



workforce management
made easy



ITR Case Study

Shaw Conference Centre



About Shaw Conference Centre

Type Hospitality

Location Edmonton, Alberta

Website www.edmonton.com/shaw-conference-centre

Customer Needs

- Accurate tracking of hourly employees' time
- Automated calculation and payment of gratuities
- Automated calculation of and deductions for union dues
- Ensuring proper staffing coverage
- Reducing tardiness/absenteeism

Company Profile

Managed by Edmonton Economic Development Corporation (EEDC), the Shaw Conference Centre (SCC) is an extraordinary work of architecture built into the bank of the North Saskatchewan River in downtown Edmonton. The SCC has established itself as one of Canada's premier meeting, entertainment, and convention venues, hosting more than 10 million visitors in its 30 year history.

The SCC's hourly employees are the heartbeat of this facility, providing the maintenance, housekeeping, banquet service, dish washing, food preparation and security operations necessary to keep its clientele happy, and coming back for more. So, effectively managing the time and labour activities of these employees --- to ensure proper staff coverage for each event and facilitate an accurate and timely payroll --- is critical to the ongoing success of the SCC and the smooth operation of its events.

Business Challenge

For the first 30 years of the SCC's existence, workers simply signed in and out on a paper time sheet; managers would then manually calculate the hours for pay and transfer the gross amount for each employee onto an electronic spreadsheet. But as the organization grew, so did the numbers of employees --- and the amount of time required to track and report for payroll the actual hours worked by the facility's nearly 700 hourly employees. Astonishingly, up to 4 hours of each manager's time on every event day was spent on this error prone and tedious manual process. In addition, managers --- as many as 5 banquet captains, depending on the size of the event --- had to be stationed at all times on the doors, checking staff both in and out of the building.

Selection Process

SCC banquet manager Maurice Manganaro was the instigator for moving to an automated workforce management system. As manager of the SCC's biggest department, he is responsible for the comings and goings of up to 500 hourly banquet staff for every event, ranging in size from 30 to 6000 guests.

From the moment he first heard about TimeZone™ at the National Restaurant Federation show in Chicago, Maurice was convinced it was just the type of solution the SCC needed. The SCC's assistant general manager Cliff Higuchi and payroll administrator Elly Petit agreed. "Our goal here at SCC is providing an excellent customer experience - whether they are here for conferences, graduations, or concerts. To meet these goals, proper staffing coverage is key, and just as critical is making sure the employees show up to work their assigned shifts," says Elly.



"With the TimeZone™ system, [processing payroll is] 300 times quicker... We have 16 or 18 managers and they all say this is a great big time saver for them, and they're all glad it was purchased."

Elly Petit, Payroll Manager
Shaw Conference Centre

Because the SCC uses ADP® as its payroll service, naturally they looked at ADP®'s integrated time and labor management product, ezLabour®, as a logical choice. However, ADP® could not accommodate the SCC's policy of paying its banquet staff gratuities based on hours worked. Thankfully, with some customization ITR's TimeZone™ system was not only able to satisfy this business requirement, but was also able to handle deductions for union dues to Local 401 UFCW (United Food and Commercial Workers), which are payable in each week in which the employee logs hours.

The Solution

After several consulting sessions in which the SCC's needs were scoped and clearly documented, they decided to go with the core TimeZone™ product and the Enhanced Scheduler module, which together fulfilled the key needs of the SCC: first, automating the collection and tracking of employee hours, and second, simplifying the process of employee scheduling. Five HandPunch® biometric data collection devices were purchased and placed strategically at the building's employee entrances and exits.

Employee adoption of the biometric system was quick, thanks to some best practices implemented by the SCC. "We made it clear to the union and the employees from the start that this whole system, including the hand scanners, was put in for their benefit – not to track them or watch them, just to make sure they received accurate pay, on time," says Elly. "We told them 'You punch in and out, you're guaranteed your hours. When it's done manually, something can get missed.' Once they realized it was for them, there was no problem."

Next on the wish list for SCC? The TimeZone™ Accruals module, which will enable the tracking and management of accruals and benefit time, such as sick and vacation absences.

Results and Benefits

As soon as the system went live, there was a dramatic decrease in the time managers had to spend on payroll. "With the TimeZone™ system, it's 300 times quicker," quips Elly – not to mention simpler and more accurate, since there are no manual calculations or data entry necessary. As well, she says, "with the old process, the employee could get away with quite a bit. Now they're a little more honest and on top of what they're doing – if they're late they get docked, and if they don't scan and out, they don't get paid."

Elly has strong advice for companies who are considering implementing a workforce management system. "Go for it!" she says. "We have 16 or 18 managers and they all say this is a great big time saver for them, and they're all glad it was purchased."

In addition to these hard dollar savings in managers' time and employee wages, there's soft ROI, too: "Now the managers can concentrate on getting the events set up correctly, and on the customers, not on the employees: the system takes care of that." And that, as she says, is what it's all about: a great customer experience.



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