



Case Study:
BLINK FITNESS

Industry: Health and Fitness
Employees: 2,000+
Locations: 100+

How Blink Elevated Its Workforce Management Practices

Blink Fitness started in 2011 and has since grown to over 100 locations in the U.S. A premium-quality, value-based fitness chain, Blink’s company philosophy of Mood Above Muscle™ emphasizes the positive feelings derived from exercise in addition to the physical benefits. In 2018, Blink was named as one of Inc’s 5,000 fastest growing companies with a three-year growth rate of 208 percent. Blink’s Every Body Happy campaign features real people in varying shapes and sizes. Their website highlights the colorful gym design, elevated customer service and a relentless focus on cleanliness.

By 2018, Blink had grown quickly but its workforce management practices had not. Blink then began speaking with Legion Technologies.

“We relied on spreadsheets and a very painful scheduling process,” said Maggie Bach, Operations & Learning/Development at Blink, who is responsible for employee onboarding, training and day-to-day operations for Blink’s 100+ locations. “From the first demo, we understood the visibility Legion offered,” says Bach. “Legion answered two questions,” says Bach. ‘How to maximize hours? And, are we putting hours to work in the right way?’ Legion aligned with our brand, and was an especially good fit for our employees using the mobile scheduling app.”

From Pilot to Full Rollout in Three Months

Blink first conducted a pilot of Legion with three diverse clubs for the pilot. One was a high volume club in Queens, the other a facility that’s open 24-hours a day and the third was a California location, to ensure there was no lag in actions being conducted at Blink’s New York headquarters.

Bach says this gave Blink time with Legion customer success to ensure Legion was adopted, training was in place and,



Before Legion

- Manual scheduling using spreadsheets
- Manual forecasts
- Lack of labor optimization
- Lack of visibility into workforce analytics

After Legion

- Fully automated scheduling tied to guest check-ins
- Location-specific demand forecasts driven by ML
- Labor budget allocation with automated schedule tweaks
- Full visibility into schedules, labor metrics, compliance

Results

- 10,000+ hours saved annually on scheduling
- Location-specific forecasting and scheduling for 100 clubs
- 90+ locations onboarded in three-month period
- 90 percent adoption rate of employee engagement app



Maggie Bach, Senior Manager, Operations, Communications & Learning at Blink Fitness



most importantly, it was useful for employees.

After the successful pilot, Blink established an aggressive timeline to launch Legion into 90 Blink facilities within a three-month period.

“The experience has been great so far,” says Bach. “The Legion team’s ability to take feedback and be flexible with us and our needs has been great. We can still learn so much from each other.”

Blink’s fitness franchise brands were onboarded in the summer of 2019. These franchisees use the Blink-specific configuration of Legion so the experience for club managers and employees is the same across all Blink locations.

“Questions like ‘are we spending hours the right way?’ were answered. Legion aligned with our brand, and was an especially good fit for our employees using the mobile scheduling app.”

Employee Engagement Spikes with Mobile App

According to Bach, one of the biggest benefits of using Legion since its implementation has been the employee engagement app.

“The mobile app is a much bigger hit amongst our employees than we expected,” says Bach. “Being able to have the schedule so easily accessible is a big plus for our employees and shift swaps are really easy.”

Legion’s mobile app for employees is available for iOS and Android where shift preferences, availability, time off requests, schedules and shift swaps are self-service. Over 90 percent of Blink’s employees are using the app on a voluntary basis. Clubs still print paper schedules and employees can use a browser to indicate scheduling preferences and see their schedules if they opt not to use the app.

Bach says Blink managers approve shift swaps but the fact that employees can directly contact others with offers and serve themselves saves a lot of time. She says the entire scheduling process, with one-click schedule generation, is a large time-saver. “I estimate we are saving two hours per week per club in scheduling, which equates to over 10,000 saved hours across clubs annually,” says Bach.

Demand Forecasts Integrate Guest Check-in Data

Legion demand forecasts are created for each business and location, relying on machine learning for extremely high levels of accuracy; they continually improve as actual numbers are used for occasional model retraining. “Blink forecasts are based on guest check-in data and are location-specific,” says Bach, who says that check-in files are sent to Legion by the hour. “Some clubs have staff for 230 hours per week while others such as 24-hour clubs are staffed 620 hours per week so this location specificity is important.”

With highly accurate labor demand forecasts, Bach says Legion answers the critical question of whether Blink is over or understaffed.

Bach says that another benefit of using Legion is built-in labor compliance standards. “California is the strictest of our regions for labor laws,” says Bach. “It’s very helpful to have compliance factored in.” Legion pre-loads compliance templates for all states and regions, then auto flags any potential violations during the scheduling and timesheet process. As schedules are auto-generated, compliance is automatically factored

Budget Constraints Automatically Reconfigure Schedules

Bach points to another benefit of using Legion: its budgeting feature. Budgets are set based on check-in data that feeds the demand forecasts. “Legion’s automated forecasts may allocate 415 hours of labor, but I can input 400 as the number and Legion will schedule according to this budget,” says Bach. Bach notes that Blink payroll also uses Legion to dig into employee-specific workforce data and see audit data such as meal break adherence.

“Scaling is much more possible...”

When asked to summarize the overall benefits of Legion, Bach points to employee satisfaction and visibility, including the ability to see all employee schedules, overspending and underspending. One of the more important benefits, she adds, is Blink’s ability to scale its tools as it continues to rapidly grow its business. “Our investment has been very valuable with Legion. All of our employees and area managers have bought into Legion and they like using it,” says Bach. “We have grown tremendously in the past year...as we grow, scaling is much more possible with an automation tool like Legion,” she says.



Blink gyms feature colorful design, elevated customer service and a relentless focus on cleanliness.



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Legion is reinventing how companies manage and empower their hourly workforce. By accurately forecasting demand, computing precise labor needs, and staffing with the right employees at the right time based on employee skills and preferences, Legion’s autonomous, AI-powered Workforce Management platform enables companies to tightly manage labor spend while delivering great experiences for their customers and employees.