

SCHEDULESOFT NEWS

August 2009

SHIFT SCHEDULING TRANSFORMED

ScheduleSoft is the leading provider of optimized workforce scheduling software for complex labor and production environments. Our systems are unique in their ability to allow for rules configuration through setting parameters rather than costly customization. We hope you find our monthly insights useful in your day-to-day operations management, and encourage you to forward to your colleagues.



ScheduleSoft News and Comment

Automated Workforce Management – Why Invest & Where’s the Payback?

Although your bottom line may not show it and laid-off workers may question it, pundits, newspapers and magazines are providing a more optimistic look for the economy in the coming months. The bleeding seems to have slowed and in some areas jobs are being added.

During economic downturns management’s first instinct is to eliminate all but the most necessary capital and discretionary spending. New computer software systems are typically seen, regardless of industry, as unnecessary

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New Features

- Kiosk Shift/Post Ranking
- Day View Editor
- Automated Overtime Generation
- Enhanced Reports
- Post Processing
- Kiosk User Defined Fields

- consecutive days worked
- consecutive weekends worked
- consecutive shift-post limits
- consecutive break hours

For more information, call 1.866.807.8090.

and most certainly discretionary during any time of declining revenue and profit. For several months we have used this space to suggest forward looking and industry leading companies use these opportunities to implement business changes and automate processes, supported by computer software that will save money now and position the company for future growth.

The right automated workforce management system is a key tactical execution piece in support of supply chain integration, regulation compliance and lean strategy success. Automated workforce scheduling, tied to business demand is the first step to workforce right-sizing and cost savings for any organization. Effective workforce management solutions are designed to pull data from and feed data to your ERP, Time Keeping and Human Resources management systems. ScheduleSoft's workforce management software is precisely such a tool.

Workforce Right Sizing

Over the past twenty years, manufacturers have been called on to improve customer satisfaction by delivering quality products with ever decreasing lead times and significantly reduced staff and inventories. Mounting costs in healthcare and the service sector have forced cost reduction while delivering improved quality and service levels. Taxpayer revolts are forcing state and local governments to deliver police and fire protection services with fewer dollars.

Workforce Right-Sizing is more than simply having bodies fill work station vacancies. It's having the right person in the right job at the right time. To meet customer satisfaction and on-time delivery of products and services with a downsized workforce, managers and supervisors have become expert at maintaining a "just-in-case" labor pool within their departments to meet unexpected absences or changes in demand.

Right-sizing is about using the skilled "stranded labor" in one department, line or shift to fill gaps in another department, line or shift. This may only be accomplished with workforce scheduling systems that allow managers to view the labor resources available within the entire organization, rather than just a single



Technical News

The current version of our products as of this newsletter are listed below:

Client: 4.6.220
Server Tool: 4.6.036
Kiosk: 1.5.030
EIS: 1.18.012

For questions about your current version(s), please contact Technical Support at 1.866.807.8090.

[Software Update](#)



Suggestions

How do you like the newsletter?

We'd love to hear from you by participating in the below survey. Your feedback can help shape the content for future newsletters.

Contact Us:
news@schedulesoft.com



department, line or shift. Using an automated workforce scheduling system facilitates and organizational view of the labor pool. Once implemented, the features of automated scheduling will reduce labor costs across the organization without damaging customer satisfaction or on time product or service delivery. In fact, satisfaction and delivery are likely to improve.

Identifying Automated Workforce Scheduling Cost Savings

For obvious reasons, most managers and supervisors are unwilling to admit “just-in-case” labor practices when preparing a justification for an automated workforce management system. The following identifies additional sources of cost savings that will pay for the new software.

- 1. Recruitment, Hiring and Training** – Automated workforce scheduling provides a view of the entire labor force, their training and certifications. The existing labor pool is better matched to business demand, distributing work hours more uniformly across the entire labor pool. Increased visibility to employee training and certifications allows the system to assign the best available worker to the demand. There is no longer a need for “make-work projects” for workers included in the schedule just in case there is change in demand or worker availability. Our clients see a reduction in the number of temporary workers, excessive hiring and training.
- 2. Double Time Payments** – Visibility into the entire business labor pool and automation of straight and overtime rules allows managers and supervisors to monitor overtime assignments. By linking business demand and employee scheduling, managers are able to evaluate an uptick in overtime vs. the cost of adding additional staff. If double time payments are made and continue, they do so as a result of an immediate conscience decision rather than a surprise at the end of the job, week or month.
- 3. Shift Rotations** – Automated workforce scheduling facilitates a variety of employee work schedules. Workers may be grouped and assigned to a job,

department or line for only the hours they are needed rather than assigning them for a full shift. In a manufacturing environment this may apply to lines that have mixed production or to maintenance staff. Cleaning crews may be assigned and rotate between specific jobs or departments rather than maintaining a crew to cover each area.

4. **Compliance Risk** – Automated workforce scheduling provides documented evidence of compliance with business and union rules and regulations. It links workers and their training and certifications to comply with government rules and regulations. Documentation of compliance issues is easily achieved through automated updating of the database.
5. **Accurate Time Keeping** – With automated scheduling, employees are paid for hours worked within the hours scheduled. Employees may be limited to punching in and out based on the work hours defined in the schedule. For employees who “clock” in or out outside the parameters of the scheduling system, variances must be documented and approved by a supervisor authorized to make such a change.
6. **Scheduling Process** – The scheduling process itself is the source of cost reductions and a more productive use of employees at all levels of the organization.
 - a. *Master Data Duplication and Errors* – Duplicate entry of information and manual record keeping is costly and a prime source of errors with any data. An automated scheduling system will pull data from and feed data to your existing ERP, Time Keeping and Human Resources systems. Employee master data (including training, certifications, worker preferences, etc) is entered once, maintained in one location and shared with the scheduling system.
 - b. *Data Accuracy* – With electronic master data sharing, accuracy of the data is now the responsibility of one individual. New master data, data changes or corrections are made quickly and available for immediate access by

the scheduling system.

