Workforce Management Technology is Changing the Contact Center

Learn why more companies are evaluating the effectiveness of their current WFM solutions.

When was the last time you evaluated workforce management (WFM) solutions for your contact center?

If it has been a few years, you may be surprised to learn about all the latest technology that is now included, making the WFM process more automated and easier to manage.

Workforce management technology for contact centers has evolved considerably in the past few years, going from traditional agent forecasting, scheduling, and adherence to advanced automation that has a major impact on the customer experience and agent engagement. The increased adoption of work from home (WFH) along with changes in customer buying patterns has accelerated the need for new functionality.
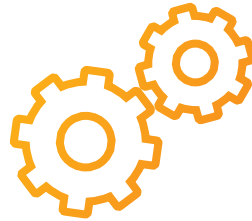
What can you get now with a modern WFM solution?

The great thing about having a modern WFM system is that all the automated capabilities are interlinked within the application. This improves operational efficiency, customer service delivery and agent engagement.

Using a modern approach to manage the day-to-day WFM responsibilities, you are now provided with a larger suite of solutions within your software:

- WFM technology is easy to use yet sophisticated with extensive functionality.
- Improved speed when making "on-the-go" scheduling adjustments.
- Immediate connection to everyone involved in the scheduling process including WFM analysts, agents, and supervisors.
- Automated agent attendance check-in to accurately know when agents are logged in and working.
- Mobile technology for agents to view and make schedule adjustments from any location.
- Improved agent engagement with shift bidding, split shifts, and managing PTO requests.

What follows is a quick summary around the value and functionality of each solution.

WFM technology is easy to use yet sophisticated with extensive functionality.

When you hear the words "ease of use" typically the first thing that comes to mind is less functionality. With a modern WFM solution, this is not the case. This technology takes a straightforward, wizard-based approach to solving both common and timely WFM challenges with a clean and modern user interface. WFM technology does not need to be complex in order to deliver true enterprise functionality with ease.

These solutions have been designed from the ground up with a focus on reducing clicks and time spent finding the exact information you need. Jumping from forecasting to reporting to scheduling is a process that takes seconds, not minutes. Whether through the feature tiles or drop-down menus, getting where you need to go is quick and straightforward.

Improved speed when making "on-the-go" scheduling adjustments.

Building schedules from historical and traditional data has been around for decades. What separates modern WFM technology from its predecessors is how to handle and process exceptions.

Simply put, even if a company puts hours upon hours each week into creating workforce management forecasts and schedules, there are always real-time changes that will need to be made. Maybe a few agents call in sick, or call volume is higher than normal because of an unexpected marketing promotion. Whatever the reason, workforces need to be adjusted, and the faster the better.

Using solutions like the Automated Schedule Adjustment Plans (ASAP) from CommunityWFM can make all the difference. With this technology, the intraday process has been streamlined so that schedule adjustments can be made quickly and agents are notified within minutes. This automated approach identifies which agents are available for a shift adjustment; and once notified, agents can accept or decline those offers through different channels. The system will automatically update agent schedules with zero action from a WFM analyst. This automation creates an agile workforce while eliminating error prone, tedious, and time-consuming processes.
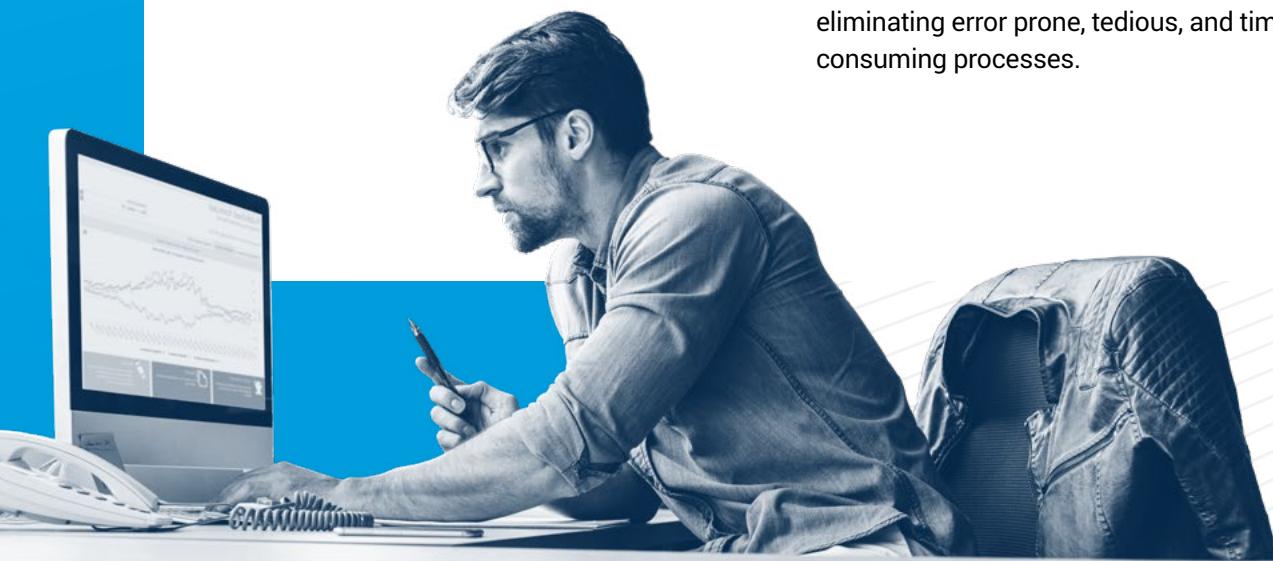
Immediate connection to everyone involved in the scheduling process including WFM analysts, agents, and supervisors.

