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Your guide to Intelligent Auto Rostering

Right people, right place, right time

GUIDE - Advanced Time & Attendance software

Right people, right place, right time. Your guide to intelligent auto rostering.

If there is one lesson which businesses should take away from the past few years, it should be that above all else, the ability to remain agile and adaptive to change is paramount. In the face of global upheaval and mass disruption, we've all been taught the value of no longer being beholden to rigid structures.

A key pillar of this is the ability for businesses to get the right people in the right place at the right time, at a moment's notice. **Sicknesses or other absences have the potential to cause significant levels of disruption** within the workplace and ensuring that proper cover is secured to shore up a shift is vitally important. Unfortunately, this is also an area which can all too easily become a time sink for, plugging holes manually with frantic phone calls and emails.

The role of HR and operations teams has never been more important for organisations across the globe. The disruption of the pandemic and growing concern for an unstable economy means that **simple and automated processes are becoming the norm** to not only increase efficiency but to ensure your people can focus on strategic priorities.

One of the best ways you can help your teams achieve this excellence is by freeing them from the drudgery of manual inputs and admin heavy tasks. **Shift patterning, scheduling and sick cover can represent significant time sinks for HR and management teams.**

Contrary to older schools of thought, automation isn't designed to replace the human factor within organisations- in fact, greater degrees of automation have the potential to free the human experts within your business to leverage their time and talents in more meaningful ways. New technology isn't intended to replace people, it is in fact a tool designed to handle the more tedious and data intensive responsibilities so that the talents of your people can be put to more creative uses. With the priorities of all businesses set on pushing forward productivity and profitability, it is clear that automation offers one of the clearest pathways to success.

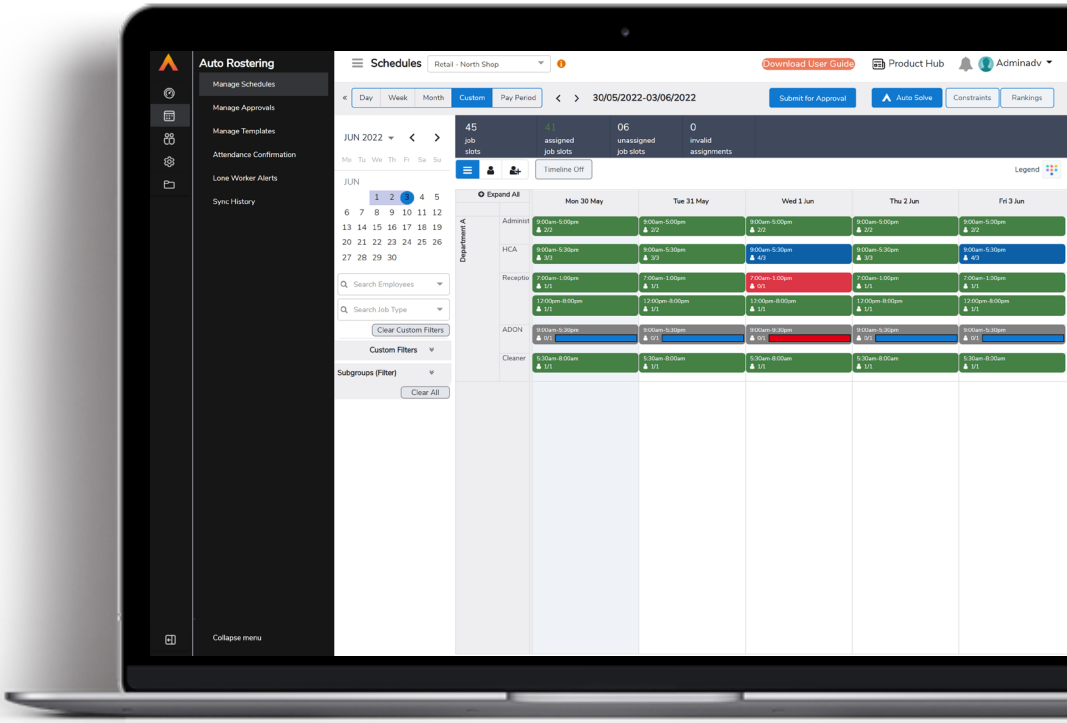
In this guide **we explore the future of automated processes for organisations - most specifically in the field of rostering and shift patterning** (known more formally as auto-rostering), and examine some of the ways that increased automation can help transform a businesses' prospect and allow them to leverage the talents of their people for the better.