- c. *Manager Productivity* – Department managers no longer spend time, they should devote to productivity, process and customer satisfaction, developing and modifying schedules, responding to worker requests for vacations and leave time and job swapping. ShcheduleSoft's kiosk system allows employees to make these requests without supervisor interface. As long as the requests fall within the established business rules, such requests may be accepted and implemented without supervisor input on each individual request. Exception reporting allows supervisors to deal with these matters during the time they devote to administrative duties. Because the scheduling system tracks these requests and changes, supervisors no longer need to keep manual records.
- d. *Schedule Accuracy and Consistency* – With careful entry of business and contract work rules and policies, an automated workforce system delivers a schedule which accurately matches the labor needs defined by demand. The system administers worker assignments uniformly in line with business and contract rules. Employee grievances and turnover are greatly reduced when employees know that the rules are fairly and evenly applied across the workforce.
- e. *Schedule Visibility* – Management, line supervisors and hourly workers have full visibility to schedules which are updated immediately upon request or due to demand changes. An automated workforce scheduling system allows system users to track worker scheduling changes. This eliminates the perception of manager/supervisor bias in setting the schedule and has proven to reduce worker grievances and turnover.

For more than 13 years, the singular focus of the ScheduleSoft team has been delivering user-configurable;

rules based workforce scheduling software, adaptable for use in applications as diverse as healthcare, law enforcement, complex manufacturing and everything in between. Terminology may vary from application to application. However, regardless of application, all of our clients have found cost savings in a majority if not all of the above areas. Our mission is to deliver flexible, automated employee scheduling that supports and enhances the business objectives of our clients.

Visit www.schedulesoft.com to read our May 2009 newsletter discussing the benchmarking process we use to assist our customers in quantifying potential cost savings to justify the purchase and use of our software.

To speak with an automated scheduling expert contact ScheduleSoft Sales at 866-807-8090.



Feature Highlight

Baseline Data and Project Requirements

The most difficult part of any project, and in particular an information technology project, is getting everyone on the same page relative to what must be accomplished. Our June/July article on the Implementation Process made frequent reference to the Project Team, both vendor and client. Both teams must be steeped in an understanding of their role in the process and the discipline they represent and be able to communicate that information. Failure to accurately define project requirements causes friction within and between project teams and delays the “go-live” date for the project.

The following offers some Project Requirements and baseline data requirements insights based on our experiences through a variety of implementations.

The Project Team – For the client, the members of this team must include at least one member from every stakeholder department or discipline. In advance of the installation, the project team must have agreement on

what is within and outside of the project scope. Client team members should be aggressive in advocating for the needs of their constituents.

Unfortunately, there are too many instances where these discussions are continuing, without resolution, when the ScheduleSoft team arrives to begin installation. For a project to be successful, the client's project team should agree well in advance of the project kick-off about what is in scope and out of scope for the project.

Business Strategy – Prior to defining project requirements, the client's project team must understand and be able to articulate the company's business strategy. Is it Lean Manufacturing, Supply Chain Optimization, Compliance Management and Documentation, etc? An intimate understanding of the path business leaders have charted for the company and how workforce management fits into that path will help the team prioritize define and project requirements.

Survey Staff and Employees – As a team member you may already have an understanding of what is seen as wrong and what needs to be improved about employee scheduling. However, soliciting and listening to candid feedback from coworkers may offer a new perspective on the issues and help identify project requirements that may have been overlooked. Example: You and the project team may feel Kiosk should be addressed as a part of Phase II, while the users of the Kiosk system can offer several reasons why it should be part of Phase I.

Collect Baseline Data – Develop a system for collecting, documenting and quantifying baseline data. Active listening will allow accumulation of a long list of data, materializing from staff meetings, break room conversations, locker rooms, the production floor, etc.

For example, a common complaint is "Creating the employee schedule for a week takes forever!" You know it does not "take forever". How long does it really take? Ask those involved in developing the schedule to detail the time spent developing a few weekly schedules. This will allow you to establish baseline data for schedule creation. If all scheduling complaints and concerns are handled in same nonthreatening manner, prioritizing and documenting requirements (benchmarks) will be

simplified for the project team. This will also be useful in documenting cost savings once the project is complete.

Analyze Business Practices – Contract and business rules are a frequent source of frustration and complaint in the scheduling process. Often these rules were developed to support an outdated product mix or business demand. Once the baseline data has been collected, documented and quantified, it should be linked to current business practices to assure it remains a need.

Collective Bargaining Agreements and Business Rules– At least one team member should have a thorough understanding of CBAs for the company’s unions as they relate to scheduling, work hours, vacations, sick days, etc. Union Representatives should be consulted to clarify any confusing provisions. For nonunion companies business rules should be documented and verified with supervisors and Human Resources.

Employee Master Data – The client team should work with Supervisors and Human Resources to assure all employee master data is current; specifically as it relates to job training, certifications and shift preferences.

Accurately defining project requirements and accurate baseline data are the keys to keeping projects on track, within budget and eliminating project creep. As you review these tips you will see the successful defining of project requirements is the result of listening, documenting and verifying.

For more information on workforce scheduling project requirements, contact SchedulSoft at marketing@schedulesoft.com.



New Client Welcome

ScheduleSoft is pleased to welcome **Parkland County, Alberta, Canada** to the extensive list of single and multi-command law enforcement agencies using ScheduleSoft to efficiently schedule their employees.

ScheduleSoft, the leading provider in demand-driven scheduling products, business solutions, and services

Gregory Flessas



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