



## SCHEDULING

Reduce  
Workforce  
Friction with  
Integrated  
Scheduling



# Any Way You Look at it, Employee Scheduling is Complicated

It seems like simple advice when a manager hollers, “Check the schedule for your next shift” as an employee leaves for the day. But the reality is, scheduling is one of the most complicated aspects of running a smooth operation.

Integrated solutions are essential to accurate workforce management. Scheduling is a key area where the right solution can streamline processes and procedures to relieve organizational and employee issues that you may not have even realized. Aside from receiving accurate pay, it's likely that an employee's schedule is one of the most relevant aspects of their work experience.

Consider the following scenario...

It's a playoff game during football season. Everybody is at the grocery store buying snacks and people are impatient to get home in time to watch the game. Looking at the long lines at each register, the store manager realizes one employee is more than 30 minutes late. He dials the employee's number, hoping she's on her way to work.

*“Why aren't you here for your shift?” he asks when she picks up.*

*“I checked the schedule on Tuesday. I'm not scheduled to work until next week,” says the employee.*

*“I updated the schedule on Thursday because we had a few last-minute changes. Didn't you see the latest?”*

*“I haven't been at the store since Tuesday, so I had no idea,” says the employee.*

*The manager is frustrated. He knows there must be a better way to communicate schedules than posting them on the wall or calling employees every time there's an update. But he can't think about that right now – the customers are getting restless.*

Regardless of your industry or business, if you're in charge scheduling, there's a good chance you feel this manager's pain. Unfortunately, scheduling is one of the most complicated business elements and one of the most critical aspects of operational success. You can't maximize business results without the people there to help you do so.

# Scheduling Doesn't Have to be Hard, it Starts with an Integrated Approach

HR technology offers a way to address scheduling issues through proactive workforce management – the organizational process that comprises all the activities required to maintain a productive workforce, including:

- Tracking employee time and attendance
- Managing mobile or remote employees
- Creating schedules
- Administering leave management
- Maintaining and managing employee documents
- Integrating with other business systems, including payroll and ERP

Not only are integrated solutions essential to accurate workforce management, but organizations also need a platform that will adapt and flex to their unique needs. Whether it's tracking time and attendance, creating schedules, or integrating with payroll, you need flexibility and configurability in your system.

“The reality is that nonstandard work schedules are common, and every organization that is reimagining the workplace should be cognizant of the pros and cons of implementing them. Schedules can affect a host of important outcomes for employees, both personal and professional,” [according to Harvard Business Review.](#)

Many organizations don't know what they're missing – in terms of employee and operational effectiveness – by not having scheduling integrated with their other systems and tools. When you have a robust workforce management system in place, you have all the information you need to avoid issues like the previous scenario, thanks to an integrated approach.



# How workforce management solutions solve scheduling issues

Even with the technology available, many organizations with hourly employees or shift workers on staff still rely on paper schedules, cumbersome spreadsheets, or outdated backend systems that employees can't access. In these organizations, you'll find the schedule posted on the backroom wall or other central location so that employees can find out when they work next. This approach may suffice when schedules don't need to change. But what happens when they do need to change?

"It is clear that volatile schedules can create tremendous stress and hardship for employees and their families. This is especially true for workers in positions that do not pay well and offer limited benefits," according to the authors at Harvard Business Review.

In many organizations, schedule changes occur daily – if not hourly. Managers and shift supervisors might even say that despite their best efforts, schedules are living documents. The reality is that employees need to swap shifts, special circumstances require adding more labor, people get sick. Managers change and update schedules to fix gaps and ensure the right people are in place. With so much volatility on the scheduling process, and without a convenient way to access the current schedule, it can be tough for employees to know where they need to be and when.

Without workforce management solutions that integrate and include key scheduling capabilities, it can be next to impossible for managers to know what's going on with their teams and even more challenging to manage shift overages and overtime costs effectively.

Organizations such as healthcare providers may have multiple locations, 24-7 operational hours, and traveling workers. All these factors create unique scheduling challenges. Keeping track of these schedules requires significant time and energy that many operations don't have.

## Consider this...

A nurse in the emergency department at your hospital agrees to cover a shift to allow another nurse to take a weekend trip with family. Last minute, you realize this change puts the nurse covering the shift into overtime hours you cannot afford. Now you have to break it to your employee that their weekend plans are ruined.

