable a consistent global employee experience

"We also really wanted a platform that could be a single point of truth for employees; one place for them to go to for all the information they needed, whether it was benefits-specific or company policies or wellbeing programmes. **It was non-negotiable that the platform we chose would be able to host all of that and provide employees with a globally-consistent experience.**

We felt it was crucial that no matter where they were in the world, even if they transferred from one country to another, it would be the same system and the same processes they already understood."

Your benefits platform – named Snow Globe – has a really distinctive look and feel, how did you come to this?

"We like to play on the snow theme of our business quite a lot, and the name 'Snow Globe' was proposed by the Communications team at Benefex. We loved that it felt like 'us' but also represented the global aims we had with the platform.

The visuals were also created by the Communications team at Benefex, who worked closely with our internal branding team to make sure all the icons and assets across the site were true to our brand."
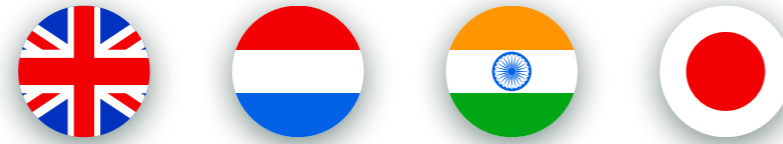
How did you decide which country to roll the platform out to first?

Phase 1

- UK
- Netherlands
- India
- Japan

Phase 2

- Poland
- Germany
- Australia

Phase 3

- Sweden
- Singapore
- France
- Canada

"We worked with Benefex to have a three-phased approach, which allowed us to roll out the platform to different groups of countries based on priority.

To decide which countries fell into which phase, we focussed on current country headcounts as well as anticipated future growth of those countries. We also factored in what the current administrative burden was like for each country. With those key factors in planning the rollout, it meant we could get the most burdensome countries done sooner, but without trying to tackle them all at once; meaning we then later had space to focus on other countries."

"In the last 12 months, we have completed waves one and two."

How did you balance affording flexibility and choice to individual countries, while still providing a consistent global experience?

"We knew early on that the platform needed to be globally-capable, because there was a majority of things we offered through benefits or as global policies (like booking time off or viewing payslips) which were accessed through different systems.

But these were global problems – individual countries were coming to us and asking for answers, so even though we didn't administer those programmes, we were responsible for finding a solution.

Making those same tools and policies available through OneHub was a decision we made early on to solve that, so we knew that a majority of the functionality, and the way the platform operated, needed to be the same regardless of region. It was really important to have a consistent global experience for employees, wherever they were.

When it came to the platform's look and feel, we decided that everything from the name to the visuals would be consistent, but we used time during the Scope and Design phases of the project to then customise the rest of the site on a local basis. This was things like language or certain layout conventions, but generally it made sense for decisions and branding to be made at a global level."

HERE'S A HUGE VIRTUAL HUG

Snow Globe

Welcome to the Snowflake family!

We think all our snowflakes are pretty cool, so you deserve a rewards scheme to match, with benefits that celebrate every quirk that makes you, you.

