

Increase ROI with Automated Leave Management

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Summary

Many organizations still handle leave requests manually, so why is it such a problem? Manual, or paper-based, leave management interrupts productivity, allows for inaccuracies, increases costs, and even opens businesses to potential litigation if protocols aren't followed correctly. By automating leave management, organizations can empower employees and support supervisors while increasing productivity, ensuring workforce coverage, reducing administrative costs and improving recordkeeping.

How Manual Leave Management Causes Mistakes – and Costs Money

It may not be surprising that many organizations still handle leave requests manually with paper forms. Whether handling planned (vacation or personal time) or unplanned (sick time) leave, a manual leave request process causes three distinct problems:

It Involves Multiple People.

A typical manual leave request usually involves three people at a minimum: the employee, a supervisor and an HR administrator. For example, if an employee calls in sick, the process may look something like this:

- Employee alerts supervisor by voicemail.
- Supervisor calls employee to confirm absence.
- Supervisor drops everything to document the absence.
- Supervisor reaches out to HR administrator to make sure the employee has available sick time to use.
- HR administrator confirms available leave time.
- Supervisor coordinates with scheduling personnel to determine if temporary help is needed.
- Supervisor brings in replacement worker for the shift.

It Increases Errors – and Cost.

Because multiple people play a role in manual leave requests, the opportunity for errors increases with each person involved. Attendance on Demand estimates that employers lose a day of employee leave time each year through manual mismanagement. Additionally, a manual leave process increases costs by reducing productivity while supervisors and administrators handle the request.

It Makes the Leave Request Protocol Difficult to Enforce.

Although many organizations have a leave request protocol in place, the nature of a manual process makes that protocol relatively unenforceable. Any variations in the process may be mostly innocuous, but the alleged “mishandling” of an employee’s leave request could result in costly litigation.



Why You Should Automate Leave Management

An automated leave management process is a structured, system-guided process that reduces errors, costs and personnel involvement.

Each time an employee requests leave—and a supervisor grants it—the appropriate protocol is followed with minimal interruption in productivity, saving time and money.

With automated leave management, the process of an employee calling in sick looks like this:

- Employee logs into time and attendance system (through web browser or mobile app) to notify supervisor of sick leave.
- The system alerts the supervisor that the employee has “called in” and identifies if the employee has enough sick time available.
- The supervisor reviews the day’s schedule and decides if additional help is needed for that shift.
- If help is needed, the system identifies workers available to take the shift.

Automated leave management reduces the number of personnel involved in managing leave requests and significantly streamlines leave management. It also offers substantial benefits to both employees and supervisors.

Automated Leave — Better for Employees

Automating leave management empowers employees to proactively manage their leave time in a trackable way. Other benefits include:

- **First come, first served leave approval**, especially useful for leave requests for prime vacation times, such as the holidays and summer.
- **An accurate record of request and approval** so employees can be sure supervisors granted the leave and are aware of their leave schedules.
- **An overall fairer system of leave management**, giving employees confidence that the system prevents supervisors from “playing favorites.”



Automated Leave — Smarter for Supervisors

Supervisors also benefit from automated leave management in several ways:

- **More tools at the supervisor's disposal**, including system alerts, approvals, benefits review, scheduling and worker availability.
- **Less disruption to productivity** as the supervisor can quickly manage leave requests (and any resulting coverage concerns).
- **Supervisors can be more responsive** to employees' requests with the help of alerts and other tools.
- Supervisors have a **reliable and retrievable record of edits, changes and approvals**, providing a more transparent system.

Increase Leave Management ROI with Your Time & Attendance System

If you already use a time and attendance system, can you use it to automate your leave management process? The answer is yes if it includes the following seven features:

- **Employee Self-Service:** Employees need to be able to directly access the time and attendance system to submit leave requests. It's also helpful if employees can review their own leave balances to ensure they have accrued the appropriate amount of leave time.
- **Mobile Access:** The ability to access the system from a mobile device cannot be overemphasized. Not only beneficial to employees in the field, mobile access allows employees requesting unplanned leave to confidentially submit a request from a cell phone or other device.
- **Alerts & Notifications:** Alerts and notifications are key for supervisors, allowing them to be more responsive to employee requests and scheduling and coverage issues as they arise.
- **Scheduling Tools:** Scheduling tools help the supervisor quickly determine if employee leave can be taken without affecting productivity, and if, in the instance of unplanned leave, temporary help is needed.
- **Worker Availability:** Identifying who is available to take on an additional shift is a powerful tool for the supervisor looking to maintain team productivity in the event of an employee's absence.
- **Audit Trail:** To make the protocol transparent (especially in the face of mishandling allegations), the system must maintain an audit trail identifying which records were edited, who made changes, and when those changes were made.
- **Reporting:** Customized or predesigned reports are useful if an employee's leave time comes into question or if a supervisor or administrator needs to review time taken or leave trends for a department, team or group.



Conclusion

Automated leave management streamlines an organization's leave process, minimizing impact on personnel and productivity. Whether the focus is increasing efficiencies or reducing inaccuracies, automated leave management is a straightforward strategy to empower employees, support supervisors and boost ROI.

About Attendance on Demand, Inc.

Attendance on Demand supports the labor management needs of thousands of companies and more than a half million employees across North America. Launched in 2006, Attendance on Demand is a rapidly deployed, cloud-based solution that minimizes a company's risk and technology investment while providing advanced features for securely managing labor data—calculating pay rules, scheduling employees, budgeting labor, and automating recordkeeping for labor law compliance. With standard uptime over the industry average of 99.995% and above average customer retention rates, Attendance on Demand removes the worry of maintaining expensive infrastructure. An extensive North American distribution network helps organizations use Attendance on Demand to reduce labor expenses and improve decision-making.

To find out how Attendance on Demand can help your organization, call 800.465.9980 or visit attendanceondemand.com.