## How workforce management solutions solve scheduling issues

Without a central workforce management system, managers must review multiple spreadsheets, request forms, and data points to schedule each employee properly. These outdated systems make the scheduling process ripe for errors. In the healthcare industry, managing overtime is particularly essential to ensure employees aren't burdened by too many shifts and reduce perceptions of favoritism around shift assignments. In this environment, accurate and smart scheduling not only impacts the organization budget and employee satisfaction, but it also affects patient safety.

There are also labor laws and state requirements regarding hours worked. For example, in California, there are unique [regulations regarding overtime](#). In Seattle and other localities, employees earn [sick and safe paid time off](#) based on the number of hours they work. A flexible system that adapts to your organization's needs is an important way to ensure you're meeting local and federal compliance regulations.



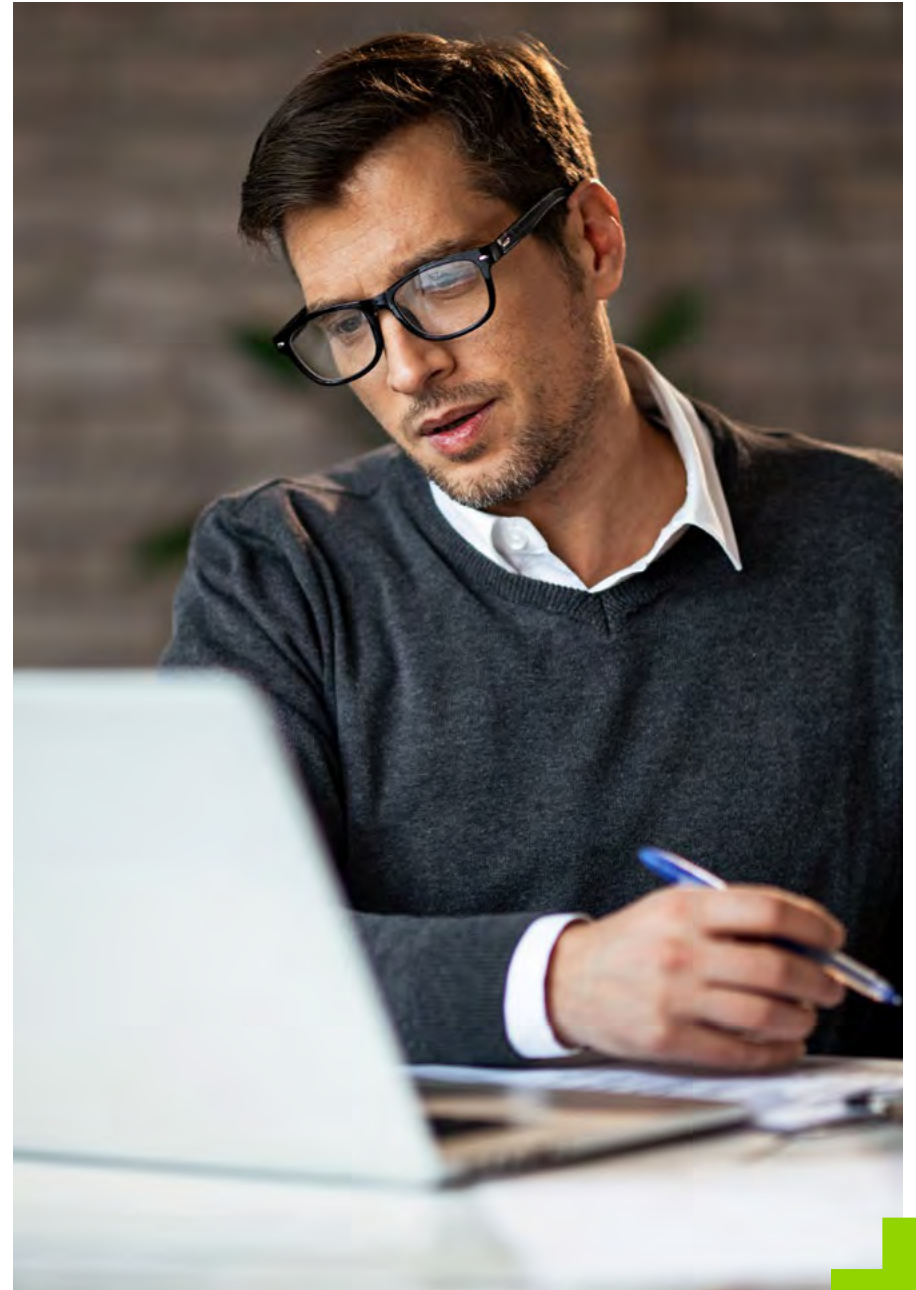
## Important capabilities for scheduling

