



Success Story: Bonnaroo Group

Bonnaroo Group Orders HotSchedules Solutions to Combat Communication and Scheduling Snafus



With a name derived from Cajun slang term meaning “Good Time”, The Bonnaroo Group is passionate about delivering a good time, every time to their guests. The well-established Chili’s Grill and Bar brand they franchise helps further their cause.

Throughout Georgia and South Carolina, the Bonnaroo restaurants promote their belief in working as a team, being fully-engaged with the guests and operating their restaurants to their greatest capacity. Their operating standards require that they deliver the highest-quality products in a clean, efficient environment, while providing the best service in their marketplace.

The Bonnaroo Group also believes that among their competitive advantages is their ability to manage a large chain on a smaller scale. By focusing their efforts on one brand, in one geographic area, they have more effective oversight and span of control so they can focus on broadening their base of customers. To date, they have 21 restaurants and counting, so their strategy is working well.

Communications Breakdown

Brett Summers, Vice President of Operations, came on board with Bonnaroo about 5 and a half years ago, bringing with him a wealth of restaurant industry experience. He is known for his big smile, high energy and work hard/play hard mentality.

When asked what The Bonnaroo Group was using prior to introducing the HotSchedules solution, he said, “For the most part, managers were relying on spreadsheets. Managers would create them, print and post them on the bulletin board. It took several hours and lots of combing through historical sales and labor data to get them done.”

But the biggest problem with the offline form of paper-based scheduling was the way that staff members communicated and accessed the schedule once it was ready. Most would call the store, interrupt the

Their Story

The Bonnaroo Group—longtime franchisee of Chili’s Grill & Bar, encourages teammates to have fun on the job while providing their guests with the best service possible.

Challenges

- Scheduling using spreadsheets took several hours and lots of combing through historical sales and labor data to complete.
- Team members calling or coming by the store and interrupting operations to ask about the schedule.
- Changes to the schedule created even more disruption.

Products

- HotSchedules

Results

- Managers spend more time on operations instead of administration.
- Improved work-life balance and happier team members.
- Significantly improved communications, particularly with Millennials who use smartphones.



manager and ask them to read the schedule over the phone. Others would come into the store in person to check the schedule. Not only was this inconvenient for the staff members, it was a significant, and repeated disruption to store operations.

What's more, any changes to the schedule created yet more disruption. To trade or swap a shift, the two staff members agreeing to the change had to locate, change and sign the shift-change book. Then the book had to be brought to the manager so they could approve and sign it as well.

Summers notes, "Getting a good schedule posted took managers long enough. It was yet another long and trying process to get anything changed once a schedule was posted. All changes had to take place in person since the hard copy book was our only means for keeping track. Timing for such changes depended entirely on how quickly all three people could get to the restaurant, agree to the change and sign the book."

HotSchedules to the Rescue

The Bonnaroo Group had heard of HotSchedules, so when HotSchedules executives, Justin Buckley and David Cantu, reached out and suggested the HotSchedules solution, the Bonnaroo team jumped at the chance to upgrade and modernize their processes. Summers said, "We had ten restaurants when we first introduced HotSchedules. The general managers all went through the online training session and then each of the restaurants scheduled a training webinar with the management team. We felt like it rolled out very well, and transition was very smooth. As we grew, and we were growing at a rapid pace, HotSchedules was able to train the new managers prior to opening the store so the staff was knowledgeable in utilizing the functions right out of the gate."

Now, team members can request a trade or shift pickup online or from their mobile device, 24 hours a day. Managers can approve it online as well and the entire process is streamlined.

Summers commented, "HotSchedules has enabled us to communicate more effectively, especially with regard to the millennium generation. Keeping pace with technology is always challenging, but really needed in this industry. We're now adapting to their demands for more technology-driven communications."

More Bionic

With HotSchedules, managers are quicker and more proficient at creating schedules. By reviewing the proforma and the sales and labor data that is immediately available to managers in HotSchedules as they build a schedule, they are able to be both speedier and more precise. Adapting an existing schedule to account for unexpected sales fluctuations is also easy to accommodate in HotSchedules, even after a schedule is posted.

An additional aid to managers is the ability to easily track and be alerted to overtime with HotSchedules. Integration with the POS system also allows managers to enact punctuality controls that prevent team members from punching in too early or out too late.

"We integrated our HotSchedules with our Aloha POS so we could take advantage of the punctuality controls. They are allowed a 5-minute grace, but beyond that, they have to check with their manager. These features not only deliver convenience, but long term labor cost savings as well.



Managers get to spend more time for operations and less on administration



Happier team members due to improved work-life balance



Streamlined communications to meet the industry's changing needs



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Brett Summers,
Vice President of Operations,
The Bonnaroo Group

An Indisputable Piece of Evidence

With state labor laws constantly in flux, the necessity of proper documentation and maintenance has become even more critical. That's why legal and HR groups, in particular, perk up when they hear about the clear, precise, searchable records in the HotSchedules Digital Logbook. In addition to providing valuable time savings, the accuracy and date-bound qualities protect the restaurants from fraudulent or questionable claims. "Since we started using the Digital Logbook, we have won almost all of our unemployment cases because it has helped us document such instances so accurately," Summers confirmed.

"Now, when team members are tardy or miss a shift, we document it in Logbook. If someone misses a shift and then files a claim for unemployment, we can go right back to Logbook, type in their name, print out the dated records and show that it was job abandonment, not termination, and does not qualify for unemployment," said Summers. "It's a nearly indisputable piece of evidence."

Other uses of Logbook include logging repair and maintenance records, keeping up with safe counts and store deposits. "Area directors access Logbook remotely and the information has helped them immensely in their oversight of the business," Summers said.

Back to Business

HotSchedules delivers on their commitment to connect and provide freedom to today's workforce, and that ultimately leads to happier employees. "With HotSchedules, managers spend more time in the dining room instead of in the back office. They can spend more time on operations instead of administration. Or they can do their schedule from home, which is very convenient for them. It delivers a work-life balance they didn't have before, and I think it makes them happier to be here," said Summers.

"It's not just that we communicate more efficiently, we understand better too. At the cooperate level, we know what's going on inside each restaurant in a way we never could before. We would never want to go back and be without HotSchedules," Summers concluded.



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