



# Business Management Systems Case Reference

## Employee Scheduling Software Helps Police Serve Community Better and Trim Excess Overtime by 90%

### The Challenges

Guided by the needs of the community, residents and businesses, Windsor (Connecticut) Police Department (WPD) employs 68, of whom 55 are sworn personnel serving on a 24/7, 5-2 schedule on a 28-day cycle. Everyone's schedule—from Chief to clerks—is managed and reported.

Seeking more time for supervising and investigating, Detective Sergeant William Freeman needed to automate staff scheduling because constant changes often kept him and nine supervisors deskbound several hours a day.

Freeman explains a problem typical to law enforcement scheduling: "Community requests for extra coverage, staff's sick or vacation days, and emergencies usually invoke overtime. In Windsor, contracts require overtime be offered—by seniority in each category—first to qualified staff on their day off, then to those just coming off shift, and finally to other sworn officers.

Microsoft Excel for staff scheduling was time-consuming and very difficult to constantly amend. Excel turned out no reports and offered no way to export staff hours worked into the town's payroll software.

"Staff scheduling in Microsoft Excel was completely inadequate to set up or 'see' our overtime priorities, to organize the call-in process for supervisors, or to report and prove our contract compliance. Filling each overtime slot could take 15 to 20 minutes—up to two hours per shift. Multiply that times ten supervisors and managers every day for a year. In June 2010, I began searching for employee scheduling software to help harvest back those lost management hours."

### The Solution

Freeman previewed many staff scheduling programs online. He says, "Our needs are unique, but Snap Schedule staff at Business Management Systems immediately understood them. Snap Schedule is very powerful and complete for most police scheduling needs, but unique WPD priorities required a custom plug-in. BMS worked religiously to meet our schedule."

Business Management Systems (BMS) develops the Snap Schedule line of shift scheduling software. It also develops Business Appointment Manager, software to manage large volumes of appointments, locations, and equipment.

Snap Schedule software and the custom plug-in offer schedulers a screen to specify a date (e.g., June 13) for which search out under-staffed shifts. The software applies WPD's contract priorities and prioritizes qualified staff for each slot. It then compiles a sequential call-list by timeslot for supervisors.

**Customer:**  
Windsor Police Department

**Web Site:**  
<http://www.townofwindsorct.com>

**Location:**  
Windsor, Connecticut

**Industry:**  
Government

#### Customer Profile:

Windsor is the location of the first English settlement in Connecticut, settled in 1633 by a congregation relocating from the Plymouth Colony. Bordering Hartford to the north, Windsor covers 31.1 square miles on the west bank of the Connecticut River. It is located an equal distance from New York and Boston.

Windsor Police Department serves a town with tourist destinations dating back to the 1600s. Police Department personnel protect life and property by observant patrolling, enforcing laws and ordinances, giving assistance to those in need and maintaining open, positive relationships with people in the community. The department handles more than 52,000 calls for service each year and provides 24 hour E-911 service for Windsor residents. (Source: Company web site)

#### Software and Services:

- Snap Schedule™ Premium Employee Scheduling Software
- Windows® XP
- Windows® Vista
- Windows® 7

**For more Information Call:**  
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## About Business Management Systems

Business Management Systems develops and supports software that optimizes schedules and staff time in every business sector. BMS software streamlines laborious scheduling that consumes thousands of management hours every day.

- **Employee Scheduling Software:** Snap Schedule employee scheduling software drastically shrinks manager and scheduler time. It simplifies creating, modifying, reporting, and publishing employee work schedules. Users earn praise for stretching payroll dollars by more-efficient employee shift scheduling and rostering.
- **Managing Staff Appointments and Billing:** Business Appointment Manager focuses on appointment-based businesses. It reduces time spent scheduling employees, rooms and equipment, and finally in billing and reporting. Those tasks now take minutes or seconds, not hours.
- **Who Is Business Management Systems?** The engineering and software professionals running BMS rocked the business software world by winning five Microsoft awards for software excellence over four years. Their software products were acquired by the world's largest software company, which still actively markets and expands them.

From this heritage of modern software development excellence, Snap Schedule employee scheduling software and Business Appointment Manager continue to optimize staff scheduling, appointments and management for businesses around the world.

Web site:  
<http://www.BMScentral.com>

WPD initially purchased 15 Snap Schedule licenses, the plug-in, and several customized reports, including a WPD-specific Cruiser Checklist Report that displays assigned officers and their patrol districts, supervisors and dispatchers, and an equipment status checklist for every operational police cruiser on any day. BMS worked closely with WPD during deployment to ensure smooth installation and ease of staff learning.

Because the immediate results were highly favorable (see below), WPD upgraded to Snap Schedule Premium. Based on Microsoft SQL Server, the premium version empowers additional users and lets users see each other's schedule changes on-screen in real time.

Freeman relates, "Snap Schedule's customer service helped sell us on the wisdom of this upgrade," says Freeman. "BMS had proved they would make our investment pay out." At WPD's request, Snap Schedule staff developed an additional plug-in to allow export of hours worked, overtime, and time off to the town's MUNIS payroll system from Tyler Technologies.

### The Benefits

Freeman reports easy deployment, with Snap Schedule staff rapidly responding to installation questions. Snap Schedule's tools sped the import of old Excel spreadsheets to help populate staff records. Freeman quips, "My hardest task was deciding which color to use for which status."

Even staff without computer skills picked up Snap Schedule willingly and without difficulty. Supervisors use the Roster Report daily to see clearly which staff will be where, when, and with which skill sets. Supervisors report saving many hours over previous software solutions. They devote more time to training officers and delivering hands-on benefits to Windsor residents.

"The dynamics of this software are phenomenal," says Freeman. "It gives us visibility and overviews we never had. Schedule misunderstandings are nearly impossible, except when there's human error. This new clarity helped us reduce overtime pay mistakes by 90 percent."

Tests of the Snap Schedule Premium/MUNIS payroll interface are very positive. Freeman says, "Automated transfer of hours worked, shift scheduling, and overtime data into MUNIS will save our admin staff many hours every week. That data import will happen in minutes."

"My original need," says Freeman, "was to put myself and other supervisors 'back in service' by spending less time on shift scheduling and managing overtime. We need to be out on call so we can ensure situations are handled properly, do spot checks, supervise Dispatch, and monitor prisoners. Now we can do much more of what Windsor residents care about."

Freeman sums up, "If the Snap Schedule software hadn't already sold itself on its merits, their customer service would have. BMS gives us answers the same day we ask—usually within a couple of hours. They're definitely team players."