Most businesses already have multiple layers of communication in place. From email to Slack and everything in between, there are many ways to reach out to colleagues. However, all these channels for talking to one another can create fragmented conversations. It also makes remembering where and when a conversation happened more difficult than it needs to be.

Now built directly within modern WFM technology is a communications framework to keep all conversations about scheduling and contact center operations in a single place. Easily message an entire list of supervisors or agents based on their defined parameters within the technology instead of copying and pasting messages or individually adding users. Best of all, you can start communicating with temp or gig agents right away when they are added. There is no need to wait days for IT to create a batch of inboxes when a hiring spree happens. Get agents onboard with WFM technology and start talking to the right groups immediately.

Automated agent attendance check-in process to accurately know when agents are logged in and working.

With more and more companies adopting work from home policies, a big challenge for WFM personnel is determining who has checked in, who is late, and who has requested unplanned paid time off. To automate the process, solutions like the Automated System Attendance Monitor (ASAM) from CommunityWFM have been created. Integrated with the phone system and the agent mobile app, ASAM provides a streamlined approach to virtually track agent arrival and attendance. Supervisors are able to view agents online as they arrive by specific time intervals and also see a detailed dashboard of the current status for every agent they monitor.

From the perspective of an agent, it is not always easy to track down their supervisor to let them know they need to clock in late or take an extended lunch. Instead, agents can alert team members using a mobile workforce management app. Through the app, they can let their supervisor know they will be out of adherence with the current schedule and the reason why. No need to play phone tag or worry an email will get buried and remain unread. Having WFM technology automatically keep track of who is at work allows more freedom to adjust schedules upfront instead of always being in reactive mode.

FRIDAY
2

Mobile technology for agents to view and make schedule adjustments from any location.

While a mobile WFM app is a key communication channel to quickly optimize schedules, it also provides some additional benefits for agents. They can view their schedules, receive notifications, opt-in offers, reminders, and view adherence KPIs.

Outside of the improved communication with agents, WFM analysts and schedulers also have several ways to improve their own efficiency using the app. For example, if they see a specific agent with a unique skill will be absent tomorrow, they can easily send out a request to fill their shift. This request will only go out to relevant agents that aren't scheduled yet and have the right skills. When the request is pushed out, each one can get a notification on their app that a shift is available. For companies that leverage shift bidding, a WFM app is a great way to improve agent engagement in the bidding process. An agent can bid on shifts at the dinner table or anywhere else after getting a better feel for what shifts will work best for them in the future.
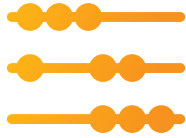
Improve agent engagement with shift bidding, offering split shifts, and managing PTO requests.

What exactly is shift bidding? This solution gives agents more choice and involvement in their own schedule. Shift bidding enables a WFM analyst to quickly generate all the shifts for a specific period. Once the shifts are created, all agents will get notified that they can bid on the shifts that best fit with their preferred work schedule. There is a timeframe for bidding and once it ends every agent will be automatically notified of their schedule. Best of all, you can even have the best performing agents get priority bidding as a performance incentive.

Another way to improve agent engagement and participation is by offering split shifts. With so many agents working remotely and no longer needing to commute to and from an office, companies can now leverage agent hours for when call volumes are higher. This concept generally involves an agent working a couple of hours in the morning and a couple of hours in the afternoon or evening. When call volume starts to rise, a WFM analyst can send out a message through different channels stating a split shift is now open. Only agents that qualify for the shift based on their skills will receive a message and they can log in right away to start working.

Lastly, one of the least pleasant tasks supervisors have is approving time-off requests. It is yet another reason why companies are turning to workforce management technology to help manage this time-consuming process. Once an integration is established with your HR system, managing vacation requests, balances, and accruals will never be easier.

Summary

The flow of new workforce management technology into the contact center has yielded a host of automated solution that save time and money. It allows management to get out of the trenches and focus on important tasks such as training, process improvements, and delivering a great customer experience. This technology improves the bottom line.

Discover all of the new technology changes available in today's modern workforce management solutions. Contact us for more information and see firsthand the CommunityWFM difference!

CommunityWFM

(877) 668-6870
www.CommunityWFM.com