


Mobile Workforce Management

Current Challenges and Solutions





For many working professionals, **work is not bound to a single location.**

INTRODUCTION

Even before the pandemic forced the normalization of remote work among traditional office workers, the mobile workforce was very much prevalent. In the business world, many managers were expected to travel from one site to another to oversee operations and have face-to-face customer interactions. In many **service businesses**, police officers, nurses and many others are always on the move and rarely confined to a physical desk. Similarly, the manufacturing and supply chain industries rely on transportation as a key function which requires its employees to be on-the-go.

Still, mobility was not the norm for many people until the strict regulations of the COVID-19 pandemic were put in place in early 2020. Around the world, employees felt **the impact of the remote work phenomenon**. In fact, we will continue to experience a shift in this direction as we head into **the future of the working world**. By 2022, the mobile workforce is expected to grow to 1.87 billion employees globally.* And now that remote work is here to stay, leaders are seeking ways to better manage their teams and optimize productivity outside the office.

In this white paper, we will define what a mobile workforce is, what it means in terms of the employee experience, the challenges it brings, and mobile workforce solutions in order to adapt to the future of work.

* <https://www.forbes.com/sites/joefolkman/2017/03/02/the-6-key-secrets-to-increasing-empowerment-in-your-team/#7264e86f77a6>

A background network diagram consisting of various nodes (circles) connected by solid and dashed lines, creating a complex web of connections. The nodes are in shades of gray, and the lines are thin and light gray.

What is a Mobile Workforce?

A mobile workforce is often used synonymously with **working from home**. But in reality, it goes much further than that. It represents a workforce that is made up of employees who are **not constrained to a physical location or office space**. This can include workers such as truck drivers, salespeople, healthcare providers and more. These types of employees are commonly known as **field service workers** and have made up a large part of the mobile workforce for decades.

In the **modern workplace**, however, employees who traditionally work from 9 to 5 in an office have also joined the mobile workforce by **switching to a work-from-home approach**. According to a Citrix study, 61% of workers are working outside the office at least some of the time, and this number is only growing.*

While desk jobs make sense for many businesses, some roles have been performed off-site since the beginning of their existence **due to the nature of the job**. However, in both cases, it is important to provide employees with a way to **stay connected to the workplace**. That is why we cannot define a mobile workforce without considering the **technology and tools** that enable mobile work to be possible. The mobile workforce is also made up of all the technologies that have allowed us to operate from **anywhere an internet connection exists**.

Giving mobile employees access to these technologies means that they can **get work done on-premise, in the field or on-the-go** without being disconnected from workplace. Furthermore, technology **enables data to be collected** from relevant transactions that occur anytime in any place. For example, a sales representative can update a CRM from a mobile device minutes after stepping out of an off-site meeting with a potential client.

Mobile technology has radically changed the way we all work and has the potential to bring about great benefits for organizations and their clients alike. However, in order to manage a mobile workforce effectively, we must **take into consideration the employee experience**, how it is affected by this ever-changing aspect of work and the challenges that emerge as a result.

* <https://www.citrix.com/articles/7-enterprise-mobility-statistics-you-should-know.html>

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The Mobile Employee Experience

- ▶▶ The employee experience is one of the important focal points for human resource managers. One of their main goals when it comes to improving the employee experience is **increasing employee productivity without sacrificing their well-being and job satisfaction**. With the rise of remote work, this topic has become an important point of discussion and debate among business leaders around the world.
- ▶▶ Managing a mobile workforce effectively means being able to handle **both the online and offline aspects of work** to make people's jobs less time-consuming and complex. Those that were able to **adapt and respond to the needs of their employees** have been the most successful businesses in a post-pandemic era. In fact, the majority of respondents to a *Deloitte Global 2021 Millennial and Gen Z* survey selected **flexibility and adaptability** among the three most important workforce traits. In the same study, 27% of Millennial business leaders listed work-life balance as one of their top-four non-financial business priorities.*
- ▶▶ However, with employees being at a distance, it is often difficult to **communicate about and empathize with** what they are experiencing. All aspects of work from the recruiting process to onboarding new employees into the company to managing their day-to-day work itself are all parts of the mobile employee experience that must be carefully deployed. While **mobile technology** plays a vital role in facilitating these functions, it is important to understand the challenges of managing a mobile workforce that go beyond providing an **optimal employee experience**.

