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Chris Quinn
Fieldworks Marketing
01435 873080
chrisq@fieldworksmarketing.co.uk

World's best Retailers depend on automated workforce management, says Aberdeen

10th May 2007, Milton Keynes – Aberdeen Group has reinforced the link between 'Best in Class'* Retailers and their deployment of Workforce Management (WFM) strategies. The Workforce Management Benchmark Report shows that by using the WFM process more effectively than other Retailers, 80% of 'Best in Class' Retailers have improved or met their labour turnover rate goals, resulting in improved bottom line performance due to retention savings and higher customer service.

In order to meet these goals, 'Best in Class' Retailers are 72% more likely than 'Industry Average' and 'Laggards' to assess staff needs, skills and talent development, and are 40% more likely to have established guidelines for workforce process and product training.

"Industry Average and Laggard performance is not matching up to the standards of Best in Class companies due to manual workforce procedures, lack of WFM analytics, and fragmented WFM solutions," said Sahir Anand, Retail Research Analyst, Aberdeen. "This fragmentation is essentially due to several non-integrated WFM solutions deployed within the enterprise that lead to flawed interaction of labor, sales volume and customer traffic data for long-term labor forecasting and planning purposes."

Ian Baxter, Director of Marketing at WorkPlace Systems the leading supplier of Workforce Management (WFM) solutions, commented, "It is clear from the Aberdeen Report that Workforce Management systems make a major contribution to successful retailers' bottom line, which independently reinforces what we have seen with our customers. There are still a substantial number of Retailers who have not deployed Workforce Management and could significantly improve their performance using this technology."

This view is supported by international consultants, Martec International, which recently published research among the top 100 UK Retailers, showing that, only 31 use labour scheduling systems and of those, 12 are developed in house and are not best of breed.

The Aberdeen report goes on to say that, 63% of all retailers interviewed are planning to invest in workforce management solutions within the next 12 to 24 months; with the primary driver of these initiatives being to reduce labour costs and boost margins.

Baxter concluded, "In the past Workforce Management may have daunted some Retailers, but over the years we have developed our solution and an implementation approach to make this technology more accessible and easier to realise these important benefits."

The report was sponsored by Microsoft and WorkPlace Systems and a FREE copy of the Report can be downloaded from: www.workplacesystems.com

*For the purposes of this report 'Best in Class' Retailers were defined by Aberdeen Group using four key metrics including improved labour cost containment, reduced employee turnover rates, improved operating profit as percent of sales and improved schedule effectiveness. Aberdeen canvassed retailers in the Americas, EMEA and Asia PAC.

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About WorkPlace Systems

WorkPlace Systems was founded in 1986 and is listed on the London Stock Exchange (WSI). WorkPlace is a world-leading supplier of Workforce Management software and of Consulting Solutions which increase customer service significantly and reduce labour costs, leading to improved store performance and customer experience.

WorkPlace Systems plc

Precedent Drive, Rooksley, Milton Keynes, MK13 8PP

t: +44 (0) 1908 242 042 f: +44 (0) 1908 201 148

www.workplacesystems.com

Registered in England Number 2016236