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How Companies Can **Strategically Align Scheduling** with Business Needs

Why copy-and-paste schedules don't work

The process of shift scheduling is **one of the most overlooked challenges for many organizations**. This seemingly mundane task can ultimately make or break a business as it sets the foundation for every working day—for all managers and employees.

But for so many businesses, the process is ineffective—and many times is broken completely:

- Overwhelmed managers **cannot find the time to create accurate schedules from scratch**, so they decide to merely tweak the previous versions.

- Schedules are distributed with short notice to employees, which results in **employee availability issues and under-staffing.**

- Perhaps most critically, **business needs are not met**. Hastily built schedules are based on the administrators' intuition rather than sales data, foot traffic, seasonality, or other business metrics.

The **scheduling process can be particularly complex** in industries with fluctuating customer demand, such as retail and hospitality, as well as for the organizations that require **24/7 shift coverage**, such as healthcare institutions and call centers. **Top-quality customer service is critical for success**, and it cannot be achieved with disgruntled employees, inefficient shift assignments, and understaffed businesses.

Shifting to a more strategic approach

Shift scheduling is now recognized by organizations large and small as a strategic component for businesses success:

- Hourly workers make up a critical part of the total workforce in the US (55.5% in 2020), and only 15% of them believe they are "free to decide" their work schedule. Overlooking their needs is one of the factors contributing to **lower engagement and high turnover** in industries such as retail and hospitality.

- New labor regulations are gravitating towards **predictive scheduling**, which urges employers to post schedules in advance and plan for adequate compensation for subsequent schedule changes.
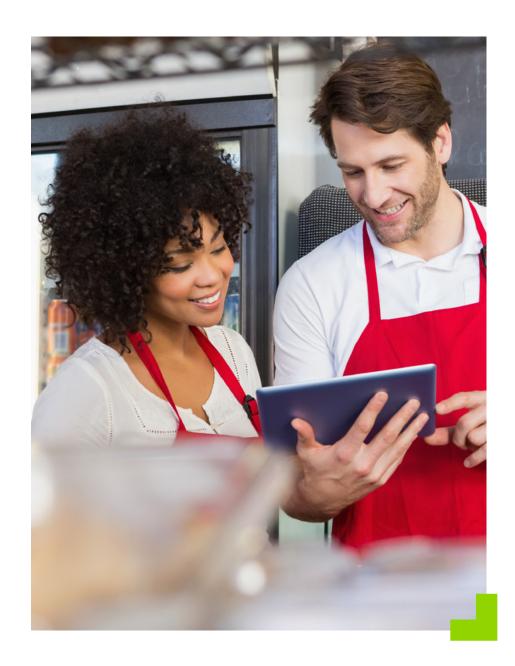
- Many companies are embracing a **"hybrid workforce"**—a mix of in-office staff, seasonal workers, part-time employees, and other team members with alternative work arrangements. Ensuring the entire staff stays focused and keeping business on track cannot be achieved without a **flexible scheduling process**.

- More workers are embracing the concept of **"portfolio careers"**, i.e. opting for multiple part-time jobs in favor of one full-time engagement. To maximize their productivity and earnings, they need employers to **notify them about their shifts in advance**.

Manual scheduling tools—as easy as they might be to use—can't provide what today's businesses require: **real-time responsiveness, analytical capabilities, and resilience**.

Spreadsheets and similar antiquated systems may work for generating one-size-fits-all schedules for small, local businesses, but they cannot account for the nuances unique to a time period, location, customers' expectations, and more. Even worse, **manual scheduling is prone to errors** leading to scheduling conflicts, under-staffing or overtime, neither of which can be afforded.
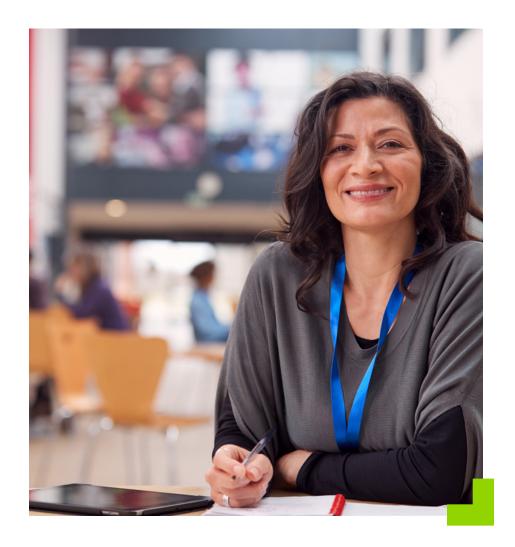
From cookie-cutter schedules to data-driven staffing

Educated guesses and copying schedules week-over-week doesn't work in the long-term. [Demand-driven scheduling](#) enables executives to assess the productivity of past shift assignments, fine-tune future schedules in reflection of prior sales or customer activity, and gain a high-level understanding of the business lifecycle.

With Humanity's powerful, cloud-based scheduling, managers can leverage external data—be it traffic, conversion rate, or KPIs—and integrate it into the scheduling process. **Interactive data visualizations** clearly highlight any variation in demand, dramatically reducing the risk of under-staffing at peak times or over-staffing during a slower period. Supervisors will never again need to devote extra time to analyze data, and can confidently assign shifts in line with the upcoming business demands.

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Get your business ready to overhaul its shift scheduling process.

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