Week after week, month by month, schedules need to be created repeatedly. Making the employee schedule to cover various shifts is an important, but thankless, role in many organizations. When a schedule is managed effectively using a scalable, repeatable process, productivity is off the charts, and labor costs come in at -- or under -- budget.

The person or people who manage the schedule not only need to know each employee's availability, but also their role, skillset, and in some cases, the hours they're working in other parts of the organization. (That's all information that can easily be lost if it's posted to the schedule on a sticky note!)

The good news is that HR technology has made this task much more manageable for every size company. In the past, only large companies could afford to purchase systems that would help automate scheduling. Thanks to cloud-based platforms, scheduling automation and robust workforce management are an option for any organization.

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# Important capabilities for scheduling

Some of the fundamental ways that scheduling software supports organizations include:

**Flexible schedules and configurations** allow managers to pivot shift coverage quickly or reassign a shift to another employee. This flexibility helps when people are out sick or are using other paid time off.

**Reporting** is a crucial benefit to view and compare scheduling data against hours worked. Variance tracking also enables Payroll, HR, and leadership teams to assess scheduling from a strategic perspective for organizational impact and analysis.

**Employee access** to schedules improves engagement and efficiency. When employees can see their schedule online, make schedule requests, and communicate with their manager about changes, they're empowered to participate in the process, helping to make it more efficient and productive. Some systems even provide the ability to create push notifications about schedule changes or to send reminders when it's time to work.

**Interdepartmental communication** and views provide enhanced organizational visibility. This is great for multiple departments or locations and employees who work in multiple departments. This view of all an employee's roles and departments where they work reduces the chances of scheduling an employee in two locations at once, helps keep unnecessary overtime in check, and ensures compliance with hourly regulations.

## Consider this...

A Lieutenant in your police department needs a day off. There are plenty of officers willing to cover the shift, but this shift can only be covered by another lieutenant. How can you make it easier to find replacements with the proper qualifications to cover the shift?



## Software solves common scheduling issues

Two recent HR industry studies found that while the Covid-19 pandemic changed organizations' spending on traditional HR technologies, many still invest in the systems required to support remote work, [according to the Society for Human Resource Management](#).

One of the studies attributes the desire to upgrade systems to an increased need for "time management technologies with time tracking and scheduling applications that are highly configurable." They also found that 36 percent of organizations practiced workforce planning in 2020, which was much higher than in previous years. Now more than ever, HR functions need workforce data and tools they can leverage to provide answers and make workforce plans – even during challenging times.

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# Software solves common scheduling issues

As you consider what your organization needs from a scheduling tool, there are vital features to consider. Necessary capabilities to think about scheduling and workforce management solutions include...

- **How does the system allow employees to view schedules?**  
A schedule created in a vacuum is not going to help anyone. Even if a manager uses technology to create a schedule, it's only useful if they have a way to deliver it to employees. Look for solutions that enable employees to check and view their schedule, regardless of their location. You also want to provide a way for them to view historical data about their hours and the shifts they've worked. Without these capabilities, employees may suffer due to miscommunication, lack of job satisfaction, and even burnout.
- **Can the system meet individual department and team needs?**  
Your medical office staff may have standard hours, but your on-call nurses work various hours and shifts. Each department and team may schedule differently, which means you need a solution that fits multiple scheduling needs.
- **Will the system help identify and control overspending in labor?**  
When it comes to schedules and time tracking, you don't know what you don't know. Suppose your scheduling system is separate from time and attendance. In that case, labor variances or issues will come to your attention when the pay period closes, which may be long after they

occurred. Managers need to be able to view exceptions so they can follow-up on employee time entries and data. Rather than asking managers to dig deep into data files, try to find a system that flags issues, alerts managers, and raises awareness regarding any employees who are close to reaching overtime limits or who aren't keeping to the schedule (e.g., arrive late and leave early).

