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Streamlining Events Operations In Post-Pandemic Resurgence

(Reproduced courtesy of Security Matters Magazine)

For many security companies, the events season is a peak time. While it brings with it a glut of work, the logistics of managing event security and traffic management with a workforce of ad-hoc, casual or seasonal workers is a highly complex balancing act. Add to this the effects of two years of pandemic, when the events sector was almost non-existent, and the many workers that have left the industry, or left the country, finding reliable people can also be a challenge. However, despite the general shortage of security staff, there are plenty of people that do enjoy working events, and now, plenty of events are being organised as the sector sees a welcome resurgence.

Whether you are providing services for a smaller event, or for one with 10,000 or more capacity, it pays to have the right workforce management and rostering software. As well as managing the shifts and allocation of suitably qualified/vetted staff for specific roles, a mobile app for people to book on and off, and a means of communication with events staff will ensure that everyone knows where they should be and what they will be doing. Timesheet reconciliation and sign-off, means that hours worked have been agreed in advance and invoices are accurate. All of which helps to ensure you deliver a great service to your client.

SmartTask's comprehensive and intuitive scheduling and rostering tools make it quick and easy to create the required services for an event, and to add staff to them. This combined with shift broadcasting and integrated payroll and invoicing has enabled SmartTask customers to manage staff for events effectively.

TMS Protection at the Leeds Castle Classic Concert

TMS Protection, based in Kent and London, specialises in events, key-holding, alarm response, training and security services for clients across the UK, including many local and national companies. During the event season the company can have up to 400 officers in the field – many of whom are seasonal, events workers. As Managing Director Tom Devine says: "Our reputation is incredibly important to us and as a customer-focused business, our people are our biggest asset. If we can make life easier for them, they will provide a better service to our customers. SmartTask simply streamlines operations so that mundane tasks are quick and easy for all our staff."

Delivering Excellence with a Seasonal Workforce

TMS regularly provides security and traffic management services for large events (10,000 to 25,000 people) such as the Leeds Castle Classic Concert, Maidstone River Festival, the Glitter Bomb at Mote Park and the UB40 concert, also at Mote Park.

The Leeds Castle Classic Concert involved deployment of an extra 80 staff over and above TMS's regular workforce. The SmartTask solution was used to manage rosters, deployment and time-sheeting for the event to cover the provision of security and traffic supervisors, CSAS officers, traffic marshals, stewards and central control room staff. At the end of the event during a debrief with the organiser, timesheets are reviewed and confirmed. TMS then uses SmartTask to arbitrate the shifts and share the Timesheet sign-off report with the client via the Customer portal. The customer electronically approves the report which triggers an automated email to TMS so that invoices can be sent.

TMS has received a repeat booking confirmation for next year – a testament to the quality of the service provided by Tom and his team.

A Game-changing Partnership

"SmartTask really demonstrate their partnership approach when they ask us about how the software needs to grow to continue to support our business. The upcoming WhatsApp integration will be a game-changer for us. In a normal week we have 160 staff, for events this can go to 300 or 400. Ad hoc staff are not going to be using the SmartTask App, so being able to send out event details direct from SmartTask via WhatsApp and receive confirmation of availability will save so much time against ringing people on the off chance they want to work. It also means their availability is already in SmartTask, ready for scheduling." added Tom.

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Total Event Solutions – Keeping Customers happy with detailed Reporting
Understanding exactly how many staff have been supplied to an event is a key requirement. Richard Green is Managing Director of Road Traffic Solutions, a market leading traffic management company that prides itself on offering an exceptional service at a fair and competitive price. Based in Scunthorpe, Lincolnshire with seven depots throughout the UK, the company provides services to some of the largest sporting and mass participation events, including the Commonwealth Games, the Queens Jubilee, Prudential Ride London, London Triathlon and the Cheltenham Festival.

Richard has recently launched a new division focused primarily on events, Total Event Solutions. He explains: "There is a sea-change within the events sector where customers now require to know exactly how many staff were deployed when and at which location. With the SmartTask solution we are able to send granular details of services provided with our invoices, so there is no doubt in the customer's mind that we have delivered all that we contractually agreed to." Operatives at Total Event Solutions are sent details of their shifts and are able to book on and off using the SmartTask app. This replaces paper-based and manual processes, and ensures the validity of data collected within the system. The resulting invoices are highly accurate leading to fewer queries and faster settlement.

New Developments from SmartTask
SmartTask has a strong track record of listening to our clients and developing our software to meet their evolving requirements. With this in mind, we are extending our solution to include many new Events specific features which, when combined with existing tools, will make managing staff for events even easier.

Event Shift Broadcasting via WhatsApp
Controllers will be able to invite workers to events via messaging either through the SmartTask app, or WhatsApp. The SmartTask app has long had the ability to message and send available shifts to workers. However, as part of our research into how we can better enable communication with occasional workers, feedback from our customers indicates that the most reliable way to reach them is via WhatsApp. SmartTask integration with WhatsApp will enable organisations to alert workers to events, assess availability, roster them and send shift details and reminders to staff.

Pay-as-you-Go Occasional Workers
With no long-term commitment, this update to our existing option (where organisations pay per number of 'Active' staff registered on the system) enables companies to designate a worker to be PAYG, meaning you will only be billed for any shifts the staff member completes.

Event Sectors and Zones
Define event location, sections and zones. This will allow Users to split an event site into sections and subdivide these into zones which can then be associated with services and workers, allowing for more effective visibility, management and control. This can save significant amounts of time as staff know the exact location they need to be at, and event briefings can be given by supervisors in-situ, which is more efficient.

Event-based Roster View
A new roster view, designed specifically for Events will make it easier to see all shifts on a given day, review status and amend shift details as required. This will enable controllers to finetune shifts and ensure contractual obligations are covered. We're also looking at mobile friendly tools to book staff on/ off and allocate equipment whilst on-site.

See SmartTask at the International Security Expo
We will be sharing our latest Events functionality, as well as the full capability of the SmartTask workforce management solution at the International Security Expo, at Olympia on 27-28 September. Our stand number is D111 – drop by and say Hello!