



- 17** Automated Time & Labor Management
- 18** Improve Your Implementation
- 22** Seven Steps to a New System
- 25** Kronos Trendline Survey
- 26** Paychex Feature Product Review
- 28** Attendance on Demand Case Study
- 30** Time & Attendance Systems Buyer's Guide

Time & Attendance

special section

Automated Time & Labor Management Offers Cost Savings and Efficiency

BY LISA LANE

Employers face a more complex set of business challenges than ever before. Companies in all industries are dealing with a shortage of skilled labor or knowledge workers due to the growth of service industries and rapid adoption of technology. Absenteeism drives direct and indirect labor costs up and adds additional challenges for those who schedule employees and need to align staffing with the needs of the business.

In addition, wage and hour litigation is the single greatest employment law risk facing today's employers, with wage and hour class action suits outnumbering all others combined.

The current administration and the Secretary of Labor have vowed even stricter enforcement of wage and hour laws.

These challenges contribute to higher labor costs for companies of all sizes, which is why more organizations have turned to automated time and labor management solutions to address their growing lists of labor challenges.

SeekTech, a leading manufacturing firm, went from using 70% of two full-time employees' time on payroll processing to about 20% of one part-time person's time, resulting in a considerable reduction of total costs spent on two people doing payroll. These savings also resulted in an increase in employee and manager productivity. The company sought an integrated workforce management solution

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that would enable it to transform its policies and processes, rather than retrofit legacy processes into a new toolkit.

Beyond a \$29,000 estimated hard-dollar annual savings and a reduction in force, SeekTech was able to raise payroll- and HR-related service levels because of the general process improvements that were part of the automated solution they chose.

AUTOMATION—A VALUABLE TOOL

An automated time and labor management solution gives HR managers a tool to make better decisions and do more with less.

Consider this example: Columbus Hospice. It used to take the healthcare provider's accounting and benefits manager, Jan Beckman, at least half a day just to input payroll each pay cycle. Now, it takes her five minutes per pay cycle.

Beckman also receives fewer calls from employees and managers because they have access to information such as vacation and sick time balances at the finger-punch time clock, which verifies employees' identity through a finger scan.

Time and labor management solutions can also tightly integrate scheduling and absence management functionality. This helps organizations efficiently schedule the right people, in the right place, at the right time, and at the lowest cost. Organizations are also increasingly looking to automate attendance and leave management across the entire workforce to discourage absenteeism and streamline the administration of complex and overlapping leave policies.

With wage and hour class action

suits on the rise, organizations are increasingly turning to automated time and attendance to assist them with compliance. From preventing punches outside scheduled work hours to ensuring fair, consistent application of pay policies and accurate calculation of pay based on the guidelines of the Fair Labor Standards Act, automated time and labor management systems are providing companies with much-needed assistance in wage and hour compliance. Time and labor management solutions also help mitigate the risk of non-compliance with changing leave laws, such as the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

AUTOMATION BRINGS BENEFITS

As functionality continues to expand well beyond basic timekeeping, the trend to deploy time and labor management as a service continues to grow. Companies want to reduce costs and focus resources on core competencies. Organizations of all sizes are reaping a multitude of benefits that include: a reliable, predictable, scalable solution; anywhere, anytime access to secure data; ongoing technology upgrades; and more time to focus on more strategic initiatives.

The shift from manufacturing to a knowledge economy has made effective management, measurement, and optimization of labor across the organization even more critical. More and more companies are turning to automated time and labor management solutions to address the growing list of labor challenges and realizing even greater value when they are part of a fully integrated HR, payroll, and benefits administration solution. ■