



Optimize Employee Scheduling with Time and Attendance

Summary

Time and attendance reporting offers a valuable way for managers to identify workforce trends and cost efficiencies. To avoid reporting “blind spots,” the right time and attendance system integrates with other workforce systems (such as HR and payroll) and allows users to select and design the data output for reports that are both relevant and revealing. When selecting a time and attendance system, look for relevant ready-made reports as well as custom reporting and collaboration tools to maximize reporting flexibility and management insight.

Data Alone Can't Optimize Your Workforce

The proliferation of “big data” leaves many managers swimming in workforce management information. Data such as labor costs, department schedules, employee attendance history and benefit accruals provides insight into an organization's workforce trends—and opportunities for cost efficiencies.

But data is just an outcome. To really understand—and affect change in—workforce trends, data needs context. What's causing these trends to happen? And why? Once an organization understands the variables that contribute to its own workforce issues, cost-savings opportunities crystalize and an organization's workforce can be optimized.

Not All Time and Attendance Reporting Is Created Equal

Time and attendance systems can be a useful source of workforce data. But even though most time and attendance systems have a reporting functionality, not all reporting is created equal—especially if “reporting” limits managers to a collection of canned reports. Predetermined reports limit managers to the types of data they can report as well as how they can present it.

Another reporting shortcoming occurs when the time and attendance system does not effectively integrate with other systems, such as HR and payroll. This means all reports only source data from the time and attendance system itself. This limits—or worse, skews—reports through a time-and-attendance-centric perspective. Without the ability to integrate other contributing factors captured by the HR and payroll systems, workforce trend spotting becomes hit or miss.

How to Optimize Your Workforce with Time and Attendance

So, what does a manager eager to optimize the workforce need from a time and attendance system? To identify inefficiencies and cost-savings opportunities, managers need a time and attendance system that integrates with other systems to give context to workforce trends and delivers reports that are useful in data and design.

Integration with Other Systems

To effectively evaluate an organization's workforce trends, a time and attendance system must integrate with other workforce management systems to provide a clear picture of what is happening and why.

When you look at workforce data from a single system, it limits your perspective and creates a “blind spot.” When a report sources data from all workforce management systems (e.g., the time and attendance system, the HR system and the payroll system), the results are more insightful and actionable because they are no longer limited by a single system.

An important aspect of integration is how quickly changes—made in any of the systems—are reflected in reports. For a report to be accurate, it must use up-to-date information, so any changes in a system need to take effect in real time.



Additional steps, such as manually refreshing system data, can seem like a small task, but, when missed, skew reports and lead to erroneous assumptions.

Why Integration Matters

Consider an organization concerned about skyrocketing payroll. If a report cannot source data from all systems, a manager might turn to the payroll system to report on the previous month's total payroll. But a manager working with a time and attendance system that integrates payroll data can run a report on total payroll outlay and department scheduling for the month to find the increase in labor cost is attributable to overtime in several workgroups.

Useful Data and Design

Ready-made reporting typically gathers standard information such as payroll totals or a department's total hours from a previous month. But to optimize a workforce, managers need the ability to determine the specific information they need (data) and the best way to organize it (design). While the need to customize data is an obvious benefit, why is customizing the way it's organized important?

Imagine two different departments run a report on the same data. One department finds it more useful to sort and organize the information by date range while the other wants it organized by employee. Customizing the report's design makes the information more useful and valuable to the user. Customization is also helpful to create federal or state compliance reports.

What to Look for in Time and Attendance Reporting

System integration and useful data and design are key offerings of a timekeeping system. Specifically, what features will help your managers optimize workforce management most?

Relevant Ready-Made Reporting

Although limited by a predetermined template, ready-made reports are still useful and relevant for standard information. Verify that data changes in the system take effect in real time to ensure all reports are accurate and up-to-the-minute, such as:

- **Employee Exceptions** like missed punches, time card errors and more
- **Actual vs. Scheduled Hours** where actual hours worked are compared with scheduled hours to compute the difference between the two
- **Employment History Detail** which lists important employee events in chronological order
- **Summary Sheets**, summarizing data on a specified workgroup or individual employee such as personal info, hours worked, exceptions, etc.



Custom Reporting

Custom reporting gives managers ultimate flexibility in data and design. To spot opportunities to optimize your workforce, time and attendance custom reports allow managers to:

- **Choose, change and select** the information displayed
- **Build reports in real time** and refresh existing reports with current data
- **Group data in ways that makes sense** to the department or organization
- **Build, sort and report content by specifying data** such as workgroup levels, time periods, employees who meet a specific condition/criteria, department, cost center, date range, employee schedule, or benefit information
- **Print, email and save** completed reports

ACA & Workforce Management

Under the Affordable Care Act, qualifying employers must offer coverage to employees who work an average of 30 or more hours per week—or face a penalty per employee.

To limit their liabilities, many employers look to workforce management strategies that ensure part-time employees stay part-time.

Consequently, time and attendance reporting plays a key role for these organizations. System integration and custom, real-time reporting help organizations set scheduling targets while meeting the demands of their business.

To learn more about optimizing your part-time workforce under ACA, download [Limiting ACA Liability: Managing Part-Time and Seasonal Employees](#)

Collaboration Tools

Sharing reports among departments, workgroups or locations can identify workforce cost efficiencies across the organization. The right time and attendance system encourages collaboration by:

- **Sharing reports** with other authorized users
- **Protecting private reports** to safeguard confidential information
- **Emailing reports automatically** to designated users
- **Displaying and exporting reports** as PDFs or Excel spreadsheets
- **Pulling real-time data** for accurate, up-to-date reports
- **Keeping a live link between the existing report and the system** so that as data is updated in the system, the report automatically updates
- **Creating common reports** to be run and shared by multiple users
- **Requiring no special report-generating software**, but instead using a “universal” application (such as a standard Internet browser for Web-based systems) to encourage report sharing among locations



Relevant ready-made reporting, custom reporting and collaboration tools help harness system integration for more insightful data use.

Conclusion

Time and attendance reporting can deliver eye-opening insights on workforce trends and optimization opportunities. By integrating with existing HR and payroll systems and providing useful data and design, a time and attendance system can help direct more efficient workforce decision-making through ready-made reporting, custom reporting and collaboration tools.

About Attendance on Demand, Inc.

Attendance on Demand supports the labor management needs of thousands of companies and over three-quarters of a million employees across North America. Launched in 2006, Attendance on Demand is a rapidly deployed, cloud-based solution that minimizes a company's risk and technology investment while providing advanced features for securely managing labor data—calculating pay rules, scheduling employees, budgeting labor, and automating recordkeeping for labor law compliance. With standard uptime over the industry average of 99.995% and above average customer retention rates, Attendance on Demand removes the worry of maintaining expensive infrastructure. An extensive North American distribution network helps organizations use Attendance on Demand to reduce labor expenses and improve decision making.



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