

Workforce Manager™

For many years, retailers have implemented labor scheduling solutions to control labor costs and improve compliance with union rules and labor laws. While traditional solutions may help retailers control their labor spend and comply with business rules, they don't help accomplish another critically important opportunity – to increase sales.

Traditional enterprise scheduling applications take simplistic approaches such as forecasting labor requirements based on historical sales only (i.e., top-down drivers such as forecasted sales, number of items expected to be sold, or customer count). But these traditional solutions do not factor in bottom-up corporate-driven work – promotions, new product rollouts, category resets, and so on – which accounts for 20-40 percent or more of store labor activities. Without a way to calculate all the work that must be performed in the stores — top-down and bottom-up — schedules will always be off.

The only way to ensure stores have the right mix of labor to complete all work and meet target customer service levels is to have visibility into workloads required to complete all tasks in the stores: customer facing, corporate-driven, daily, fixed, and ad hoc.

In addition to the critical requirements described above, retailers require scheduling solutions tailored for the dynamic needs of retail workforce management. Traditional labor scheduling programs use inefficient algorithms — some developed decades ago for manufacturing and supply chain usage and not suitable for the dynamic needs of retail. Such algorithms lead to unacceptable processing time for schedule generation and do not have the ability to rapidly generate multiple iterations to support the fast-paced and continually changing retail environment.

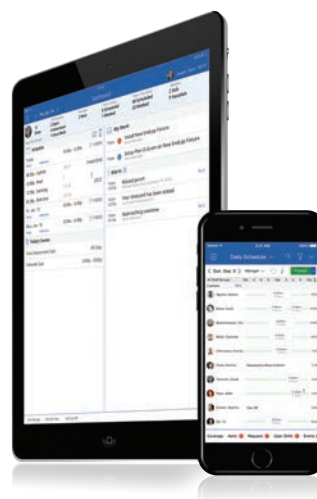
To solve this problem, traditional solutions force retailers to limit the number of constraints that can be factored into their calculations, thereby making the schedule less employee-centric. This shortcoming negates the effectiveness of the schedule, leading to, at best, disgruntled acceptance in the stores, higher employee turnover, and increased training costs. Alternatively, unacceptable processing time forces the retailer to schedule a subset of employees in each store (e.g., cashiers only), which negates the benefits of dynamic automated scheduling for all store employees.

Workforce Management Especially for Retailers

Reflexis has extensive experience in helping retailers achieve execution excellence throughout their organization, including corporate, regional management, and in their stores.

“Retailers are using granular task information, combined with understanding how long it takes to accomplish certain tasks based on labor standards, to fuel labor forecasting systems. This enables more accurate forecasting of demand by balancing both customer service priorities and home-office driven mandates.”

- Gartner Research



Our Web-based workforce management solutions (all developed by Reflexis) help retailers define all activities required in the workplace: accurately forecast the workload demand, rapidly generate accurate schedules, and provide real-time visibility to execution status in all locations. Not just schedule the right person at the right time, but ensure they are doing the right thing. Furthermore, Reflexis provides all of this in solutions that are easy to learn and use, a crucial requirement for an industry typically plagued by high employee turnover rates.

Reflexis Workforce Manager (labor budgeting, forecasting, scheduling, & reporting) generates accurate forecasts and schedules while factoring in all the variables required by retailers:

- Compliance with labor laws and union rules
- Employee skills, proficiency ratings, availability, and work preferences
- Dynamic customer traffic patterns
- Workloads needed to complete corporate driven tasks
- Varying store size, format, operating hours, and brand

Reflexis enables retailers to generate accurate schedules that factor in both kinds of drivers: top-down (forecasted sales, number of items expected to be sold, or customer count) and bottom-up (fixed activities and ad-hoc ones such as setting up a promotion).

Reflexis Satisfies the Need for Speed

The Reflexis labor scheduling module is based on new mathematical algorithms developed specifically for retail by a team of experts at the MIT Operations Research Lab. It can generate “wall-to-wall” schedules — for all store employees, not just a subset of them — at a rate of seconds per store. By rapidly generating schedules that factor in all of the above variables, Reflexis satisfies the retailer’s business objectives while improving employee morale (and reducing turnover) by respecting their preferences.

Labor Forecast: Increased Sales

Reflexis is the only solution that provides retailers with the integrated tools needed to coordinate corporate planning, optimize schedules, and measure store compliance of its sales, merchandising, and operational initiatives. When integrated with Reflexis Task Management, our Labor Scheduling solution enables you to minimize labor costs while maximizing the ability to execute to plan.

Task management/labor scheduling integration is a particular strength of the Reflexis platform. Task-based data such as required workloads can flow directly from Reflexis Task Manager into the Reflexis labor scheduling engine. Once the tasks, whether on-going or ad hoc, are approved through the company’s approval workflow process, tasks including information such as required workload, date/time, etc. are published to the labor scheduling application. The integration is seamless: projects created in Task Manager are automatically brought into the Workforce Manager application.

With Reflexis Workforce Manager and Task Manager, retailers can not only ensure the right person is scheduled at the right time, they can also ensure their corporate strategy is executed as intended in all stores to drive increased sales and profitability.

The Reflexis Advantage

An integrated platform of task management, compliance, time and attendance, and labor scheduling solutions enables retailers to maximize the efficiency of their workforce, ensure key tasks are completed as intended, and respond quickly to sales and operations trends using best practices. An integrated workforce management solution enables retailers to:

- Control labor costs and maintain compliance with union rules and labor laws
- Reduce IT and maintenance costs: the common Reflexis Operating Model enables business administrators to easily update procedure changes and operating policies (e.g., store open/close hours) from one central location
- Ensure promotions, new product rollouts, and other corporate-driven initiatives are carried out as expected in all stores
- Create labor schedules that ensure employees have enough time to help customers and complete corporate work – both of which drive increased sales
- Leverage real-time KPI-driven tasks to automatically assign corrective action when a metric falls out of tolerance
- Receive tasks and alerts and update status in real time using handheld devices on the sales floor or in the field
- Automate Time and Attendance/payroll processes to increase accuracy and respond proactively to important trends such as impending overtime and labor violations

