Enterprise Excellence

Streamlining your Operations and Cost Containment

Hospitalities are increasingly challenged to find ways to reduce costs without sacrificing quality. It seems everyone is tasked to 'do more with less' to contribute to overall cost savings. One way to do that is to do the right things, the right way, the first time. With a solution that is tailored to specific corporate functions, you can maximize the efficiency of your operations and be empowered to accurately and consistently distribute information, plan, schedule, assign, prioritize, automate, communicate and monitor task compliance. The key benefit: significantly reduce expenses while improving the ability to communicate with locations and monitor compliance. By leveraging a solution like this, you can skip the extensive training or large system configuration for easy deployment and implementation.

Now more than ever it is extremely critical to have on-demand visibility to confirm that your communications are being read by the right people, that your employees are executing location-level tasks as they should, and that head office executives have the ability to verify that their locations are compliant with company objectives. This is not only critical from a compliance perspective but can also contribute to a company's ongoing success. Companies are looking for better ways to help employees at their various locations to understand their marketing, product-display and management strategies. They realize they need a better way of communicating best practices, product marketing methods, seasonal product availability and other information to their employees to help ensure consistent operations across locations.

Over the past decade, there has been an investment in a wide range of new technologies such as POS, inventory management, workforce management and other automated solutions to help improve productivity and efficiencies. Investments in these systems have, for the most part, provided immediate and ongoing cost savings. But you want and need to find further areas to cut costs, as there are very little savings left that can be squeezed out with these well established technologies.

A key component to cutting costs is to have consistency across all locations and gain efficiencies by streamlining processes. Since the advent of chain retailing, companies have struggled to ensure that all locations operate the same way, using the same processes and driving the same results. This operational consistency touches on many facets of retail execution; operations, merchandising, finance, human resources, loss prevention, information technology, etc.

As the infrastructure cost of connecting your enterprise decreases the benefit of a centralized communications solution that can be utilized to make centralized decisions/strategies consistently across all your geographically disbursed locations should be seen as a requirement. There is most definitely a need to monitor communications and completed tasks, and manage corporate compliance.

Hospitality, like other retail verticals, has similar operational issues of effectively and efficiently communicating strategies that are being made centrally to geographically disbursed locations. The requirement is there to inform and educate employees on such things as health and safety regulations, food recalls or
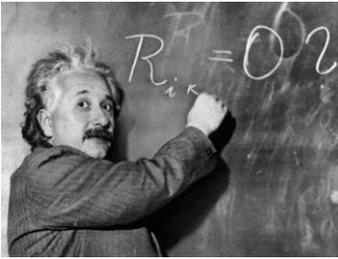
just general information and then monitor the completion of tasks and compliance of your corporate directives.

According to Hospitality Technology Magazine, there is an almost 20% interest in innovation leveraging Cloud Computing. Even greater, a 23% interest for SaaS (Software as a Service) specifically and almost 50% interest in centralized solutions. And in the food/hospitality industry, accountability and the ability to make almost instant changes and to know those changes have been executed across the enterprise - no matter what they are - is extremely important. Delivering a solution via innovative Web 2.0 technologies and SaaS solutions can now ease the burden to drive operational compliance throughout chains.

Opterus' solution, *Store Ops-Center* (SOC), is offered as SaaS and has been specifically developed for retail. This store execution management solution is an on-demand, web-based software that is designed to communicate corporate policy, day-to-day objectives, assign tasks and handle issues between corporate office and locations and manage compliance. SOC enables you to rapidly and accurately transfer all information to and from locations more effectively. More and more it's becoming the single point of access at locations where employees go to get all their information.

The reality today is that many companies have an environment where multiple corporate departments are using various communications methods to gather information from the locations, without any type of governance. In many instances, one department's request might conflict with that from another department, resulting in confusion at the location on what needs to be done at the right time. Consistent operational compliance across all locations is essential to efficiently drive out operational costs. Companies now must be able to monitor location compliance on a location and individual basis to identify areas of improvement for better results. Until now there hasn't been a plausible way to have visibility into the daily operations of each location to know which are compliant with corporate operational initiatives.