* <https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/global/Documents/2021-deloitte-global-millennial-survey-report.pdf>

A background network diagram consisting of various nodes (circles) connected by solid and dashed lines, representing a complex web or organizational structure.

Challenges of Managing a Mobile Workforce

01 | COMPLEX BUSINESS REQUIREMENTS

Although we are seeing a significant rise in remote work, the reality is that organizations will need to **manage blended teams**. Organizations are likely to find themselves managing a mix of fixed-location and mobile employees both of which can have flexible working hours. This is all to say that **there is no one-size-fits-all approach** when it comes to managing your workforce. As a result, the needs of business are becoming more complex than ever before. When it comes to time & attendance, you will need **management tools** to streamline tracking time, messaging hourly employees, distributing the workload, forecasting staffing levels and employee scheduling.

Companies will need to **innovate and invest in technology** that will establish efficiencies and enable adaptable business practices, especially when it comes to important field service management aspects such as **decision-making processes, communication and scheduling**.

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02 | ADOPTING NEW TECHNOLOGY

Digital transformation is not easy.

By 2022, the global HR software market size is expected to exceed USD 10 Billion.*

This means a more attractive and competitive space for new vendors entering the market, but it also means more and more options for organizations to choose from. As business leaders rush to invest in tools to **make their HR functions more competitive**, digital transformation and change management can become a challenge for HR and IT departments. Thus, **supporting the changes** that come with adopting new technology is crucial for the success of their implementation.

Adopting new technology means that organizations need to **support more types of devices** such as mobile phones, tablets, computer kiosks, etc. Some organizations also take a **bring-your-own-device (BYOD)** approach which brings its own challenges and nuances.

At the same time the implementation of new tools requires a good look at your **current processes**. Employees are looking for an alternative that will make **completing their tasks easier**. The worst thing you can do is to place a new system on top of processes that don't work, are overly complex or are not well-defined. This will lead to **low adoption rates, reduced engagement and satisfaction among employees** as well as **inconsistent processes that lead to errors and discrepancies**.

It's up to HR and IT teams to work together to streamline the adoption of new technology by providing the support their employees need.

* <https://www.grandviewresearch.com/industry-analysis/hr-software-market>

03 | DATA SECURITY

With remote work and the rise of technology adoption, companies are **housing more data than ever**, and email use is skyrocketing. This only increases the need for data protection. Furthermore, allowing employees to **use their own devices** and access workplace applications remotely has **created security concerns**. For example, personal phones that house company data are an easy target for cyberattacks. In fact, Wi-fi networks in most homes are easily compromised. There is also an **increased security threat** when employees are using public Wi-fi networks.

To combat this threat, it is important for organizations to **educate employees** about the dangers of security breaches and make sure they **follow best practices** when it comes to **protecting company information**. Remote work is here to stay, which is why **creating strong and enforceable policies** around the issue of data security is a must. In the next section, we will see how **workforce management systems** can also play a vital role in data security.

Mobile Workforce Management Solutions

Because a mobile workforce can be difficult to manage, company leaders are turning to **mobile-friendly, cloud-based solutions** to effectively manage remote employees and those who are working in the field. These solutions are designed to help **automate and support** many functions of mobile workforce operations. As a result, leaders are better able to **empower their employees** and create productive and efficient teams.

Let's take a look at some of the common functionalities included in workforce management solutions.

01 | TIMEKEEPING

Timekeeping solutions make it easier for employees to log their work time with online timesheets and other **mobile time entry methods**. For example, employees who work in the field can use their **mobile phone to clock in and out** when they arrive at their location of work. It is also possible to track employees while they travel from job to job. **Geofencing capabilities** allow employers to better control the accuracy of these punches by setting up virtual boundaries around a geographical location. In addition, many applications are able to support **offline punching** for when employees don't have internet connection.

