



FOUR SEASONS  
HOTEL  
LONDON AT PARK LANE

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# SUCCESS STORY

 Fourth®



# Four Seasons

HOTELS



## Challenge

- A traditional labour model with 95% of employees hired on fixed 40 hours contracts, which resulted in instances of over and understaffing and inflexible labour costs.
- Fixed labour standards across jobs and departments causing a lack of flexibility in labour deployment to accommodate the variable demand of busy and quiet periods.
- A time-consuming labour scheduling process using manual spreadsheets which didn't allow for quick rotas changes or efficient communication with staff members.

## Solutions

- A forecasting model that reliably predicts future labour needs by calculating labour standards against actual service demand to derive the optimal hours required for all job roles.
- A dynamic scheduling tool to create rotas quickly and share them in real-time with staff.
- Daily and weekly reports detailing labour performance KPIs to assist finance and department manager understand the impact of labour cost on profit.

## Results

- Strategic hiring of staff members, where possible, on alternative, secure and flexible contracts to accommodate changes in demand, reducing over and understaffing during busy and quieter periods.
- Greater insights to adjust the labour model in real-time.
- 75% of operational labour standards are now variable allowing for cross-departmental collaboration and better deployment of labour resources.







## Challenges

Throughout the years, the iconic Four Seasons Hotel, Park Lane, London, operated with a more traditional labour model, hiring core team members on 40 hours contracts to ensure maximum coverage to deliver the five star experiences their guests had come to expect. However, adoption of this traditional labour model meant that department heads didn't always have the flexibility to adjust labour scheduling to actual customer demand, resulting in inflexible labour costs or understaffing during quieter periods and peak season. Building staff rotas on spreadsheets was also a manual, time-consuming process, making it hard for department managers to adjust rotas and communicate with staff members efficiently on time.

## Solutions

Right before the pandemic, which quite possibly forever revolutionised how hospitality businesses operate, the Four Seasons Hotel adopted Fourth's Workforce Management solution. Using a forecasting model based on activity drivers that measures actual service demand and calculates required hours for all departments, according to specific labour standards, allowed the hotel to adapt their labour model to meet the actual level of customer demand, ensuring peak productivity at all times.

Daily operations for department managers were greatly simplified by using a dynamic scheduling tool that made the process of building rotas intuitive and seamless, allowing adjustments to be made quickly.

To analyse instances of over and understaffing, and the impacts on profits, department heads were equipped with weekly reports detailing labour performance KPIs.

This created an inclusive working culture and provided a greater understanding across departments of how labour could be continuously adapted.



## Results

Testing the Workforce Management solution during the pandemic, a time characterised by unpredictability and uncertainty in customer demand, allowed department managers to understand their labour standards and adapt minimum staffing levels through cross-departmental collaboration.

Deploying labour according to actual customer demand enabled Four Seasons to deliver the high standard of service expected by their guests, while controlling labour costs.

The easy-to-use scheduling tool allowed rotas to be built fast and published in real-time. Adjustments could be made easily to meet the needs of the hotel during busy and quieter periods, while providing staff members with secure, flexible working patterns, where possible, for an improved work-life balance.

Weekly reporting was adopted by department heads to support regular meetings with finance, which encouraged discussions around how the labour model could be continuously shaped to achieve peak productivity, while optimising costs.

The Four Seasons Hotel in Park Lane, London, is a luxurious place. It's surrounded by tranquil parks, prestigious shopping destinations and some of London's most iconic landmarks. At Four Seasons, everything feels peaceful, elegant and calm. However, to provide the five-star experience distinctive to the Four Seasons, managers need to strategically schedule their staff to be in the right place, at the right time.

## A Refined London Experience

Labour is the single highest cost for a hotel, one which is only set to grow. Considering the increases in staff wages and soaring energy, food and commodity costs, hospitality establishments are facing higher operating costs. Generally, these are passed onto the guests, impacting customer demand and guest expectations. It's critical that







hotels forecast their labour accurately to optimise costs and utilise efficient tools to schedule the right people, at the right time, in the right place to guarantee peak productivity and deliver a high standard of customer service.

