



Workforce Management Case Study

Automated Time and Attendance Solution: Leaving behind the time consuming and error-prone time cards system

The Company

Bemis Flexible Packaging is known as a world leader in specialty packaging, serving the food and beverage markets. At the beginning of 2010 Bemis Company Inc. purchased the Alcan Packaging Food Americas division – part of this acquisition included the manufacturing plant in Toronto Ontario Canada.

Striving to deliver the highest quality packaging products and services to its customers in a competitive environment, the Toronto facility invested in technology solutions that help achieve higher productivity and efficiency. However, the company's original manual clocks and payment process had changed little over time.

“We were still using the old-fashioned punch time clocks with paper time cards - like something out of the old movies!! We wanted to improve this extremely time-consuming and error-prone system by electronically gathering the data , addressing the exceptions, processing and transferring accurate results to payroll in order to better schedule times and work, control cost and guarantee the exact payments.”

Iain Morton, Human Resources Manager of the Toronto facility, Bemis Flexible Packaging (Milprint Division).

The Challenge

Time-tracking - A highly labour-intensive process

With about 80% of the Toronto facility workforce in the unionized production area, manual time tracking was a highly time consuming and labour-intensive process exposed to human errors and inaccuracy. Finding out who had worked where and when and at which rate was a hard task when data was manually collected, checked and transferred to payroll on paper time cards, and then summarized using spreadsheets .The objective was to ensure not only cost-control of each operation line, but also to ensure that each employee received the right payment for work performed.



Monitoring the hours, overtime and leaves was always done retroactively using the punched cards, which was susceptible to employees punching in for others who were late to work, or paying overtime despite incompleteness of a full 40 hour work week. Retrospect also creates enormous pressure with all payroll activity deadlines when trying to assure accurate payments. This manual process, managed on spreadsheets corrected by hand and manually typed into the payment system was prone to error. The result was, a time consuming process ending in deductions after payment was processed.

Regularity compliance

Faced with legislative tasks and union agreements the pressure on HR and payment departments increases. These departments were required to invest a large amount of their time in complying with governmental, contractual and legal regulations. Manual work involves great efforts to accurately collect, calculate and produce reports reflecting working hours and conditions, while exposing the company to a risk of non-compliance with rules and agreements.

Control labour costs

Finding the right balance between labour costs and ever tighter product margins is a major challenge for a manufacturing plant. With manual processes and no overall data and reports of real time attendance and different rates for different job assignments, managers lack the ability to identify exactly when and what the actual cost is. Lack of labour tracking is one contributor to unplanned overtime, adding to the increase in operation costs.

The Solution

Synerion, automated Workforce Management solution for the manufacturing industry

The Toronto facility implemented the Synerion workforce management solution as well as the biometric hand system. Today, employees clock in and out by simply scanning their hands.

“Since implementing the Synerion solution, we always receive accurate data and have experienced only success with the hand scanners” praises Iain Morton from Bemis Flexible Packaging.

The system automatically collects time and attendance information, and feeds it to supervisors. Supervisors have gained visibility into daily and weekly working data of their employees and can generate reports. Reports are pulled daily and weekly with a detailed breakdown of who works, when, for how long and in which position. Updates are managed during the week so that when payment processing is required, the bulk of the data gathering has already been completed.



Bemis Flexible Packaging biometric hand system and in the background: what used to be the manual punch card holders became the employees' "mail slots"

Reduce payroll error rate and processing time

Accurately tracking employee time drives big cost savings:

“The overall new process introduced by Synerion, beginning with the initial automated data gathering, and through payroll processes, has saved us, at a minimum, 20% of work time including supervisor work, payroll work and the work of others involved in the process”.

Iain Morton, Bemis Flexible Packaging.

Statutory payments and deductions are made automatically, while payroll costs are posted to the ADP (payroll payment) system.

Simplify the gathering to payment

With the elimination of manual intervention, data is automatically transferred between employees, supervisors, and schedulers. HR and payroll departments increase accuracy and reduce re-work and correction actions. The schedule, approval changes and activity updates and even comments about those updates are all entered from the supervisor's desktop and can be viewed by the HR and payment departments, as well as other supervisors and managers, at any time.

Real Time accurate information

In taking a more proactive approach to business pressures, managers are required to have better insight on the workforce. With Synerion systems, Bemis Flexible Packaging managers and supervisors gain better visibility into planned shift schedules and actual attendance. At the end of each working day supervisors can comment on the daily activity and look at the variants compared to the planned shifts. From approving lateness when appropriate, to remarks about changes on the operations floor that effect the hourly rate –information is now always up-to-date and accurate, ready to process into payment.

Control cost

Cost effectiveness is reached by linking the actual payroll to real operation costs. “*Make-Up Hours Reports*” are generated weekly to ensure completion of the employee’s 40-hour week, regardless of distribution. Only upon completion of the full 40 hours, are the employees entitled to receive overtime payment. This step alone helps gain significant cost reduction. Appropriate payment is also achieved using exception reports such as the “*Attendance Report*” highlighting late-comers, absence, vacations and leaves and the “*Higher Level Position Report*” , ensuring proper payment at applicable rates according to different positions filled during the shift.

Bemis Flexible Packaging has gained not only appropriate payment but also satisfied employees now being paid for the actual tasks they performed. The expectation at the Toronto facility is that the Synerion system will save them an additional \$500/month, after having seen their investment return captured in less than a year.

Finding the right partner

Affordable solution that is easy to use

The Toronto facility of Bemis Flexible Packaging already had past experience trying to implement another well-known Time and Attendance solution, which was unsuccessful. They came to Synerion with the understanding that integrating the Time and Attendance solution, including Time Costing and Time Scheduling would not be as simple as one might think. This integration process is not a simple conversion of hours worked into payment, implementing the solution involves the utilization of different formats and rate codes within different positions, absenteeism and leave codes, to be exported into the payroll system. Moreover, the integration requires a cultural change during which employees and supervisors express their resistance to that change.

The Benefits

- Better overview and control of the workforce
- Easy access to data
- Reduced labour costs
- Budget met
- Payroll accuracy according to different rates and agreements
- Regulation compliance

For more information on Bemis Company, Inc., please visit <http://www.bemis.com/>

For more information on Synerion products, please visit www.synerionwfm.com



We found that Synerion was a true partner during a difficult transition process, affordable and functional for a company our size. Synerion has a unique implementation methodology, helping us customize the solution according to our work processes. We are looking forward to future cooperation with the Synerion Workforce Management solution to help us better utilize our resources”.

Iain Morton, Human Resources Manager.