Distinctive Inns cuts labour costs by 2.8% with AI-driven forecasting and scheduling from Fourth

Against a backdrop of rising labour costs, Distinctive Inns required a solution to control costs and improve efficiency. Fourth enabled them to achieve this with AI-driven Labour Optimisation and forecasting.

2.8% average labour savings per site	7.7% increase in like-for-like sales	9 hours p/w less payroll & scheduling admin

"The wage is the biggest expense and the hardest one to control. Fourth gave us the visibility to see where we were overscheduling and align staffing with real demand. That's made a huge difference to our bottom line."

James Bull
Operations Director
Distinctive Inns

Customer Profile:

Distinctive Inns is an independent pub group that aims to offer high-quality, honest food and drink served in a relaxed and informal environment. Operating across the East Midlands, it has grown from its first outlet, The Riverside, launched in 2010, to include three more venues, with an additional two new venues opening early 2025.

Customer: **Distinctive Inns**

Industry: Hospitality   **Locations:** 4   **Employees:** 98   **Fourth Solutions:** Labour Optimisation & AI Forecasting

Challenges Faced:

Distinctive Inns faced increasing cost pressures from April 2024's minimum wage increase and rising operational expenses. Lingering overstaffing habits from post-pandemic recovery contributed to labour inefficiencies, particularly in food-led and seasonal venues.

Managers relied on manual forecasting, which was time intensive and resulted in challenges scheduling the right staff to meet demand, with restaurant waiting staff often having excess downtime while the bar was overwhelmed, or vice versa.

Solution:

Fourth's Labour Optimisation and AI Forecasting solutions provided Distinctive Inns with the insight to deploy staff more accurately. AI-driven forecasting replaced estimations from managers, ensuring staff scheduling is aligned to accurate demand forecasts.

Fourth's Advanced Analytics offered full visibility into labour costs, site performance, and deployment efficiency across all venues for the first time. These granular insights allowed the team to pinpoint over-scheduling issues, ensuring labour was allocated to match demand, particularly during bar spikes and quieter restaurant times.

Distinctive inns then engaged Fourth's Productivity Consultants to tailor the labour rule metrics to venue-specific needs, such as seasonal or wet-led locations, driving maximising operational efficiency.

Results Achieved:

Fourth's Workforce Management solutions have enabled Distinctive Inns to achieve:

- 2.8% average labour savings per site

- 7.7% increase in like-for-like sales

- 9 hours per week saved on payroll admin and schedule approvals

- Improved staff deployment - reducing incidences of over and under scheduling throughout the business

[Find out more about Fourth's Workforce Management Solutions](#)