

Scheduling and Resource Management for Cruise Lines

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The challenges of managing large crews and keeping passengers safe in today's cruise industry are complex. Lee Clarke recommends six focus areas that will improve customer service and business performance using Workforce Optimisation technology

The global cruise industry is undergoing a period of rapid transformation. In a climate of increased consolidation and regulation, cruise companies around the world face a complex set of challenges when it comes to managing their vast crews and keeping their passengers safe.

Optimising crew and resources, achieving economies of scale and winning market share in one of the world's fastest growing leisure sectors are key objectives in the sector and yet the sheer scale of managing cruise ships may make them seem unattainable.

All too frequently, the volume of information and process challenges involved in the industry can have a potentially damaging impact on customer service and negative commercial implications. At the same time, these challenges present significant opportunities for cost control, service improvement and strategic performance when the issues are overcome and effective resource optimisation is implemented.

So how do cruise lines overcome these challenges and turn them into positive opportunities? Dynama's latest White Paper outlines how to improve guest satisfaction and business performance by focusing on six key areas.

Focus on the areas that matter

Success for cruise management lies in deploying the latest automated Workforce Optimisation (WFO) solutions to alleviate the biggest pain points. Here are six critical areas that deserve immediate attention:

1. Optimal Resourcing – use the latest WFO technology to gain 360° visibility across deck, engine and hotel crew from one single integrated system. Having all critical information in one place provides control in an information-intensive environment, making it easy to create, maintain and change schedules quickly and efficiently.

This gives management time to focus on revenues and minimising risk while crew members can devote themselves to improving the guest experience.

2. Cost Control – ensuring the right crew are on the right cruise ships at the right time with up-to-date medical and travel documentation is critical but expensive. In fact, crew travel expenses are one of the biggest costs for cruise lines. The good news is that even small changes can amount to multi-million-dollar savings. The latest WFO solutions integrate with HR and travel systems to enable joined-up logistics planning that keep crew moving, with the best flight and hotel deals available. Furthermore, sophisticated functionality enables 'what if' scenario planning including budgetary analysis alongside full demand planning and compliance management before a single dollar is actually spent.

3. Compliance - with international best-practice standards and legislation it is essential to ensure the safety of crew and passengers and minimise the risk of heavy penalties for non-compliance. Automated WFO systems provide the hard evidence necessary to demonstrate compliance with these regulations by capturing, storing and reporting on a ship's end-to-end compliance activities at the click of a button.

4. Staff Engagement – in a highly competitive industry, attracting, developing and retaining the best talent is a constant challenge. Use workforce optimisation to create a virtual library of crew skills then tap into the data to develop meaningful training programs and career paths. Empower and motivate staff further by adding self-service capabilities. At a glance, crew members can view their schedules, see who they are working with, trade shifts with colleagues and request time off at any time and from anywhere in the world.

5. Change readiness – is a valuable attribute. Constantly changing operational and industry demands put immense pressure on scheduling and resource management. Fortunately, WFO solutions consolidate and analyse big data in a highly dynamic way, enabling managers to build efficient, flexible schedules for today and tomorrow. Spotting trends and variances in demand and in real-time, improves proactive decision-making and boosts business agility.

6. System Interfacing – effective scheduling and resource management depend on harnessing the right information from the best applications available rather than forcing existing systems to integrate with each other. The latest WFO solutions interface with most of the leading ERP and HR systems as standard, enabling easy information exchange for core financial, HR and payroll requirements. Delivered as Software-as-a-Service (SaaS), today's technology also reduces capital expenditure and simplifies the IT implementation and management procedures associated with traditional on-premise infrastructures.

Focus on these six areas, do them well to create a future-proof scheduling and resource management framework that keeps everything ship-shape. To find out more or to download Dynama's latest White Paper entitled "Scheduling and Resource Management for Cruise Lines" visit www.dynama.global.

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About Dynama

Dynama, an Allocate Software company, builds on 25 years' heritage and is a leading provider of maritime and defence workforce deployment software. Headquartered in London, Dynama has a fully fledged new office in Canberra (Australia) with sales and support in the USA.

Its flagship product, Dynama OneView, is designed to underpin complex workforce management in safety critical and high skill level environments, delivering both safe staffing and productivity savings.

For more information, visit Dynama (<http://www.dynama.global>)

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