- **Is there a way we can examine scheduling against workforce management trends?**  
Scheduling is a crucial component of workforce management, and as such, you need data that will provide a perspective about schedule variance and trends. With integrated reporting capabilities, workforce management systems empower managers by allowing them to view productivity trends in schedules and hours worked.

Just as your scheduling capabilities have outgrown the calendar-on-the-wall method, you want the workforce management you choose to grow and flex to meet your needs. As with any HR technology solution, it's best to find a fully integrated solution that meets multiple requirements.

# Five Features That Set TCP's Scheduling Capabilities Apart

Based on our experience, we know that scheduling should improve overall operations and ensure you have the right people in the right place at the right time. For today's employers and employees, scheduling is much more complicated than posting a calendar on a wall. We offer a variety of scheduling tools to support how your organization achieves results. With [TCP's scheduling solution](#), powered by TimeClock Plus software, you can build and manage schedules, create recurring schedules, set up exceptions, and download reports to optimize your workforce.

Here are five important ways TCP sets itself apart from other providers...



# 1 Flexible scheduling options

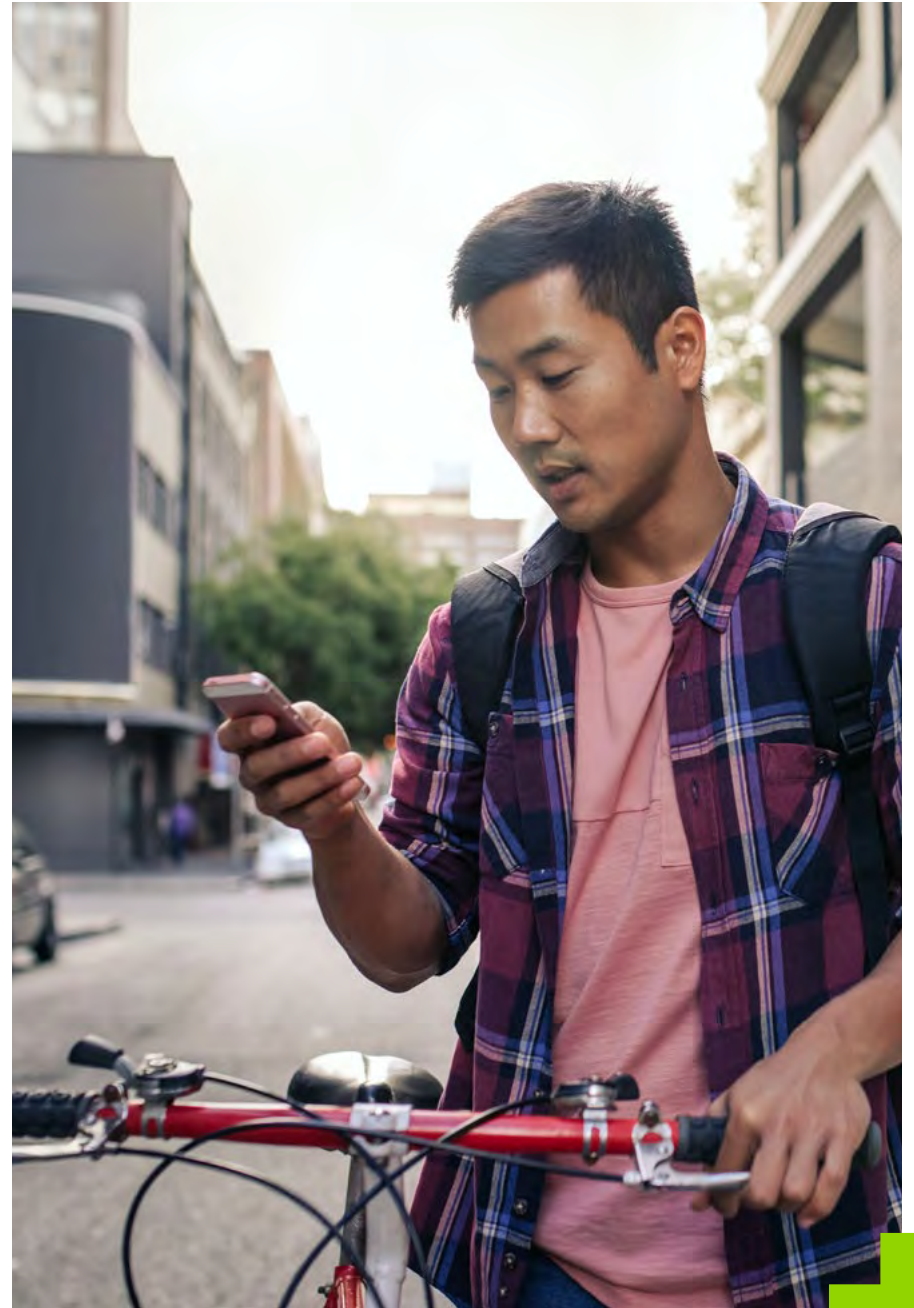
Schedules in our software can be set up on an ad hoc basis to recurring 9 to 5 hours, and anything in between. You can also deploy specific schedules for different environments. The easy-to-use interface allows you to drag and drop shift assignments, as well as view coverage percentages to ensure the right people are scheduled at the right time.

