

Harbour Hotels reduces expected labour costs by 2% with Fourth's Activity Based Scheduling



Hotel group empowers department heads to move from reactive to proactive cost control using Fourth's dedicated Workforce Management solution for hotels.

Reduced scheduled hours by 400-600 per week

2% saving on expected labour costs from efficient scheduling

Saved managers 2-3 hours per week on admin

"Labour costs are by far the largest cost in our business. Fourth's solution has allowed us to influence labour spend before the hours are worked, not after."

Gary Hall
Finance Director
Harbour hotels



Customer Profile: Harbour Hotels

Harbour Hotels are a collection of 14 luxury hotels, each perfectly positioned in one of the UK's most iconic, desirable destinations. Each hotel is located in naturally sensational settings, exploiting every inch of its surroundings, featuring brilliant in-house restaurants, buzzy bars, top-notch spas and epic event spaces.

HARBOUR
HOTELS

Industry: Hospitality

Locations: 14

Employees: 1,000+

Fourth Solutions: Workforce Management for Hotels

Challenges Faced:

Harbour Hotels were a satisfied customer of Fourth's HR, Payroll and rota solutions for many years. They delivered operational reliability and supported consistent service delivery. However, as the business grew and labour costs increased, there was a need for an advanced solution that offered a more sophisticated scheduling and analytics capability.

Like all hospitality operators, Harbour Hotels payroll costs are significant, with approximately £30 million spent annually and over 35,000 hours worked each week. They required a solution that could support proactive cost control, enable real-time decision-making, and empower department leaders to align schedules with business priorities, rather than react to cost overruns after the fact. Critically, any new solution needed to offer an intuitive interface for department heads to build efficient schedules and minimise the time spent away from their team and other responsibilities.

Solution:

Having reviewed and trialled options from various tech vendors, Harbour Hotels decided to upgrade to Fourth's Activity-Based Scheduling solution, designed specifically for the needs of hotel & leisure operators.

Each department now receives real-time visibility of their labour allocation – built on centrally-managed labour standards – enabling them to identify exactly how much labour they need for each shift. For example, the housekeeping department determined it could move from a standard “minutes-per-room” benchmark, applied to the department as a whole, to applying a specific labour standard per role allowing a better understanding of fixed and variable tasks. They are now in the process of distinguishing between the time required on stay-over and departure rooms.

With Harbour Hotels department managers already having a high degree of trust and confidence in the Fourth solutions they already used, the roll-out of Activity-Based Scheduling was well received and has immediately brought significant benefits to the team.

Results Achieved:

By embracing Fourth's Activity-Based Scheduling solution, Harbour Hotels has:

- Successfully scheduled over 30,000 labour hours for 1,000+ employees every week, with enhanced visibility and control.
- Reduced scheduled hours by 400–600 per week – by the system applying robust labour standards and clearer guidance for managers.
- 2% saving on expected labour costs – through efficient labour management.
- Saved managers 2–3 hours per week by reducing time spent on admin, freeing them up to focus on service and their team.
- Moved from reactive to proactive cost management, reducing surprises and improving planning.

[**Find out more about Fourth's Workforce Management Solutions**](https://www.fourth.co.uk)