



Blain's Farm & Fleet Leverages Zebra Workcloud to Optimize Employee Scheduling

Reducing Labor Hours by 7% and Increasing Sales

Blain's Farm & Fleet is a specialty retailer with 45 locations throughout Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin and Michigan. This modern general store remains steadfast in its commitment to offering customers high-quality products, competitive prices and reliable service.

Blain's customers enjoy shopping in multiple ways: in-store, by phone, online or even by taking advantage of the store's "Shop on the Spot" service that allows them to pick up items at the store without placing an order in advance. To better serve its shoppers, Blain's invested in Workcloud Scheduling with the goal of enhancing scheduling, optimizing labor forecasting and delivering a better digital workplace experience for its frontline associates.

Company Challenges

Blain's Farm & Fleet's previous scheduling system had outlived its usefulness and began to fall short when faced with the realities of modern business. "Our prior scheduling system was implemented in the early 90s, and before that, we had completely separate scheduling and time and attendance systems," explained Mike Schabacker, Director of Stores, Finance and Communications at Blain's Farm & Fleet.

"But in today's world, creating a great digital experience for our associates is critical to helping us improve retention and reduce turnover. And with our large format stores with multiple departments, we needed a modern solution that could integrate our systems to provide a more seamless experience for our management teams and associates," said Schabacker.

Solution

To address these challenges, Blain's Farm & Fleet implemented Workcloud Scheduling and provided its frontline associates with the Workcloud Scheduling Employee Self-Service app. "Our associates can access their schedule, time punches and even make time off requests — all from the palm of their hand using the self-service application. It's been a tremendous advantage for us in terms of efficiency and visibility," said Schabacker.

SUMMARY



Customer

Blain's Farm & Fleet

Industry

Retail

Challenge

In a tight labor market, Blain's needed a modern scheduling solution that delivered a great mobile experience for its frontline associates and management teams.

Solution

- Workcloud Scheduling
- Workcloud Scheduling Employee Self-Service

Benefits/Outcomes

- Achieved a 7% reduction in labor hours within the first year and maintained that ever since
- Realized improvements in sales per labor hour and wages as a percent of sales



Associates appreciate the mobility and flexibility that Zebra's mobile app provides. "Associates love having visibility into their schedules anytime they want. And requesting time off is much easier. In the past, our time-off requests were paper-based — hardly ideal because some of our stores have 200 associates," said Schabacker. "With Zebra Workcloud, associates can enter their time off request in the app and then get immediate notification when it's approved. And associates can also easily swap shifts, advertise a shift if they don't want it, and view any open shifts. It's been a super way to support them, giving them more control over their lives and schedules."

Additionally, Zebra has helped the company with labor modeling. Blain's imports labor modeling and planning data into the Zebra application, aligning the company's forecasted demand with each store's budget hours and wages. "It's important to meet our financial budget targets and Zebra helps us do that. Zebra automatically aligns our forecasted demand to meet each store's needs. As wage pressures have continued to increase, Zebra [Workcloud Scheduling] has been critical in our ability to manage wage expenses," said Schabacker.

Benefits and Outcomes

Blain's Farm & Fleet has realized numerous benefits since implementing Workcloud solutions. "By incorporating our labor model work into Zebra Workcloud Scheduling, we achieved a 7% reduction in labor hours within the first year. And we've maintained that ever since," Schabacker added.

Zebra has helped Blain's boost other important productivity metrics. Since implementing Zebra Workcloud solutions, the company has seen improvements in sales per labor hour and wages as a percent of sales.

In the future, Blain's plans on expanding its collaboration with Zebra. "We see so many features and functionality coming up in the next version of the software, including machine learning and AI. We're excited about how Blain's is continuing to grow — and excited about continuing to work with Zebra's software and solutions as they help us reach our goals," Schabacker concluded.

"By incorporating our labor model work into Zebra Workcloud Scheduling, we achieved a 7% reduction in hours within the first year. And we've been able to maintain that ever since."

Mike Schabacker
Director of Stores,
Finance and
Communications,
Blain's Farm & Fleet



To learn more please visit zebra.com



NA and Corporate Headquarters
+1 800 423 0442
inquiry4@zebra.com

Asia-Pacific Headquarters
+65 6858 0722
contact.apac@zebra.com

EMEA Headquarters
zebra.com/locations
contact.emea@zebra.com

Latin America Headquarters
zebra.com/locations
la.contactme@zebra.com

ZEBRA and the stylized Zebra head are trademarks of Zebra Technologies Corp., registered in many jurisdictions worldwide. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. ©2024 Zebra Technologies Corp. and/or its affiliates. 11/25/2024.