Not only is accurate timekeeping essential for **legal compliance and accurate payroll processing**, it also plays an important role when it comes to **business intelligence**. Through reporting tools and real-time dashboards, supervisors are able to track employee time metrics in order to control labor costs and monitor budgets.

02 | SCHEDULING

Knowing when to dispatch or transfer employees from one job to another can be tricky. Sometimes, a **quick decision** is required in order to avoid unnecessary costs. Having a **scheduling solution** as part of a workforce management software can help managers better manage schedules and ensure operations run more smoothly. Having a scheduler accessible on a mobile device is crucial for **managing the workforce in real time**, whether in the office or in the field.

Functionalities of a good workforce planning tool allow managers to **build and adjust an employee schedule on the fly**. Schedules can also be **automated** so that staff members do not need to spend time manually job scheduling each week. Instead, they can focus on managing performance and productivity. Alongside a timekeeping tool, mobile scheduling capabilities help **reduce absenteeism** and **avoid unforeseen overtime costs**.

03 | ABSENCE MANAGEMENT

To properly create schedules, it's important to have a good handle on leave and absences. Tracking and **managing all types of leave** from a mobile device is an advantage for both employees and managers. Employees can make/approve PTO requests and check their **time-off balances** from anywhere. At the same time, managers can get an overview of their team's schedule right when they need it. They can also complete **approval workflows** and check upcoming leave in order to staff accordingly.

Absence management is also important for being aware of trends and knowing when actions are needed. For example, managers can proactively plan ahead when it comes to holiday seasons when **staffing levels** tend to be lower than normal. They can also anticipate when they need to delegate certain tasks or ask for **back up staff**.

04 | REAL TIME COMMUNICATION

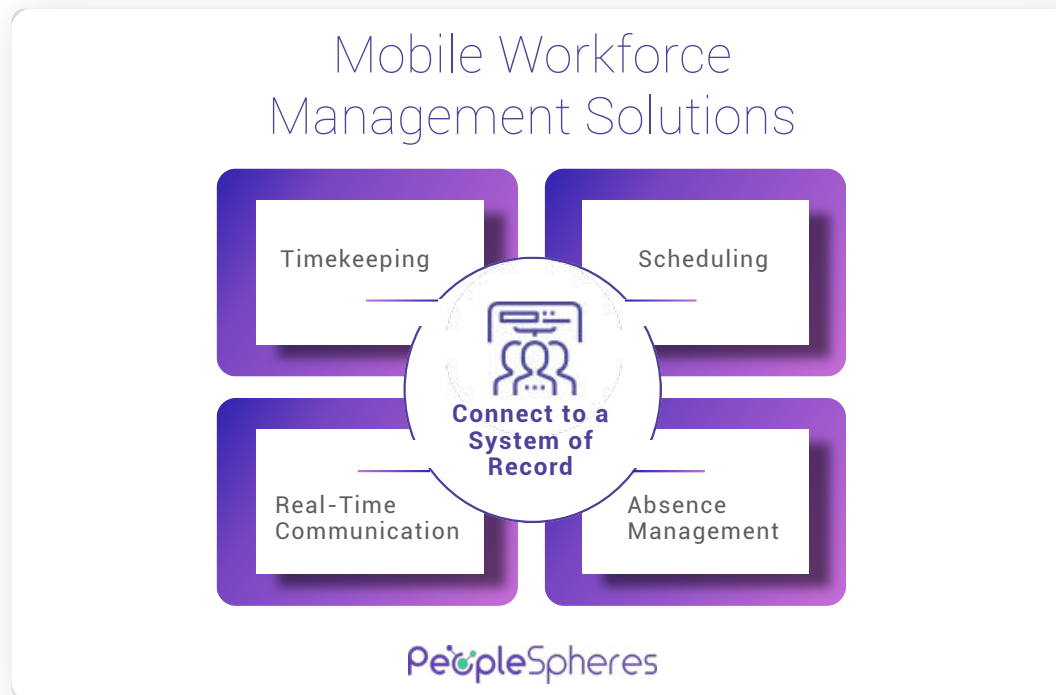
When managing a mobile workforce, **effective communication** becomes a key factor. Workforce management solutions are a way to be able to **communicate with hourly employees in real time**. In fact, you will only get the results you are looking for in a workforce management solution if the information reaches the person who needs it. The solution should eliminate the need for additional emails or phone calls when changes are made to an employee's schedule or shift. As your business grows, it will become increasingly difficult to **communicate in a scalable fashion**.

