



Scheduling: Making the Case for Change

How to build a case for automated scheduling that aligns with public safety agency goals

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Making the Case for Change

Discovering a solution to a problem your organization is facing is only half the battle. The other half is convincing the relevant stakeholders to lend their support and help make the change a reality. This typically entails making a case for the proposed solution — explaining clearly and convincingly what need is being addressed, why this particular solution is the one worth exploring, and why it's worth the budget to get it done.

To get the attention of leaders, IT, and other important stakeholders and to persuade them to approve your project, you'll need to answer the following question.

How will an automated scheduling system assist the agency with reaching its mission-critical purpose and crucial business objectives?

Automated scheduling technology offers unique solutions to the issues associated with manual scheduling. An automated scheduling system can help public safety agencies in five key areas:

1. Standardizing scheduling
2. Increasing productivity
3. Reducing compliance risk
4. Promoting transparency and employee engagement
5. Providing managers better tools to control costs

Creating a compelling argument for a new automated scheduling system to present to leaders is critical to getting buy-in. From staying abreast of current technology to maintaining compliance and increasing productivity, articulating the need and value in terms that will resonate with leaders is key to moving the case from a “nice to have” option to a reality.

Most importantly, the business case must convincingly answer the question of why the agency should spend its time and money investigating and implementing the proposed solution. For scheduling, important business goals include scheduling standardization and compliance, eliminating the administrative workload, and increasing productivity and budget responsibility.

To define the business need and to provide supporting business drivers, the case also should include the following.

Operational challenge

What are the greatest challenges of scheduling employees?

Strategy







Can you currently tie the agency's operational strategy to the existing scheduling tools and support the goals of the agency? What opportunities could the agency take advantage of by going forward with the project? What risks or liabilities could be reduced or mitigated?

As you document the current system, use the following list of business drivers to illustrate where the key areas impact the agency and how technology can be used to make improvements (or guard against risk):

- **Standardize scheduling:** An automated scheduling solution ensures that everyone is treated the same way through scheduling uniformity. It creates structured staffing and approval processes that are fair and equitable, while ensuring schedules are created that put the right person in the right place at the right time based on rules.
- **Increase compliance:** Compliance and fatigue rules for scheduling should be preconfigured in an automated solution and consistently validated when staffing decisions are made and when granting time off. In addition, a full audit trail and reporting capabilities should be intrinsic to the scheduling application, providing needed audit trail data without having to dig for the information.
- **Eliminate redundant manual work:** Mobile and self-service access allows employees to submit time-off requests, conduct shift changes among themselves, accept work offers, access schedules, and view accruals, which greatly reduces redundant administrative work for the command staff. The more that employees can perform their own tasks, the less time and effort that is required by the command staff.
- **Manage labor costs:** Controls and reports within the automated scheduling system help command staff stay on top of costs. The scheduling application should be able to alert managers to over- and understaffing, identify who is eligible for overtime, track overtime hours by activity for audit purposes, and pre-approve or suppress overtime if needed.
- **Improve operational visibility through reporting:** Authority levels and access for different employees and groups mean that managers can access detailed reports with the most requested and recommended metrics for better decision-making and in-depth insight into operations. Reports can be scheduled and emailed to keep managers up to date
- **Increase employee engagement:** All employees in the agency should have confidence that scheduling is fair, equitable, and safe. They also should have control over their schedules for better work-life balance and feel that there is open and flexible communication across the agency and scheduling tasks are simplified.

Identifying stakeholders and gaining support

Scheduling processes affect every person in the agency and impact resources in other departments such as IT, payroll, and HR, and in labor unions. Changing the way things are done can be unsettling to many people. Identify relevant stakeholders to get buy-in from different roles and departments, and recognize their concerns, including what works and what doesn't work in the current scheduling process. Addressing these issues will help you gain their support and obtain the right system. The table below outlines what each stakeholder's concerns might be.

Role	Interests	Concerns
 Chief	Reporting, budget, overall operational efficiency, compliance, community, labor union and media relations	Visibility into labor costs and employee trends, controlling costs, operational efficiency, enforcing policies, avoiding negative media coverage
 Managers i.e., command staff	Simplified scheduling, ease of use, clear and uniform policies, self-service tools	Difficulty scheduling and notifying employees of work and filling openings; ability to know who is working and where or who is off duty, and how to contact any employee at any time; ensuring certifications/qualifications are up to date; morale; ability to share data with other systems
 IT Professionals	Security, deployment, maintenance	Ease of implementation, maintenance, support and security
 Labor Relations	Adherence to collective bargaining agreements	Employee engagement, fair and equitable scheduling, enforceable and auditable policies
 Payroll Professionals	Ease of use, integration of scheduling and payroll to reduce data entry	Timely and accurate feeds of payroll data, production of the perfect paycheck
 Employees	Fair and equitable schedules, ease of use, mobile and self-service access	Unfair scheduling practices, lack of transparency, work-life imbalance

Finalizing the case for a scheduling change

As you complete your business case, make sure that you've linked each new technology improvement to a benefit realized. The benefit might not always be hard dollar savings, but every case should show how the new technology directly connects to an actual benefit for the agency and the agency's goals.

Each case will have its own unique set of business drivers and solutions, but each should be able to answer the following questions and explain how investing in a new technology benefits the agency:

- What value does a new automated scheduling system provide that our current scheduling tool does not?
- Is the cost of the new automated scheduling system justified?
- What are the concerns of each stakeholder, and how can I address them?

Pulling it all together

Making an effective case for switching to an automated scheduling system requires planning and business acumen. An automated system can save your organization a great deal of time and money over the long run while also building transparency and employee engagement. However, first, a case must be made for the goal, and institutional momentum must be gathered. With the steps outlined in this white paper, you should have all you need to move internal stakeholders and get your organization on the path to more effective, efficient scheduling.

For more information, please visit ukg.com/publicsafety.



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