Creating schedules that attend to employees' shift preferences and are planned according to season demand can be tricky enough but it gets even more challenging when labour costs start to heavily impact revenue, affecting ongoing profitability. Plenty of businesses resort to cutting labour costs, which translates into operating with fewer staff members, often missing out on the opportunity to offer a truly unforgettable experience to the guests.

Just before the global pandemic took every industry by storm, the Four Seasons Hotel partnered with Fourth for a thorough review of its resources to deploy labour efficiently. Our newly launched Workforce Management solution for hotels became their tech engine for efficiency, productivity and profitability.

Fourth's latest forecasting model and scheduling tool, integrated with the Fourth Workforce Management solution, is optimised for the unique needs of the hotel industry, with the primary goal of helping managers deliver high productivity, while maximising profits.



**MATHIAS COCURON**

*Regional Director of Finance*

A labour management solution is not about cutting labour, but improving the management of your labour, in order to fit your labour model to your business to deliver the best service to your guests and at the same time, the best return to your owners."



## A solution tailored to the workforce

The tech solution has been adopted by all departments at Four Seasons, moving the scheduling busy work from time-consuming excel spreadsheets to a seamless, integrated and intuitive software.

Fourth's automated labour demand forecasting is achieved through custom built labour standards and activity drivers that precisely calculate the optimal time required for every hotel job role and task, providing reliable, predictive insights into future labour demand.

Paired with the dynamic scheduling tool, managers at Four Seasons acquired full visibility of the labour required, the staff available to meet the demand and a visual landscape to plot and calculate the assigned hours and cost against staff and 3rd party contractors.

## Protecting Profits for long-term success

Considering the current climate, it's essential for hotel managers to have firm control of operational costs, to protect revenue and guarantee ongoing profitability.

This means investing time and resources where they are truly needed and matter the most. Fourth's dynamic scheduling tool minimises the time and effort needed to create staff rotas by providing full visibility of the labour hours required and the staff available to meet demand, with real-time service demand captured from demand generating systems and fed into the scheduling tool. The workforce management solution is mobile-optimised, allowing managers to make changes on the go and check staff availability to find replacements at short notice, publishing rotas in real-time, so employees can immediately see their schedules, swap and apply for open shifts.



### **MATHIAS COCURON**

*Regional Director of Finance*

Labour is a big cost in our business. Probably the biggest cost. It is essential we show a return on the business. I have been using the solution to show our owners that these are the tools we are using to improve awareness; to improve flexibility; to be more productive and drive productivity."





## Data-driven decisions for a thriving business

If we have learned anything over the past two years, it is that everything can be unpredictable. Deploying tech solutions that work seamlessly in sync is a great way to connect every area of the business and keep everything under control.

Fourth Workforce Management solution is integrated with Time & Attendance, to monitor staff attendance, availability and actual recorded work hours ensuring all staff members are then paid accurately.

Four Seasons took full advantage of daily and weekly reports to support regular meetings involving department heads and finance, analysing previous and forthcoming labour plans to openly discuss how operations could be optimised.

Improving awareness of the financial investment and impact of labour costs on the bottom line, allowed department managers to question how their labour standards could be adapted to drive efficiency and increase productivity, creating a collaborative and inclusive process that fits the hotel needs, while working out new ways to deliver a consistent and truly world-class guest service.



**MATHIAS COCURON**  
*Regional Director of Finance*

The Fourth team has been amazing, especially the technical team, in the way that they actually understood and listened to us."



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## About Fourth

We provide end-to-end, best-in-class technology and services to the hospitality industry. Our inventory and workforce management solutions, coupled with the industry's most complete data and analytics suite, give operators the actionable insights they need to control costs, scale profitability, improve employee engagement, and maintain compliance.

We work with multi-national companies across the hotel, hospitality, leisure and retail industries, including Corinthia Hotels, Jumeirah Hotels & Resorts, The Ritz, The Dorchester, Dubai World Trade Centre, Travelodge, The Ivy, Soho House, Burger King, Pizza Express, The Wentworth Club, Selfridges and Sodexo.

## You have enough to do.

Let us take the busy work off your plate. Discover how we can help simplify your back-office operations, boost your efficiency and profitability, and streamline your procurement and inventory processes.

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