The most successful businesses are those who are **agile** and can respond quickly to change. In order to keep up with ever-changing work demands, your solution should have the ability to **notify employees and managers when changes happen**. Since they may be on-the-go at the time a change occurs, sending a mobile notification is a good way to ensure the information doesn't get overlooked or missed.

05 | CONNECT TO A SYSTEM OF RECORD

One of the main goals of a workforce management solution is to ensure that your workforce (mobile or not) is **as productive as possible**. Traditionally, a remote worker would have to wait until the end of the day to document the day's progress or update his/her supervisor with the day's events. When a workforce management tool is integrated to your system of record, **capturing data directly from the field** becomes possible.

As the workforce becomes more and more mobile, **real time check-ins** and data collection become indispensable. It allows employees to respond to problems more quickly and to answer to customer and business needs in a more efficient manner. For example, by connecting your workforce management solution with a customer relationship management (CRM) tool, like Salesforce for example, managers can more quickly **identify opportunities** to increase customer satisfaction.



A background network diagram consisting of interconnected nodes and lines. Some lines are solid, while others are dashed. The nodes are represented by small circles, some filled and some hollow. The overall structure is a complex web of connections.

The Advantages of Mobile Workforce Solutions

01 | INSIGHTS FROM ANALYTICS

Collecting data can be done more seamlessly with a workforce management solution in place. However, it's the **analytics tools** they are connected to is where all the value lies. With these tools, you can gain meaningful insights about **employee behavior and productivity** of your workforce. With location and time tracking managers are able to better evaluate whether their strategies are working or not. It also allows them to get visibility to important metrics that **gauge the performance of their teams**.

With more and more organizations embracing **big data** as a strategic initiative, you can involve your remote workforce by providing easier and more accessible ways for them to collect data. This can include their own **time and attendance data**, but also **travel time, engagement survey results and more**. Based on this data, managers can make better and more informed decisions about the workforce. When workforce management data is combined with other types of HR data, such as recruiting or training, these insights can become significantly more **valuable for decision-making**.

02 | SCALABLE AND FLEXIBLE

The purpose of any solution is to simplify the lives of users. So, when a solution is to be used by employees in multiple locations and across departments, it's important that it is able to accommodate the needs of everyone. For example, you can configure the timesheet in a way that is intuitive to use. Choosing a solution that is **customizable and flexible** will become a big advantage for you and your organization. Overall, it should be intuitive and **easy to learn, use and add new users**. When employees are willing to adopt the solution, the businesses will experience profitability and the ROI will be positive.

It is also important that the solution be able to accommodate your needs as the company grows. That means that it should be able to **handle third-party integrations**. This way, when your company grows, your strategies change or your budget increases, you will be able to integrate new mobile workforce applications over time. **Digital transformation** does not have to be costly. Even if your HR systems are outdated, modernizing your tech stack does not necessarily require ripping everything out and starting over. Intelligent solutions such as **PeopleSpheres' mobile employee experience platform** brings your old systems to life by enabling you to use them on your mobile device and integrate them to the same platform as your other tools.

03 | INCREASED SECURITY

Implementing a mobile workforce solution that is **cloud-based** increases the security of your data. Instead of housing data on an internal server or personal device that is at risk of crashing or being hacked, software as-a-service (SaaS) cloud services are able to offer a **high level of security and data backup**. Working with solutions on the cloud also means you can securely access the data you need from anywhere. This is an advantage when it comes to managing a mobile workplace.