The story so far of Snow Globe

Launch to UK employees

Launch to India employees

Launch to Netherlands employees

Launch to employees in Japan and Poland
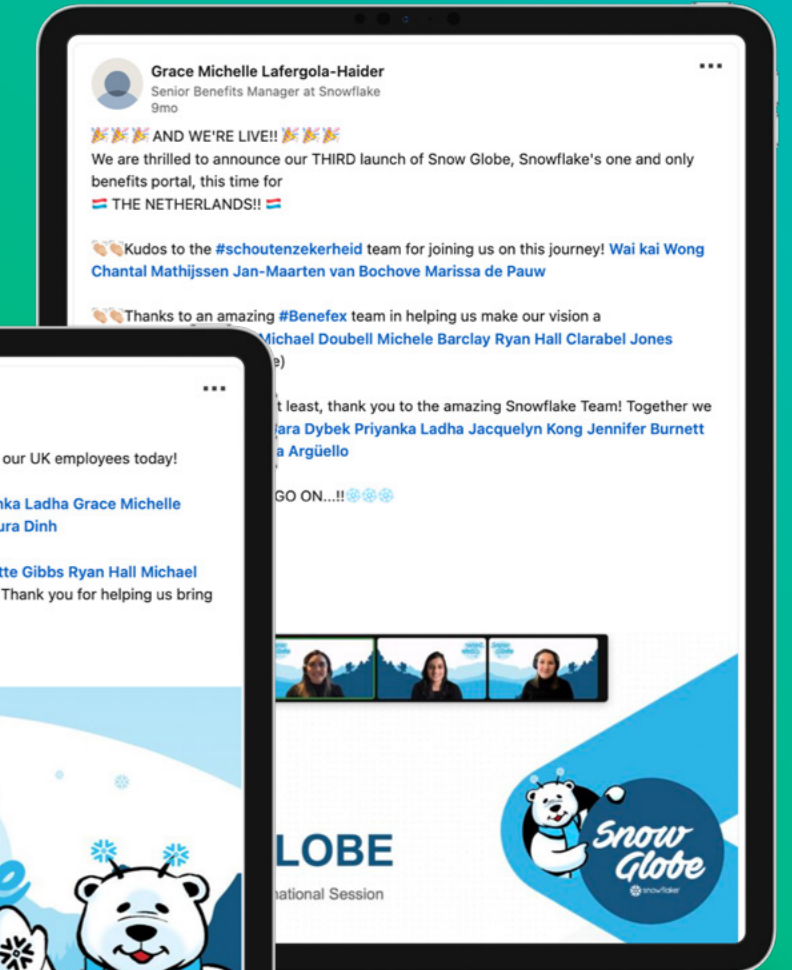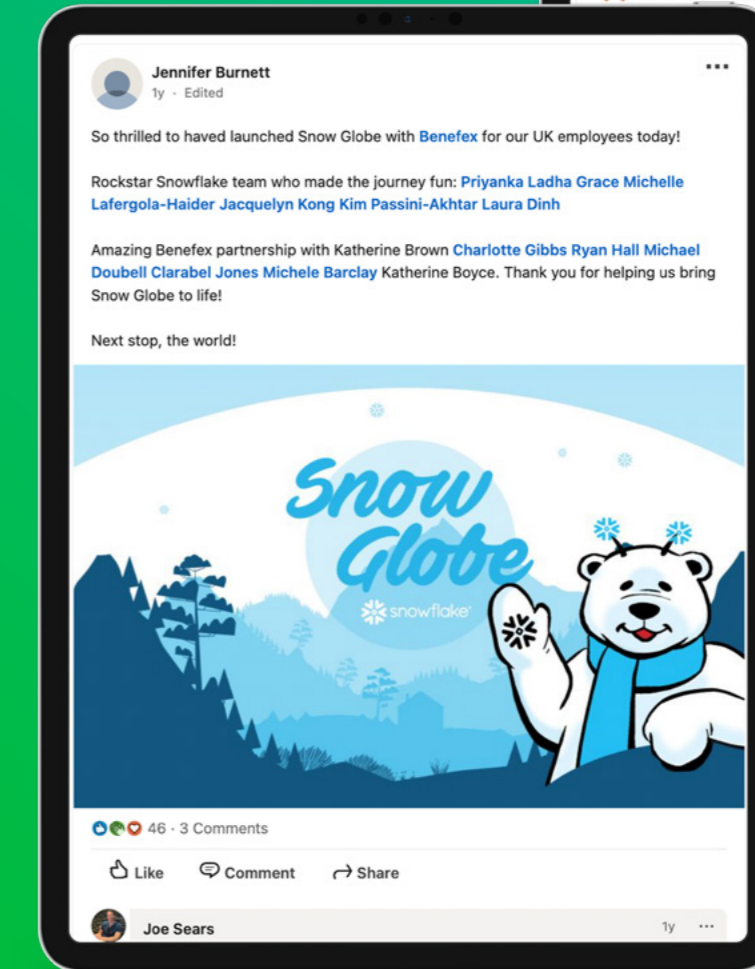
Launch to Australia employees

Launch to Germany employees

October 2021

December 2021

June 2022

September 2022

What were the main outcomes you achieved?

