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THE PROBLEMS

The following problems were identified as negatively affecting productivity:

- Buddy clocking with both the punch clock cards and magnetic card readers
- Misplacement of magnetic cards, resulting in costs associated with replacement
- Staff being dishonest with hours worked
- Magnetic cards were getting dirty due to manufacturing processes, resulting in the card reader being unable to read them.

Taking the guesswork and tampering out of time and attendance at Halewood Breweries

Situated in Benoni in Gauteng, Halewood Breweries is the owner and distributor of the Red Square Vodka brand. The company also does contract packaging for Smirnoff Vodka and other brands and is a bottling facility for a variety of spirit coolers and liqueurs.

In 2002 the company switched over from a manual clock card system to a magnetic card reader access control system from Senti Systems. In 2007, the company decided to install a biometric fingerprint reader system from Senti Systems to eliminate the aggravation of employees losing cards. "The expense involved in replacing these cards was impacting on the bottom line. In addition, accurate hours were unavailable because of this phenomenon," said HR Manager Ronnie Reddy.

To date 200 employees, from blue collar workers through to administrative staff, have been added to the system, which has a capacity for 300 individuals. Reddy explained that there are six readers installed at the production, distribution, stores, sales and reception areas which cater for time and attendance. In addition, one of the readers functions as an access control facility between the reception area and the factory, allowing the opening of the magnetic lock on the door.

Reddy said that due to a couple of rather unusual instances where the fingerprints of the tea lady and the painter were unreadable, due to their age, a keypad was installed to provide secondary entrance. "In addition, we have incorporated two further backup measures to the system. Firstly, we record two fingerprints each on each employee's hands in case one finger or even a whole hand should become damaged and the fingerprints are inaccessible. Secondly, we have a latecomer's register which has to be completed and signed for by the employee to ensure verification when hours are tallied for remuneration."

Reddy said that there was initially some resistance from a number of employees and this required training sessions to point out the advantages of the system for both the company and for the

employees. "Another factor that has presented us with challenges is the bottleneck that forms when employees enter and leave work. However, they now stagger their times slightly to ensure a smooth flow of pedestrian traffic. This is comfortably accommodated by TurboTime."

Reddy pointed out that if power failures occur on weekends data tended to 'go missing' on the old system. "However, the biometric readers have a battery for power backup in that eventuality which has eliminated this problem. Even when there is a discrepancy in the time factor when an extended power failure occurs, we simply use the Turbo Time 'Auto Clock' feature to identify and rectify the difference."

All data from the six readers is captured centrally by Reddy and transferred to an external payroll service provider for payment purposes. Reddy is completely satisfied with the system, which has resulted in increased profitability and accountability.

THE SOLUTION

The biometric fingerprint reader system has provided the company with a number of benefits:

- Buddy clocking eliminated
- Has removed excuses given by employees for not clocking in
- Employees only paid for hours worked
- Tamper proof
- Faster access for employees.

"I can recommend TurboTime as a solution provider for any Time and Attendance problems."