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The Future of Mobile Workforce Management

Businesses across all industries are looking to anticipate and improve the customers experience by **increasing workforce capacity and reducing costs**. At the same time, organizations need to ensure the **quality and consistency** of their services.

Organizations will seek to do this while supporting and managing a mobile workforce. As we saw, technology is already playing a large part in the strategic management of mobile workforces. The trend in this direction is expected to continue as companies **invest in more HR technology** and **build a mobile-oriented ecosystem**. Mobile devices will become as essential to businesses as computers once were.

Some trends include:

- ▶▶ An increase in software adoption by organizations that have a growing population of remote workers
- ▶▶ Flexibility in terms of work location and schedules made possible by the increase of cloud-based solutions
- ▶▶ The focus on performance management, productivity tracking and data collection for big data initiatives
- ▶▶ Connectivity of workforce management and other business solutions through software integrations

Organizations are already reacting quickly to these trends, while others are falling behind by maintaining their status quo. But to make the transition to a **mobile-oriented organization**, you must have a clear understanding of the requirements of your business and a vision for the future state of your mobile workforce. Make sure that implementation of new technology is aligned with your **business goals** and is suitable for a **positive employee experience**.

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Summary: Mobile Workforce Management

THE CHALLENGES

- ▶▶ It is important to provide mobile employees with a way to stay connected to the workplace.
- ▶▶ One of the main goals when it comes to improving the employee experience is increasing employee productivity without sacrificing their well-being and job satisfaction.
- ▶▶ With employees being at a distance, it is often difficult to communicate about and empathize with what they are experiencing.
- ▶▶ Although we are seeing a significant rise in remote work, the reality is that organizations will need to manage blended teams.
- ▶▶ By 2022, the global HR software market size is expected to exceed USD 10 Billion. This means more options for organizations to choose from.
- ▶▶ As business leaders rush to invest in tools to make their HR functions more competitive, digital transformation and change management can become a challenge for HR and IT departments.
- ▶▶ Adopting new technology means that organizations need to support more types of devices such as mobile phones, tablets, computer kiosks, etc.
- ▶▶ With remote work and the rise of technology adoption, companies are housing more data than ever, and email use is skyrocketing. This only increases the need for data protection.

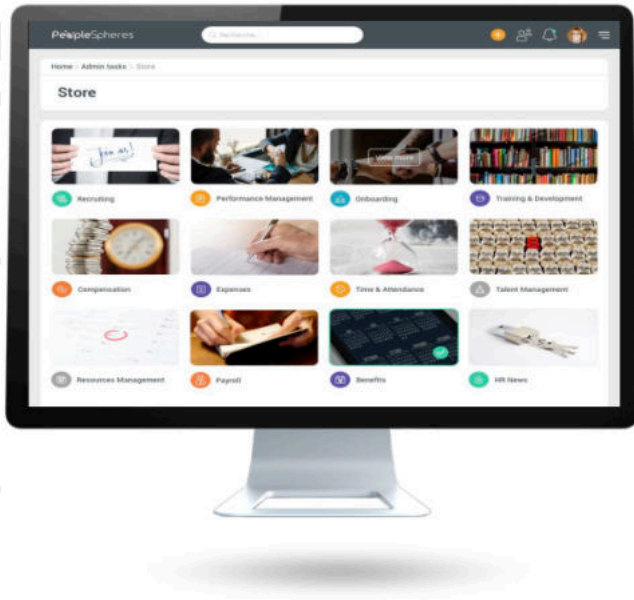
KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ▶ ▶ The mobile workforce represents a workforce that is made up of employees who are not constrained to a physical location or office space.
- ▶ ▶ In order to manage a mobile workforce effectively, we must take into consideration the employee experience and how it is affected by mobile technology.
- ▶ ▶ Companies will need to innovate and invest in technology that will enable adaptable business practices.
- ▶ ▶ The implementation of new tools requires a good look at your current processes.
- ▶ ▶ It is important for organizations to educate employees about the dangers of security breaches and make sure they follow best practices when it comes to protecting company information
- ▶ ▶ Because a mobile workforce can be difficult to manage, company leaders are turning to mobile-friendly, cloud-based solutions to effectively manage remote employees and those who are working in the field.
- ▶ ▶ Timekeeping solutions make it easier for employees to log their work time with online timesheets and mobile time entry methods.
- ▶ ▶ Having a scheduling solution as part of a workforce management software can help managers better manage schedules and ensure operations run more smoothly.