What is Auto Rostering?

Balancing demand with capacity is one of the key challenges facing an organisation when it comes to rostering. Furthermore, the need for specific skillsets or certifications (first aid training, forklift certification etc.) can mean that ensuring the optimal talent is in at the right time is easier said than done.

Organisations which rely on heavily manual processes for their scheduling can often find themselves wide open to complications which arise from sickness absences or no shows. Without the reactive capability to source adequate cover ahead of time, businesses can find themselves hamstrung in terms of output, not to mention opening themselves up to potential compliance nightmares if certain health and safety roles aren't adequately represented.

Auto rostering does away with the pain of manual inputs, freeing your teams to leverage their talents in more creative and meaningful ways for your business- focusing on what's most important to you.



Key features include:

Auto Solve
Automatically roster your people with one click

Roster Templates
Templates can be created and quickly applied to represent various recurring shift patterns over one or multiple weeks

Skills Mapping
Effortlessly roster the most suitable people for the right shift

Employee Trade Board
Where enabled by managers, employees can quickly trade shifts with other qualified employees, in line with the schedule's rules and constraints

What are the key things to look out for in intelligent auto rostering?

Auto Solving

Employee absence - planned or otherwise, is a simple reality of the modern working world. With sickness absences costing Australian firms $7 billion annually, it's clear that regardless of sector, all organisations need to be mindful of the impact of employee absences and agile to the need to find adequate cover for shifts.

In many industries, sourcing sick cover or covering for other forms of absence can often fall to HR or management teams. This can represent a huge demand on their time as without the proper framework in place, finding appropriate cover can involve a great deal of manual leg work.

Depending on the sector, other factors may throw up additional hurdles which makes sourcing shift cover more difficult than it seems. Consider a distribution hub- if an employee who has forklift truck certification calls in sick, then it's not just a case of a straight swap for another employee- there is the absolute need to ensure that their shift is covered by a colleague who is equivalently qualified. This adds a further degree of granularity to the search for shift cover and can mean your HR and management teams are losing more of their precious time.

Auto solving means that with the touch of a button, shifts are automatically populated, all with taking into account the proper levels of skillset and certification, cover for sicknesses and absences can be sourced effortlessly and reports can be generated to help give you the key insights you need to guide ongoing strategy.

> "Advanced Time & Attendance software saves a great deal of time and produces accurate information at the touch of a button, rapidly reducing labour and administrative costs."
>
> Axminster Carpets

Roster Templates

Ask anybody in your organisation what they find to be one of the biggest hurdles to productivity and they're likely to cite manual processes and admin heavy tasks. This is a particular bugbear when it comes to rostering as management or shift leaders can find themselves losing precious hours every week.

It's all too easy to become bogged down by manual inputs, meaning that your management teams are wasting hours each and every working week replicating the same, easily automated tasks.

How do organisations go about avoiding this groundhog day feeling?
The answer lies in roster templates.

With the right software, templates can be created and quickly applied to represent various recurring shift patterns over one or multiple weeks. This offers you the peace of mind you need to understand that the complexities of shift patterning are well in hand with an easy to replicate formula which you can return to time and time again, or tweak if you need to without working off multiple variations of different spreadsheets.

This means you can spend more time driving forward productivity and less time spent week after week, manually creating staff rosters.

Skills Mapping

When it comes to rostering, sometimes it's not just enough to be able to find cover. Depending on the gap in your workforce, the emphasis may firmly be on getting the right person with the right skillsets in place.

Say you work in a warehouse- a colleague calls in sick but you're confident in being able to source replacement cover for their shift. Then you remember that the person who's called in is a qualified forklift truck operator. Suddenly there is a specific gap in skills for that shift and you need to find someone to cover the shift with equivalent certification.

