



Improv Scheduling

ADVANCED SCHEDULING INSIGHTS

AN INTRODUCTION

With labor being the single most controllable expense of any business, Kronos Advanced Scheduling has become a critical way for large retailers to drive business results.

The more precise your view of your volume and profit data versus daily staffing needs, the better prepared you are to make scheduling decisions that will consistently impact profitability and service levels.

FORECASTING ALGORITHMS

Failure to effectively schedule your workforce dramatically reduces the level of service you can provide, which makes predictive, flexible algorithms an essential element in retail workforce efficiency. A power function of Kronos Advanced Scheduler is its ability to use a forecasting algorithm that predicts fluctuating demand by using past volume data by day, week, month, and shift.

Using a heuristic (flexible) algorithm, forecasting makes it possible to create (and recreate) schedules until they meet desired metrics. The end result is that managers can reduce under- and overstaffing and keep labor costs under control. Forecasted data automatically feeds into the schedule to reflect a retailer's fluctuating sales, transactions, and customer volume.

Forecasting also allows managers to auto-tune a schedule based on department variations, seasonal trends, irregular patterns, and other variables that consistently factor into scheduling.

AUTOMATION

One of the most powerful functions of Kronos Advanced Scheduler is its ability to automate and bring all scheduling tasks into a **centralized system**. Automation eliminates time-consuming scheduling tasks, streamlines error-prone processes, and boosts morale by allowing employees to make their own shift changes with little or no manager approval. An engaged, satisfied workforce translates to lower absenteeism, higher retention, and improved customer service. Automation also allows employees **self-service access** to control requests such as shift swapping,

While every retailer's workforce profile and metrics vary, all share the challenge of optimizing schedule costs against maximizing service. Striking this scheduling/service balance consistently is where applying Kronos' Advanced Scheduler capabilities can transform a retail workforce.

Is there an hour each day when foot traffic spikes? Forecasting reallocates existing staff to meet that demand. Are the two weeks after Christmas heavy on exchanges? Forecasting will take that into consideration return volume and schedule extra staff accordingly.

Adaptive forecasting positions retailers to:

- **Control labor costs** by reducing overstaffing and minimize understaffing and lost sales.
- **Improve customer service** by making sure the right people are in the right departments at all times.
- **Align employees with customers** by accurately forecasting business volume, trends, and labor allocations.
- **Reduce overtime** by correctly forecasting volume and staffing needs.

shift preferences, and viewing schedules on mobile devices. Under this umbrella is **SMS Quick Fill** that allows a manager to quickly fill an open shift with a simple group text to employees.

Studies show that an automated and mobile work environment is key to recruiting, engaging, and retaining a younger workforce. By 2020 millennials will make up nearly half (46%) of the workforce. Those tech-savvy workers expect their work communications to take place on their devices.

Automation positions retailers to:

- Cut costs by saving a estimated 25% of administrative task time.
- Be transparent by establishing an open and fair scheduling process among employees.
- Strengthen compliance by enabling managers to schedule according to country-specific legislation, collective agreements, and employee contracts.
- Engage employees by giving them self-service access to their schedule changes and choices.
- Improve efficiency and performance by eliminating manual tasks and engaging employees.
- Attract a younger workforce that prefers and expects to work from a mobile device.

ROI & BUSINESS DRIVERS

The ROI of Advanced Scheduler will vary depending on the organization's current capabilities but can be estimated by time and cost saved through forecasting and automation, controlling labor costs, increased transaction volume (customer service), and the gains from employee engagement. In several case Kronos case studies, customers report a 2-year ROI on schedule optimization efforts.

According to Gartner, one way to estimate cost savings is with this equation:

Time Spent on Scheduling by Task per Schedule

× ***Number of Shifts per Year***

× ***Number of Scheduling Managers***

= ***Gross Annual Time Savings***

Note: You will need to take into account some time to administer automation-enabled workforce scheduling tools in order to arrive at the net annual time savings. *See example below.*

Process ↓	Average Time to Complete Task (Minutes per Day) ↓
Capacity plan	15
Scheduling fulfillment	10
Distribution of the schedule	2
Intraday management	10
Postschedule efficiency analysis	10
Gross Total (minutes per schedule)	47
Run automated capacity plan	1
Review automated schedule	5
Intraday management	5
Gross Total (minutes per schedule)	11
Net Total Saving (minutes per schedule)	36

Foundational to ROI is identifying your retail business drivers. Are you trying to reduce customer wait times at the register? Are you trying to increase sales volume? Are you trying to improve customer service across departments? Do you need to allocate labor during peak hours without increasing costs?

Rather than looking to what the technology can do, it's imperative to first discuss functionality in the context of your own business process by asking "What is the problem we are trying to solve and is our current system solving that problem?"

Once your business drivers are identified, technology can be applied to fill the gap between metrics and schedule optimization. Further questions might include:

1. *How are you notified about next week's sales volume?*
2. *How you are notified about next quarter's sales volume?*
3. *How do you build a store schedule?*
4. *How do you handle time off requests?*

According to Gartner, by 2025, 40% of large enterprises with hourly paid workers and variable demand for labor will use automation to drive workforce scheduling decisions.

As your retail organization responds to shifting marketing conditions, the predictive, automation, and mobile powers of Advanced Scheduler will help you respond competitively optimizing your most valuable asset — your workforce.

If you need a team to help you optimize the functionality of Kronos Advanced Scheduler, we can help. [Contact the Improvizations Team](#) today and let's get rolling toward mainstreaming your staffing and boosting your business results!

*The Kronos Creatives.
We See What's Possible.*

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