



# Workforce Management

## Manufacturing

Interview with **schedulePRO** 



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Sachin Agrawal is the CEO of SchedulePro, a leading workforce management solution provider for the manufacturing, petroleum and corrections industries, whose customers which include Procter & Gamble, a Big 3 auto manufacturer and Shell Oil. As an expert on workforce efficiency and labor cost reduction, Sachin has a track record of significantly increasing productivity and reducing employee costs for Fortune 500 companies. Prior to SchedulePro, Sachin was a product leader at Microsoft where he developed enterprise-scale products for Windows, MSN and Windows Server.

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## Amongst all of the improvements manufacturers should make within their organization, why should manufacturers focus on employee scheduling?

Labor shortages are commonly cited as the biggest challenge facing manufacturers in 2019 and for the foreseeable future. According to Deloitte there will be between 2 million and 3.5 million unfilled manufacturing jobs by 2025. With such a large resourcing challenge, manufacturers need to not only leverage their human capital in an efficient way, but also manage employee engagement as it relates to working hours and fatigue levels for skilled shift workers.

With the aging demographic of skilled workers that are churning out due to retirement, the new breed of incoming workers will struggle with the AS/400 and Excel-based technology platforms common with manufacturers. Upgrading to a cloud-based software with an easy-to-use interface can speed up adoption and improve usage, both from a Scheduler and from an employee perspective.

Also, compared to other potential digital transformation initiatives, there are very few that can provide such immediate and tangible ROI like employee scheduling improvements can. Most technology solutions need at least a year to see any benefit in comparison to scheduling software, which can take just a few months to realize the advantages. This is true whether you are talking about efficiency and cost savings or driving greater scheduling fairness and safety for your workers.

## Tell us about SchedulePro. What are the benefits of integrating employee scheduling within an organization's continuous improvement strategy?

SchedulePro is an enterprise-grade workforce management software solution that simplifies and automates the manual staff scheduling processes often found with manufacturers.

Typically, manufacturers use Excel-based solutions -- which are often time-consuming and error-prone -- to schedule their employees. SchedulePro is the only solution that can offer one-click auto scheduling while ensuring a company's internal and external policies are adhered to. This includes worker fatigue guidelines, overtime regulations and any union requirements. It also provides analytic reports and insights into where issues are occurring and ways to reduce labor costs.

SchedulePro provides demand-based scheduling that can quickly scale your workforce up or down to meet the manufacturing industry's dynamic environments.





## How does automated employee scheduling increase efficiency, reduce labor costs and simplify compliance?

SchedulePro increases efficiency by simplifying employee scheduling down to a single mouse click. Manual processes require cross referencing different labor policies and employee qualifications in addition to checking staff availability due to leaves. However, the right scheduling solution can easily manage all of these variables across multiple facilities, teams and business units. The web-based interface also means less ramp up time for new schedulers compared to using large and cumbersome Excel files.

An automated employee scheduling solution helps organizations reduce costs by finding the optimal candidates at the lowest hourly labor rate. However, an intelligent scheduling solution will find not only the cheapest employee, but will look backwards and forwards in their work history to ensure they remain compliant with any labor laws or industry guidelines regarding fatigue or qualifications.

It's this ability to maintain continual compliance that sets SchedulePro apart from other employee scheduling solutions. Schedulers are able to create staff schedules that are more compliant since all of their different policies are automatically considered and they always have a clear trail for audit purposes.



## How does automation generate ROI?

Automated scheduling reduces the number of team members needed to create and manage employee schedules. A Big 3 auto manufacturer recently reduced scheduling time from 40 hours to 8 hours a week using SchedulePro. Similarly, Shell Oil has seen over \$3M in time savings compared to their previous manual scheduling process. In terms of hard cost savings, one company reduced overtime labor costs by 41,000 hours a year for just a single facility. That translates to over \$1M in savings compared to their previous manual process.

## What are the key benefits of implementing the right software within an organization?

The greatest benefit to any organization is increased efficiency and time savings when the right scheduling solution is implemented. Some software providers force companies to adopt their one way of scheduling employees, and for simple organizations with only one team and minimal regulations to follow, this can work. However, Fortune 1000 manufacturers typically have multiple teams of skilled workers across several different facilities.

The right software solution can simplify complex employee scheduling down to a single click. Gone are the days of reviewing labor guidelines, worrying about employee fatigue and navigating Excel spreadsheets that aren't user friendly. Companies have seen millions of dollars in time savings compared to their legacy scheduling processes previously.

**"The right software solution can simplify complex employee scheduling down to a single click."**

Successful implementations have been shown to quickly drive down labor costs, especially in reducing costly overtime charges. In larger organizations, they have also been able to reduce the number of schedulers required to manage staff schedules and free up management time.

For most manufacturers, the need to constantly stay on top of governance, risk management and compliance (GRC) is part of their workforce management strategy. A good employee scheduling solution will significantly reduce the amount of time needed to manage GRC, including OSHA, US DOT, union rules and other regulations.

SchedulePro's self-service portal allows employees to easily check their work schedule, submit absence requests online and request overtime shifts. The system's unbiased and objective approach brings fairness to employee scheduling. A major auto manufacturer successfully reduced union grievances related to scheduling by over 90% after implementing SchedulePro.

## Why should manufacturers choose automated employee scheduling over manual scheduling?

Increased productivity and the ability to quickly improve their bottom line are two of SchedulePro's most significant benefits for manufacturers looking to reduce labor costs and improve employee working conditions. An automated solution will also produce staff schedules that are more compliant than manual scheduling solutions, helping manufacturers avoid issues with regulatory and union bodies.

**"SchedulePro customers begin seeing ROI on time savings and reduced labor costs within months."**

## What factors should manufacturers consider when choosing an employee scheduling software? What steps do manufacturers need to take in order to implement an employee scheduling software?

Before and during the research process for an employee scheduling solution, manufacturers should consider the intricacies of their processes to create, manage and communicate schedules. Companies often create rosters that may not necessarily adhere to the different labor regulations and guidelines. Also, manufacturers must keep in mind the number of teams and facilities they currently have.

There is a perception that software configured for your company will be more expensive but that's not usually the case. Other more important factors typically come into play, such as the vendor's experience in your industry. Industrial environments in particular share similarities in complexity as well as their digital transformation cultures. Working with a vendor that understands this is invaluable and will save you time during the critical scoping and configuration phases of your implementation.

In general, the implementation process is a simple 4-step process: 1) Consultation, 2) Configuration, 3) Training and 4) Go Live. With the right employee scheduling solution and team this should only take a few months regardless of the complexity involved. Typically, SchedulePro customers are live and begin seeing ROI on time savings and reduced labor costs within months.





## Join SchedulePro at the American Manufacturing Summit 2019.

In March, **SchedulePro** will join industry leaders at the **American Manufacturing Summit 2019** to discuss the impact of market dynamics and new technologies for current and future manufacturing, operations and supply chain leaders.

Sachin Agrawal, CEO of SchedulePro, will present on the topic, Integrating Workforce Automation Into Your Continuous Improvement Strategy. His discussion will focus on enhancing efficiency, reducing labor costs and increasing compliance by automating manual workforce management processes.