

Food Service Case Study

Automating Restaurant Workforce Management

Helping restaurant manage schedule changes, plan complicated shift changes, and maintain a loyal staff.

Coat and Thai is an upscale Thai restaurant whose owners are planning to open a second location with hopes of franchising in the future. It faces the challenges common to the restaurant industry; service peaks, specialized staff, and high employee turnover.

Coat and Thai's single manager was the only one doing the hiring, scheduling and time tracking, creating an ever-changing bottleneck that soon became an overwhelming burden. She was managing employee time, attendance, and scheduling with a 90's era punch clock, Excel spreadsheets, and a small dry erase board hung in the kitchen. The restaurant has employees working from 5:00 a.m. until 2:00 a.m., seven days a week, compounding the problem of managing shift changes, overlapping coverage, and specialized job roles.

Additional complications facing the small restaurant included maintaining adequate staffing for every shift, adapting schedules to unexpected surges in business, managing schedule shift requests, tracking employee meal breaks, and keeping skilled chefs and experienced servers from jumping ship to newer restaurants opening in the neighborhood; a sour prospect for any restaurant.

Workforce Management Sweetens the Sour

Coat and Thai determined the first order of business was automating employee time and attendance. TimeWorksPlus allows employees to clock in/out from their mobile devices, eliminating the need to congest the kitchen during critical shift changes, and allowing employ-

ees to merge in and out of shifts with greater efficiency.

Customers get better service, and Coat and Thai has eliminated costly guess work and back-dating when congestion forced employees to skip clocking in. Mobile clock also allows their head chef to clock in off site when buying produce at local farmer's markets, saving time and creating a more rewarding experience for both owners and employees.

Coat and Thai has seen a decrease in labor costs as a result of incorporating integrated clock in/out features for unpaid meal times and breaks. Before Workforce Management Suite, employees often punched out for a meal and forgot to punch back in, creating problematic back-filling and costly guesswork. With Workforce Management Suite Punch-Logic, busy employees are only given logical options when accessing the clock in system to reduce mistakes, establish better records, and simplify payroll.

Filling holes in the schedule has become much easier with the TimeSimplicity Virtual Trade Board. Previously, the manager would circulate shift change requests to the staff, and then re-circulate when options were proposed. Now, employees simply post requests on the Virtual Trade Board. Managers can rapidly view, monitor and approve shift request changes



Synopsis

- **Challenge:** One manager was the only one doing the hiring, scheduling and time tracking, creating an ever-changing bottleneck that soon became an overwhelming burden.
- **Solution:** TimeWorksPlus allowed employees to clock in/out from their mobile devices, decluttering the kitchen during critical shift changes so employees can merge in and out of shifts with efficiency.
- **Benefits:** Customers get better service, and Coat and Thai has eliminated costly guess work and back-dating when congestion forced employees to skip clocking in.

online. Once a shift trade is approved, TimeSimplicity automatically notifies the appropriate employees. Since the implementation, the restaurant has rarely been caught shorthanded. Job codes and pre-set requirements make scheduling easy so specializations such as the age requirement to serve alcohol don't get missed during shift swaps or replacements.

The employees love the Virtual Trade Board because it makes scheduling work an easier part of their day. Many employees are college students whose schedules change each semester. Adapting schedules to better provide staff flexibility has significantly improved employee morale and reduced turnover rate.

Poised for Growth

The owners at Coat and Thai are better prepared for planned expansion into new venues and franchising. With a better handle on the complications of crew scheduling, and seamless integration with payroll, managers are more focused on service and growth. Custom templates make replication quick and easy, and centralized reporting allows the business to monitor and respond to changes while avoiding costly overtime, scheduling conflicts, and peak service emergencies.

Most importantly; employees feel more empowered to participate in the growth of the business and share their enthusiasm with their increasingly satisfied customers.

SOLUTION – Workforce Management Suite

- TimeSimplicity for simplified scheduling and mobile coordination.
- TimeWorksPlus for integrated time and attendance tracking.
- Mobile access provides employee access and management control.

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