# 2 Employee accessibility

We make it easy for your workforce to access their schedules on any electronic device. With this ability, employees are empowered to manage their schedules remotely, trade shifts, and request days off. Organizations also have the flexibility to allow employees to change their schedules without manager input if desired.

# 3 Integrated workforce management

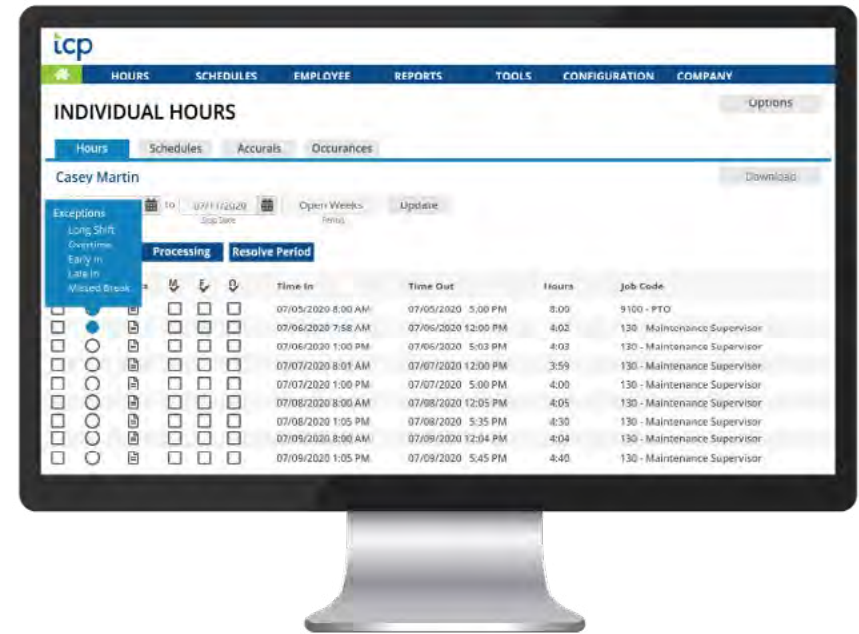
Thanks to seamless configuration, you're able to integrate scheduling with our time and attendance, leave management, and other capabilities.



# 4

## Regulatory compliance

In the TCP system, you can create rules to ensure that laws are followed and, overtime is appropriately applied. This helps ensure compliance with federal, state, and local labor laws.



