

Innovations in Workforce Management at Harris Teeter

Result

- Increased revenue through enhanced labor forecasting and scheduling
- Reduced costs and increased associate engagement and satisfaction

Innovation at Harris Teeter

From their first grocery store in 1960 through to today and beyond, Harris Teeter's secret sauce is innovation. Whether it's opening the first fully air-conditioned grocery store in North Carolina, providing innovative wine & beer bars or pursuing Uber-like mobile shift postings, innovation is a core culture at Harris Teeter. They wanted the same level of innovation from their workforce management solution.

Challenges

- North Carolina-based Harris Teeter, a wholly-owned subsidiary of The Kroger Co., with over 265 retail locations, 52 fuel centers, three distribution centers and a dairy manufacturing operation, needed an enterprise-wide workforce management platform to drive associate engagement, efficiency and customer satisfaction.
- Any solution for Harris Teeter has to reflect and support the culture of diversity and inclusion that, together with innovation, is a foundation of their business model
- Harris Teeter wanted a workforce management solution that not only supported their continued push for innovation and inclusion, but also brought innovative capabilities to the table.

Culture of inclusion

As a mid-sized regional grocer and retailer, Harris Teeter is in competition with everything from mega-stores to mom & pop shops. To compete successfully, Harris Teeter has a laser focus on three areas of its business: the diversity and inclusion of their workforce; an ever-increasing goal of customer satisfaction; and continued innovation in products and services.

The three areas are mutually supportive. By having the associates in stores reflect the diversity in the customer base they serve, customers feel more welcome and comfortable. It also helps drive innovation.

“Diversity and inclusion are naturally woven throughout the framework of Harris Teeter, starting with our own associates and the customers that we serve.... we recognize that creative energies and ideas generated by a diverse group of associates will always exceed those of any one particular group.”

— Harris Teeter President

Supporting innovation

Harris Teeter continuously strives to innovate in the way they serve their customers. Examples include having Starbucks locations in stores, offering “Hot Bars” serving pizza by the slice and other chef-prepared foods, omelet stations, sushi stations, burger bars and beer and wine bars. Their stores also support buy online/pickup in-store (BOPUS) convenience for shoppers.

Supporting all of its innovative customer services with a diverse workforce nearing 39,000 associates across its various business segments is a major challenge, especially considering some of the areas it serves have as low as a 1.25% unemployment rate. Harris Teeter chose to deploy Blue Yonder’s Luminat™ Retail workforce management capability enterprise-wide to drive innovation in their workforce management practices.

Advanced scheduling capabilities enable Harris Teeter to automatically schedule associates weeks in advance based on past customer traffic and planned events. Harris Teeter gets heightened efficiency and better coverage, resulting in improved in-stock positions and customer service and satisfaction.

Driving associate engagement

Harris Teeter believes driving associate engagement results in higher associate satisfaction and retention, as well as improved customer satisfaction. Luminat’s mobile workforce management app gives associates 24/7 access

to their schedules and time cards from their smartphones. In addition to their own shifts, associates can see and bid on uncovered shifts, as well as swap shifts with other associates. Managers can post open shifts and approve shift swaps.

“Associates have real-time information at their fingertips at any time and can take action. We are truly driving engagement by putting more control in our associates’ hands for scheduling coverage.”

— Workforce Management Business Analyst

Solution benefits

- Supports Harris Teeter’s culture of inclusion and innovation through innovative workforce management capabilities across the enterprise
- Improved shift coverage and in-stock positioning due to enhanced labor forecasting and scheduling, leading to increased revenue
- Greater associate engagement and job satisfaction to increase customer service and reduce turnover, hiring costs and training

Blue Yonder expertise

Harris Teeter believes Blue Yonder’s innovative mobile app can drive greater associate engagement and coverage across locations. “We want to think outside the box and start sharing shift postings across locations. In some of our coverage areas we have several stores within an easy drive of each other. Associates could see and bid for any of those shifts. We think it could be like Uber where associates could see and rate available shifts and managers could rate the associates after they’ve worked a shift.”