Without intelligent auto-rostering, this process would require a huge amount of legwork, manually checking through available employees and cross checking them against relevant qualifications. This represents a huge time sink and also means you're less agile when it comes to meeting the challenges of unexpected absences.

Skills mapping takes the strain off of you, eliminating the need to manually sift through available cover to find the best candidate with the right skills and qualifications. With Skills mapping, you set your own parameters and define the skillsets and qualifications you need to populate a shift.

Employee Trade Board

Ask anyone who works in people management and they'll probably tell you that fielding admin requests regarding time off represents a huge demand on their time. Even simple tasks such as approving requests can eat up hours every working week and that's before you get into the complexity of sourcing cover.

Intelligent auto rostering can also offer you a unique framework to empower you people to take charge of their schedules. If your Time and Attendance software has them, employee trade boards can be actioned by management within your organisation and provide a forum for your people to exchange shifts that suit them at their own discretion. This is a powerful feature which not only incentivises your people to take control of their shifts but most importantly, it bypasses the need for your people teams to deal with the admin of shift swap requests and sourcing cover themselves.

This level of flexibility isn't just a boon for your management or shift leading teams either. Offering your people a way to take charge of their time off is a real quality of life benefit that helps address work-life balance and one which means your employees are more likely to sing your businesses' praises as a place to work.

Employee trade boards allow you to move away from a rigid, micro-management intensive way of dealing with leave requests and shift swapping and offering a more empowering, employee driven experience. From the perspective of talent acquisition and retention, offerings such as these can form a core component of your employee value proposition and can help you stand out from your competitors.

Compliance

Intelligent rostering isn't just about ensuring the right people are in the right place at the right time to ensure productivity and the smooth running of a shift. Sometimes, that very continuity is important to ensure businesses are avoiding potential legal pitfalls and even financial penalties.

As with certifications around skillsets, certain qualifications such as first aid or fire warden training are mandatory to comply with workplace laws and health and safety requirements. Failure to adhere to these regulations can lead to severe consequences for businesses not just in terms of legal repercussions but also potentially the wellbeing of their people should accidents occur.

Errors in rostering and not having the appropriately qualified staff in place is a possibility which is only compounded when you bring manual inputs into the mix. It's no secret that the greater the amount of manual inputs within a given process, the greater the scope for human error. When you're talking about the wellbeing and continued safety of your people, there's no room for compromise.

Intelligent auto rostering allows you the perfect framework to achieve true staffing compliance through the automation of tedious, manual processes. Attendance notifications or lone worker alerts that are routed to your shift running teams or management can ensure that you're never caught off guard by sudden absences and you can always ensure that you have the appropriately qualified staff in place to safeguard your people.

What's Next?

At Advanced, we understand just how vitally crucial it is that you have the people with the proper skillset on shift when you need them. We also understand how wrangling a schedule for a large workforce is easier said than done and without access to the proper tools, people teams can find themselves losing valuable hours each working week to manual processes.

Our new Auto rostering function within Advanced Time and Attendance has been created specifically to handle the strain of the complex shift organisation. Auto Rostering is a multi-platform smart scheduling application for all industry sectors, designed to make complex staff rostering easy, saving time and money. Our Auto Rostering capabilities optimise the allocation of employees to shifts and will take into consideration all active complex constraints and rostering rules, employee availability, and employee skillsets to get the right person in the right place at the right time.

Auto rostering can also offer you a unique framework to empower you people to take charge of their schedules. Our employee trade boards can be actioned by management within your organisation and provide a forum for your people to exchange shifts at their own discretion. This is a powerful feature which not only incentivises your people to take control of their shifts but most importantly, it bypasses the need for your people teams to deal with the admin of shift swap requests and sourcing cover themselves.

We're proud to offer a comprehensive range of workforce management solutions, boasting some of the best systems and hardware on the market. Auto Rostering works seamlessly within Advanced Time & Attendance and with our clocking terminals to provide a full workforce management solution for your organisation.

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We would love to hear from you

If you'd like to discover more about how our auto rostering and other people management solutions can help transform the way you work, get in touch with one of our friendly team members today.

Contact us

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