



# How Firebirds Manages Staff Shifts in 43 Restaurants with Humanity

3,800  
Employees

43  
Location

50%  
Time saved

Crib Sheet Reports  
Fav Feature/Result

Easy, Fast, Time-Saving  
Reason Why They Love Humanity

With 3,800 employees over 43 restaurants, Firebirds Wood Fired Grill needed a tool to efficiently manage shift scheduling and decrease human error to avoid scheduling conflicts. Introducing Humanity helped local managers organize their teams more easily while also engaging employees in the scheduling process.

**The result: 50% less time spent creating schedules and smoother communication across the company!**

## Background

Starting as a single location in Charlotte more than 15 years ago, Firebirds Wood Fired Grill has become a grass-roots success story and a recognized restaurant brand with more than 40 locations in neighborhoods across America.

Embraced locally all around the country and recently named one of 10 “Breakout Brands” by Nation’s Restaurant News, Firebirds is known for offering delicious, authentic American wood-fired meals at reasonable prices.

## Paper Schedules Weren’t Cutting It

As the business grew, Firebirds managers realized that their current staff management methods were in dire need of an upgrade. While a couple locations were using Excel spreadsheets to create staff schedules, most of them were using even more out-dated options.

“Management was handing out printed, paper schedules to employees by hand at the restaurant,” remembers Kathy Severn, Executive Chef at Firebird’s Niles, Ohio location.

“It was basic hard copies, no computer program,” specified Tonya Maciukiewicz, the Managing Director at Firebirds in Morrisville, North Carolina, who was making paper schedules to manage 90 employees at her location.

Outdated staff scheduling methods led to a lot of human error, sloppy shift creation, scheduling conflicts, and it just wasn’t practical anymore. The need for an easy, efficient tool to manage staff shifts at more than 40 locations - each of which have in between 50 and 100 employees - was obvious.

“We were looking to update the way we use and send schedules to our employees to make it easier for them to be informed of their schedule, switch shifts, request time off, and change their availability,” explains Robert Hopple, who manages more than 100 employees in Birmingham, Alabama.

“We wanted to streamline the availability of staff and their requests for time off while being able to schedule at a glance from wherever we are,” said Firebirds Manager Marlon Gammon, adding that it used to take him over two hours each week at his in Columbus, Ohio, location to schedule 65 employees using Excel!

It was time for a more effective and accurate way to schedule. Enter Humanity’s employee scheduling application.



*“We were looking to update the way we use and send schedules to our employees”*

**Robert Hopple**  
General Manager Firebirds Birmingham

## Faster and More Accurate Scheduling

With Humanity, Firebirds' managers are now able to visualize the schedule easily and see everything that's going on at their location: which employees are available, who's taking time off, which shifts are still open and need to be filled, and much more.

The fact that Humanity not only notifies managers when a shift needs to be filled, but also recommends employees who are both available to work at that time and the right type of employees according to position and skills, is a big time-saver for Javier Medina, General Manager at Firebirds of Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania.

The crib sheet feature in Humanity's Reports module is also highly appreciated by Firebirds managers.

"The crib sheets are a good tool to help us visualize our roster for the day in front-of-house and back-of-house," Medina said.

"It also aid us in building our floor plans," adds Mike Warner, who manages a location in Richmond, Virginia with 85 employees. Warner also depends on the Total Hours Scheduled report to help manage day to day labor costs in minutes.

The general consensus among Firebirds managers is that using Humanity has cut the time it takes them to schedule employees in half.

## Employees are On Board and More Engaged

It's not just the managers who appreciate the switch from paper handouts to Humanity, employees have grown to love it as well.

"Our employees typically enjoy Humanity as the app makes things easier for them," says Robert Hopple, General Firebirds Manager in Birmingham.

"Most employees that are tech-savvy have embraced Humanity. They can utilize the app to request time off, change availability, switch shifts...it's definitely popular with them!" added Medina.

"The reminders being sent to the staff are great and they seem to help folks to avoid missing shifts," he added.

Humanity has significantly improved and streamlined the way in which Firebirds management communicates with employees, but also how staff members communicate among themselves.

"The communication aspect of the application is really great," said Maciukiewicz, adding that she gets "a lot less complaints about schedules" from staff members now that they truly have a say in when they work and are able to better communicate their shift preferences to her.



*"Employees can utilize the app to request time off, change availability, switch shifts...Humanity is definitely popular with them!"*

**Javier Medina**

*General Manager at Firebirds of Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania*

## The Result

- **Decreased time spent** on scheduling by 50%
- **Manage labor costs** using reporting and crib sheets
- **Engaged staff** by allowing them to add their availability, request time off and swap shifts independently
- **Improved communication** across the board
- **Decreased employee tardiness** thanks to automated shift reminders via SMS