- ▶ ▶ Tracking and managing all types of leave from a mobile device is an advantage for both employees and managers.
- ▶ ▶ In order to keep up with ever-changing work demands, your solution should have the ability to notify employees and managers when changes happen.
- ▶ ▶ When a workforce management tool is integrated to your system of record, capturing data directly from the field becomes possible.
- ▶ ▶ When workforce management data is combined with other types of HR data, such as recruiting or training, these insights can become significantly more valuable for decision-making.
- ▶ ▶ Choosing a solution that is customizable and flexible will become a big advantage for you and your organization.
- ▶ ▶ Implementing a mobile workforce solution that is cloud-based increases the security of your data.
- ▶ ▶ Technology is already playing a large part in the strategic management of mobile workforces. The trend in this direction is expected to continue as companies invest in more technology and build a mobile-oriented ecosystem.

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PeopleSpheres is the first 100% adaptable and adjustable HRIS software in SaaS

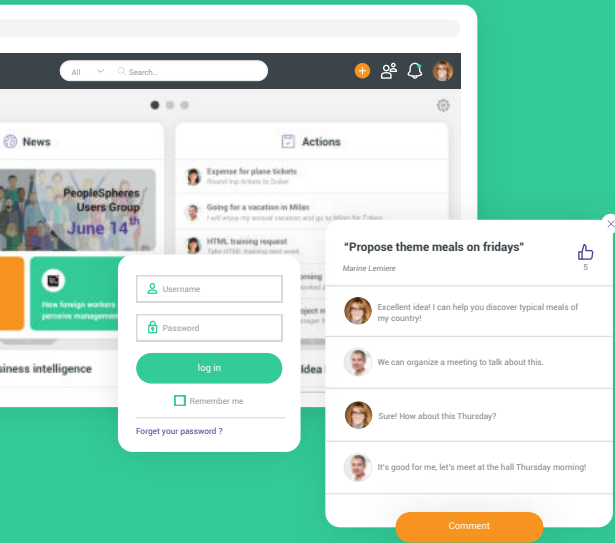


Composed of an HR core and the best HR software, our solution allows you to customize your HR portal according to the needs of your company and thus accelerate all your HR management

- 1.** **Connect** your existing HR software
- 2.** **Add** the HR modules of your choice
- 3.** **Manage** all your HR from a **single platform**

An HR core with multiple features

Benefit from a powerful platform which allows you to connect all your existing HR software, to synchronize all of your employees' data and provide a unique user experience.



- A unified user experience:
 - HR Portal
 - Unified profile
 - Notification Center
 - Cross-Modules actions
- **HR Cross-Modules reporting**
- Driving force of **Cross-Modules workflows**
- Marketplace for HR components (tools, services, content)

Benefits for your HR management

From administrative management to talent management, choose the HR modules according to your needs among a wide choice.

TALENT MANAGEMENT

- Recruiting
- Onboarding
- Training & Development
- Performance Management
- Skills
- Compensation
- Talent Management

ADMINISTRATION

- Leave & Absence
- Expense
- Time & Attendance
- Planning
- Payroll
- Dematerialization of Pay Stubs
- ESDB
- Badge Reader
- Organization Charts
- Digital Safe
- HR Document Generator
- Electronic Signature

- **Save time:** on our marketplace, choose the best software and ready-to-use connectors.
- **Have a single HR portal** with all the solutions chosen.
- **Adopt a flexible solution:** you can add or replace HR modules at any time.
- **Connect your software:** take advantage of standardized interoperability thanks to a dedicated "smart connector".