# 5

## Exception tracking

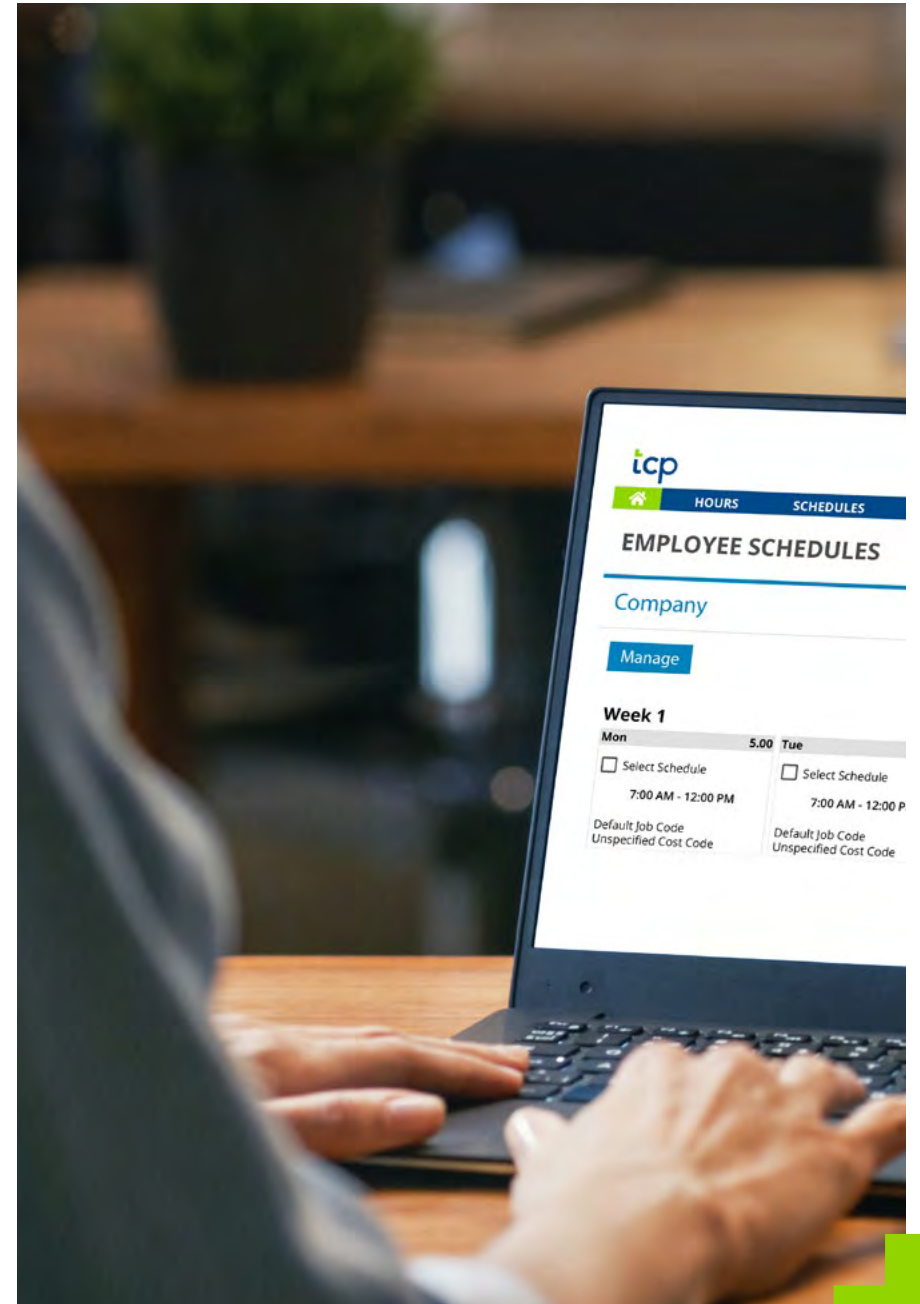
We know that organizations need to monitor schedule anomalies, such as late arrivals or missed shifts, and take action to resolve issues. Our TimeClock Plus software allows users to define the types of anomalies they wish to track, and you can also set up notifications based on these actionable occurrences.

# You Can Schedule Better with TCP

Scheduling is about having the right people in the right place at the right time. But the long-term impact extends far beyond that weekly or monthly schedule. Effective, efficient scheduling built with a modern system can help cut costs, ensure compliance, and provide workforce management and planning data that informs business decisions.

Find a solution that offers you scheduling support but also provides what you need when it comes to workforce management. When you have a flexible, real-time scheduling option that includes opportunities to analyze vital operational data, you can improve employee experiences, support managers, and make changes that impact your business.

Reach out today to learn more and [schedule a demo](#) with one of our consultants.





## Integrated solutions are key to maintaining a productive workforce

While time and attendance is at the core of workforce management, true workforce management occurs when all the key activities required to maintain a productive workforce integrate seamlessly into one package. If your organization is looking to up-level your HR technology, [download](#) our full eBook, “Everything You Need to Know About Workforce Management,” to learn how robust, integrated solutions can help you streamline processes and maximize your workforce.

