



## SUCCESS STORY

# Firebirds Restaurants

## How Firebirds Manages Staff Shifts in 43 Restaurants with Humanity

### Challenge

Starting as a single location in Charlotte more than 15 years ago, Firebirds Wood Fired Grill has become a recognized restaurant brand with more than 40 locations across America. With 3,800 employees in over 43 restaurants, it needed a tool to efficiently manage shift scheduling, eliminate errors and avoid scheduling conflicts.

As the business grew, Firebirds managers realized that their current staff management methods were in dire need of an upgrade. While managers at several locations were using Excel spreadsheets to create staff schedules, most of them were relying on even more outdated options.

“It was basic hard copies, no computer program,” specified Tonya Maciukiewicz, the Managing Director at Firebirds in Morrisville, North Carolina, who was using paper schedules to manage 90 employees at her location.

Manual staff scheduling was very time-consuming for managers and led to schedules riddled with errors and conflicts. The entire team needed an easy-to-use, efficient tool that can tackle shift scheduling in more than 40 locations, each with 50-100 employees.

“We were looking to update the way we use and send schedules to our employees to make it easier for them to be informed of their schedule, switch shifts, request time off and change their availability,” explained Robert Hopple, who manages more than 100 employees in Birmingham, Alabama.



### BACKGROUND

Firebirds Wood Fired Grill is a restaurant chain in the U.S. with over 40 restaurants and 3800 employees. Managers were struggling with inefficient scheduling processes and needed a tool to efficiently manage shift scheduling, eliminate errors and avoid scheduling conflicts.

### BUSINESS CHALLENGES

- Paper-based and manual processes were time consuming and error prone
- Inefficient communication about schedules and shift changes
- Needed to enable staff to manage schedules and swap shifts on their own

### BENEFITS OF SWITCHING

- 50% less time spent on scheduling
- Manage labor costs using reporting and crib sheets
- Engaged staff by allowing them to add their availability
- Decreased employee tardiness thanks to automated shift reminders via SMS



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Management was handing out printed, paper schedules to employees by hand at the restaurant.

“We wanted to streamline the availability of staff and their requests for time off while being able to schedule at a glance from wherever we are,” said Firebirds Manager Marlon Gammon, adding that it used to take him over two hours each week to schedule 65 employees using Excel.

### Solution & Results

With Humanity, Firebirds’ managers now have faster, more accurate scheduling and are able to visualize the schedule easily and keep track of staff at their location—from employees’ availability, to leave requests, open shifts, and much more. The platform notifies supervisors about empty time slots and recommends employees who are the right fit for the shift in question, based on their availability, job position and skills. The general consensus among Firebirds managers is that using Humanity has cut the time needed for scheduling employees in half.

Detailed reporting options are very helpful for daily operations, as well. “The crib sheets are a good tool to help us visualize our roster for the day in front-of-house and back-of-house,” said Javier Medina, General Manager at Firebirds of Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania. Mike Warner, who manages a location in Richmond, Virginia with 85 employees, depends on the Total Hours Scheduled report to help manage day-to-day labor costs in minutes.

It’s not just the managers who appreciate the switch from paper handouts to Humanity, employees are also on board and more engaged. Keeping track of schedules has become seamless for the entire staff.

“Our employees typically enjoy Humanity as the app makes things easier for them,” says Robert Hopple, General Firebirds Manager in Birmingham.

“Most employees that are tech-savvy have embraced Humanity. They can utilize the app to request time off, change availability, switch shifts... It’s definitely popular with them! The reminders being sent to the staff are great and they seem to help folks to avoid missing shifts” added Medina.

Moreover, Humanity keeps the team connected. Introducing Humanity helped local managers organize their teams more efficiently while also engaging employees in the scheduling process. **The result: 50% less time spent creating schedules and smoother communication across the company.**



Want to learn more? Let’s talk.

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