Scaled the benefits strategy

Focussed on the employee experience

Personalised on a global scale

Offered flexibility and choice across all regions

Engaged employees

One year in, how have you tracked the success of Snow Globe?

Demonstrating success

"We wanted to be able to share data back with the teams to show the rollout had been a success. We made sure that manual steps are being tracked vs those that are now automated. The number of case volumes was also important – we wanted to reduce the number of questions employees are asking through self-service."

"We went through a scorecard process with the process excellence team to be able to deliver a picture of before and after Snow Globe. Teams looked at all the administrative processes beforehand – for example, how many clicks it took to complete a task. And then, once we went live with Benefex, we looked at the effort involved to complete the same task to measure the level of digital transformation."

"Snowflake came into the process with a very data-led mindset."

The numbers – scoring digital transformation

Snow Globe Implementation in India:

- India has a digital transformation score of 100 – processes like new hire enrolment, salary changes, address changes and top-up insurance administration are fully automated.

- Before implementing Snow Globe, there were 11 steps in the process of new hire enrolment – now there are zero.

- Benefex implementation will have saved 177 hours of work over the course of the next three years for the India team alone.

- The average ticket volume has gone down by 43%.

- 96% of employees say it's easier to find their way around the site and 98% think that submitting their benefit choices is an easy process.

- Only 4% of employees had to contact helpdesk.

How has the project benefited the team?

"For us, manual processes were the enemy; we wanted to improve efficiency as the team were buried in day-to-day tasks. By automating manual processes, the team can focus on other, strategic, priorities. We've found that implementing Benefex has really helped lift our teams up and they now have the bandwidth for bigger-picture thinking."

"We went from a very manual process to complete digital transformation. Processes are now automated, repeatable and consistent. Employees are getting what they need, when they need – without the team having to send everything manually."

What take-aways would you share with someone embarking on a similar project?

Secure buy in early on

"I would say firstly ensure you're not just involving decision-makers. Involve all other key stakeholders, even if they're further afield – whether that's payroll, IT, or whoever it may be. Get everyone involved early on and ensure you're all aligned on the timeline and what you'll need from them. That really helps the project go a lot more smoothly!

"To keep stakeholders engaged, tracking success is also a priority – global benefits rollout requires a significant investment in terms of time and money so showing ROI was a must. Our scorecard has enabled us to show the leadership team a before and after picture."

Communication supports engagement

"Snowflake as a company has a lot of fun with plays on its name – so the whimsical element of Snow Globe has really helped drive engagement. The way each country is launched also contributed to the programme's success; it's a carefully thought-out process that we developed alongside Benefex. Communication is key and we have a launch email, new hire email and follow up emails.

The team does a launch presentation for every country when it goes live which also helps with getting buy in."

Look at the wider global picture

"The other thing I would say to anyone is that the first country will be the hardest – that is where you're learning the process, understanding the phases and what they mean, and thinking about your decisions not just locally but globally.

This is the point you're marking the standardisation across all countries, so give yourself a moment to breathe and focus on the future rather than just that first country. Allow yourself to stop and think about each decision you're making. It will save a lot of time and stress later down the line."

> "It's very easy to overthink the process, but if you keep going back to your objectives, and work with a provider who understands those and offers technology to support it, it's actually very manageable."

And finally, why did you choose Benefex? What has been your experience of implementing Benefex tech?

"Benefex felt like the right partner when we chose them and they've lived up to that name. The whole point of working with them is a partnership – they are an extension of us at this point. That's really important to us when we look at a project like this, that we're in it together".

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Welcome to the Snowflake family!

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Jennifer, thank you for being part of the Benefex story!

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