Traditionally the main software at the location has been the Point of Sale software. Managing the implementation and ongoing maintenance of this software has almost been a full time job for IT and Operations groups. However, the burden of implementing plans to improve revenue, reduce organizational

> *"Make things as simple as possible, but not simpler"*
>
> Albert Einstein

costs, increase efficiency, and become more cost-effective, is continuing to fall on operations.

Since there is clearly limited resources and money, operations need to find better ways of doing business to implement corporate directives across the entire retail enterprise. What is required to ensure the alignment of corporate initiatives and objectives is a simple, elegant solution that can be implemented rapidly and ensure strong user acceptance. This should not be seen as an ongoing cost for retailers but rather an essential retail productivity tool with clear benefits.

The majority of your employees, especially Generation Y staff, would like to know what is expected of them and how their progress will be measured. Regularly inviting employees on the front lines to comment on progress, tasks and directives from head office will go a long way to inform you about how the plan is working, what obstacles remain and how well you are managing your culture.

Many of today's most innovative retailers are now experiencing significant financial performance through quicker, more accurate adoption of corporate initiatives through SaaS solutions. Store Ops-Center has, for example, made the operations team for one of their customers 20% more efficient. By managing information consistently across the enterprise, you too can more easily build a skilled labor force, enhance employee loyalty through positive company culture, and ultimately reduce turnover.

Initial Benefits of *Store Ops-Center*

Increase Productivity & Improve Communications
- Opterus allows you to communicate with each location, and if necessary, each employee at the location from one centralized solution.
- Drive financial performance through quicker, more accurate adoption of corporate initiatives.

Improve Visibility and Control

- Current environments where multiple corporate departments are using various communication methods to gather information from the locations without any type of governance causes conflicts and confusion at the location level.
- Opterus enables you to streamline initiatives and make better decision with improved data and reporting from locations giving them a 360° "eye in the sky" view of the enterprise.

Mitigate Compliance Risk

- Compliance monitoring that reduces operating expenses by having a standard set of workflows that optimize operational efficiencies across all locations.
- Ensuring compliance and alignment with all corporate initiatives and objectives.
- Monitoring compliance and increasing accountability at the location level and monitoring which locations are compliant with their tasks.
- Link location issues to tasks; find ways to improve and receive feedback tied to, and independent of, specific tasks.

Improve Overall Quality of Workforce

- Today's employees have been immersed in technology almost since birth, and based on their experiences as students and consumers, they have come to expect it in the workplace as well. The pervasiveness of social media and social computing is a big part of that.
- These expectations have to be factored in when trying to recruit, retain and motivate young employees.

Increase Sales

- Opterus allows locations to have clarity of instruction.
- Employees will be following best business practices.
- Key location personnel will be spending more time with customers.
- Drive consistent customer experience.
- Studies show 2% to 5% of revenue is lost when location-level employees aren't compliant in executing strategy.

There is a need. Implementing an execution management solution will ensure the alignment of your corporate initiatives, objectives and streamline your operations. You can significantly reduce expenses, cut costs, improve communications and monitor compliance on all messages and tasks. Opterus' *Store Ops-Center* will meet your needs and really is an effective and simple solution.

About Opterus

Opterus Inc. is the leading provider of a cost-effective, easy-to-implement store information and execution management solution that increases productivity and improves retail enterprise communications. Opterus *Store Ops-Center* software is an on-demand, web-based retail portal designed to communicate corporate policy and day-to-day objectives between corporate office and store locations. This solution is specifically designed for retail operations, and provides store personnel with clear, concise and timely direction, along with the proper tools to best do their jobs to support corporate initiatives. Opterus is based in Toronto, Ontario and was founded in 2006 by a group of seasoned retail industry technology veterans. For additional information about Opterus, please visit http://www.opterus.com.