

# M&S

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**M&S and REPL**  
Collaborate on  
Successful Labour  
Scheduling Proof  
of Concept

A photograph of the Marks & Spencer store entrance. The store name "MARKS & SPENCER" is displayed in large, illuminated, black letters on a white curved wall above the entrance. The store interior is visible through the glass entrance, showing clothing racks, mannequins, and a display table. A person is walking past the entrance on the right. The floor is a light-colored tiled floor with a green stripe running across it.

# MARKS & SPENCER

**REPL**



## OBJECTIVE

The overall objective was to initially complete a business-wide readiness review, followed by a vendor selection process, detailed proof of concept in three stores and business case submission for full roll out. This was delivered to help M&S implement an efficient, automated scheduling system to ultimately:

- Expedite the process of taking weekly allocation and converting into daily and hourly splits
- Free up managers' time to interact with their customers and teams

## SOLUTION

- Help M&S to identify the key challenges by utilising REPL's consultancy services
- Select the best vendor for M&S's requirements
- Test and implement the automated scheduling system
- Provide support and services after completion of project

## RESULTS

- Prove sound business case for a full roll-out
- Engage service stakeholders
- Engage store leadership and colleagues

## THE CLIENT

Marks & Spencer (M&S) plc is a large British multinational retailer headquartered in Paddington, London, with over 1000 stores throughout the UK and internationally. Its revenue is currently £10.4 billion. M&S has an average of 80,000 employees and its strong values consist of: Innovation, Inspiration, Integrity and In Touch.

Over the last five years, M&S has made big advances in how it manages its labour, through the introduction of time and attendance, labour standards and a labour model. These tools have enabled M&S to scientifically calculate the exact resource needed at a weekly level to manage its operation. However, that still left a big gap in the forward planning process, as stores must manually take the weekly allocation and interpret this into daily and hourly splits.

Colleagues were regularly feeding back how time consuming the forward planning processes were. Therefore, the next logical step on the journey was to utilise an automated scheduling solution to plan at daily level, by fifteen-minute intervals.

The objective of a labour scheduling solution is to deliver a significant step change in the way M&S managers plan labour; removing time consuming and complex activity, and thus allowing them more time with their customers and teams. M&S aims to put the customer at the heart of everything it does, and ensuring its Customer Assistants are available at the right time, in the right place, and with the right skills is key to this.





## THE SOLUTION

The first activity undertaken by REPL was to complete a companywide business readiness review. This was to help M&S understand what the key challenges were, and more importantly, dispel several preconceived views on things such as the level of colleague flexibility. The review also highlighted to key stakeholders the potential business case, and allowed the project to gain funding for a proof of concept.

REPL then supported a vendor selection process to pick the best provider to deliver a quick and effective proof of concept.

Next, we used our experience and product knowledge to quickly mobilise the vendor, and fully configure, test and deploy the solution across

three M&S stores in just three months.

REPL was also an active member of the project steering group, helping to guide the senior leaders in making the right strategic decisions and dealing with the more tactical challenges that were being faced.

In addition, we were instrumental in shaping and helping to define the business case, including full benefits realisation and roll-out costs. REPL also supported the production of a bespoke preparation plan to help lay the foundation for a successful scale-up and roll-out.

Finally, we supported the activity to choose a vendor for the full roll-out.

## THE REPL DIFFERENCE

As a leading mobile and technology solutions provider, as well as leading consultancy firm, we were able to provide M&S with advice and help it to select the vendor beneficial to its requirements. Due to our extensive experience within the industry we effectively mobilised, tested and implemented a workforce management proof of concept, fast.

## RESULTS

The success of the collaboration between M&S and REPL was down to great teamwork, and the ability to challenge at all levels, ensuring decisions were made rapidly, and the project was delivered on time and to budget. M&S have laid the right foundations for success, and REPL have played a major part in supporting this.



**REPL**

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