

Advanced hand geometry biometrics to effectively control time and attendance

By Raymond P. Noppe

Managing Director of Uniclox Technologies

Rising labour costs, flexible hours, increased employment of part-time employees, union agreements, labour legislation and fraudulent time-keeping initiatives by employees ... all contribute to the need for biometric time and attendance equipment with verification to automate your time accounting system.

Systems and equipment have to be designed and implemented in such a way that it aids management decisions, are cost effective and error-free.

Time accounting is a four-step process which starts with the acquisition of clocking data, organising the data and calculating the data. These three steps are ongoing. The fourth step occurs when sufficient data has been acquired and analysed to produce meaningful reports with the objective of enabling informed management decision-making.

One of the most effective ways of acquiring unbiased and consistent data is through hand geometry biometrics – an unfallable process with low false reject rates whereby buddy clocking is eliminated.

The organisation of data occurs when the software that is incorporated with the biometric system is structured to allow for varying employment conditions such as a five-day work week, a fourteen-day pay period or monthly pay period with multiple shifts, shifts that overlap onto week-ends and public holidays as well as temporary periods of employment.

The information gathered in steps one and two is integrated with a software package that effectively and consistently calculates the data as per each company's specific needs and requirements to facilitate payroll and Human Resource administration on all levels and thereby obviating manual verification procedures.

The three-step ongoing process alleviates typically uneven implementation of payroll services and practices resulting from individuals who tend to administer rules and regulations differently.

A critical gap is filled with the fourth step – meaningful management reports. The right information at the right time ensures a better ability to make sound business decisions – particularly, in the time accounting and labour management fields, where these decisions have a direct impact on the organisation's bottom line. Management has the opportunity for substantial productivity-per-hour-paid improvements with unbiased, consistent information.

The implementation of the four-step process outlined above and its effectiveness is best outlined in the case study below.

A manufacturing company with 300 users and 5 divisions installed a fingerprint system approximately twelve months ago. They experienced a high false reject rate where almost every week 5% of clockings were lost through misreads. The software that was installed did not meet the needs of the company, was not user-friendly and also lacked basic time and attendance functions with the resultant inability of being interfaced to the payroll system. Support was provided by an impersonal electronic medium which in many instances did not address the problem and delayed payroll processing.

Against this background, Uniclox Technologies was approached to provide a solution. Hand geometry biometric readers were proposed as they eliminate any problems experienced with fingerprint readers. The terminals were integrated with Uniclox Technologies' proprietary time and attendance software programme and five terminals were installed inside the factories. Network-based communications to the hand readers were chosen as the infrastructure was already in place at the manufacturing company. The time and attendance software programme was loaded onto the manufacturing company's existing computer system where rights could easily be given to all the relevant users of the software. The web-based route was not followed because of possible connection problems that might arise at critical information gathering stages.

Uniclox Technologies' complete hardware and software solution resulted in the company benefiting from the onset of the implementation phase. The hand geometry readers had almost no false reject rate and provided the best clocking solution due to its speed, accuracy and verification as well as being very user-friendly. The software with advanced time and attendance functions and calculations provided an accurate and seamless solution with added time-saving benefits.

The most significant benefits of the four-step time accounting biometric approach with advanced technology are:

- Consistency in supervision – an unbiased approach
- Consistency in calculation – computerised
- Unbiased supervision interference – systems-based data is collated
- Elimination of errors – human element excluded
- Elimination of time fraud – no buddy clocking
- Control of costs – accurate and consistent information
- Time-saving and quick payroll turnaround – real time application
- Cost effective – tailor-made to each client's requirements to reduce overall payroll costs

A turnkey solution must be offered to small and medium enterprises as well as to multinational organisations that decreases labour costs and increases staff performance!

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For further information, please contact:

Raymond Noppe

Tel: 011 439 2000

E-mail: rnoppe@iafrica.com