

Bridgestone APM

Customer Profile

Bridgestone APM Uses Kronos to Streamline and Automate Workforce Management on the Factory Floor

Bridgestone APM Company specializes in the design, development, and manufacture of vibration isolation, energy absorbing pads, and foam seating components for the automotive industry. As a wholly owned subsidiary of Bridgestone Corporation of Japan, the company operates manufacturing plants in Findlay and Upper Sandusky, Ohio, and Dickson, Tennessee.

To help position the company for success in the competitive automotive industry, Bridgestone APM has implemented a focus on lean manufacturing techniques. The company has also achieved ISO 9001-2000, QS 9000, and ISO 14001 certification, enhancing its internal quality standards and minimizing waste.

Bridgestone APM selected the Kronos Workforce Central® suite to more effectively manage its workforce with tools for human resources, payroll, time and labor, and absence management. With its support for lean manufacturing the Kronos solution allows Bridgestone to reduce costs, increase productivity, improve employee satisfaction, and ultimately enhance the level of service they provide to employees.

Moving from paper to automation

Before Bridgestone APM implemented its Kronos solution, the company relied on paper records for tracking time and attendance. Payroll was outsourced and the company operated without a human resources system. In order to keep track of employee information such as FMLA and short-term disability, Bridgestone APM staff were forced to access information from its paper files as well as three separate databases. And with payroll sent to an outside vendor, retrieving custom employee data could be costly and time-consuming.

Bridgestone APM first implemented Workforce Timekeeper™, Workforce HR™, and Workforce Payroll™. Workforce Attendance™ went live a year later, and the company plans to add Workforce Leave™ as part of the upgrade to Workforce Central v5.2. Selecting an integrated system from a single vendor was an important criterion for Bridgestone. “One of our goals was to bring in a system that could do everything for us,” says Kim McRill, payroll and benefits supervisor. “Kronos is a complete, integrated package that gives us everything we need. You only have to enter the information once, and it’s available system-wide. And since we own the data, we can use it how and when we need to.”

More accurate time and attendance

Bridgestone APM runs three shifts each day at its manufacturing plants. All employees use the Kronos 4500™ data collection terminals to enter their information for each shift. Since the information is now captured electronically, supervisors have confidence that employee time is being reported accurately. Early punch-ins have been eliminated, allowing Bridgestone APM to reduce overtime and payroll inflation. “In a factory setting like ours, it’s really important for workers to show up on time,” says McRill. “They’re replacing someone who has to leave in 15 minutes, so they need to be clocked in and walking to their station in order for the other person to finish up and clock out. Being late creates overtime, and you can see how the overtime could become a perpetual and costly issue.”

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Payroll and Benefits Supervisor

Bridgestone APM

Category: Manufacturing

Business Type: Automotive parts manufacturer

Employees: 950

Locations: 4

Products: Workforce Timekeeper, Workforce HR, Workforce Payroll, Workforce Attendance, Workforce Leave

Improving absence management

Before Kronos, supervisors were unable to effectively track employee attendance, resulting in perfect attendance bonuses and days off being awarded incorrectly. Attendance policies are now applied consistently across the company. Bonuses are awarded accurately, and employees can check their attendance status at any time through the Kronos terminals.

The improved attendance tracking has also helped to increase employee morale, according to McRill. “Employees don’t have to worry about what their coworkers are doing because they know that people are being treated the same across the organization.”

Streamlining payroll

With the Kronos solution in place, Bridgestone APM has gained control and ownership of its workforce data, allowing the company to reduce costs and more easily share information among departments. Bridgestone APM has also been able to cut its weekly payroll processing time by more than half, from six days to two. The payroll staff is now able to devote time to other responsibilities. “Plus, we don’t have to get other departments involved in order to access the information we need,” says Sally Below, senior accountant. “With Kronos, the information is all right there.”

Centralizing and automating human resources

One of the biggest advantages for Bridgestone APM in choosing Kronos was the fact that the company would be able to put a human resources management system in place to manage its workforce. Now all employee information is captured by Workforce HR, and the human resources staff is able to easily access needed reports. “Before Kronos, it was like pulling teeth around here to get information,” says McRill. “It would take

four days just to get a birthday list. Now we can print that report in 30 seconds.” Not having to ask an outside agency to pull reports together is another advantage that McRill and her team appreciate.

Another benefit is the accuracy of the information from an accounting standpoint. “I can feel confident in the information I’m getting from the Kronos system,” says Below. “Whether it’s benefits information for auditors or healthcare reimbursements for my manager, I know where the information comes from, and I know that it’s good information.”

Managing employee development and compliance

Bridgestone APM is using Kronos to track employee training and certifications, important information in a manufacturing environment. The company tracks new hire and safety training, ISO certifications, and even whether workers have received the employee handbook. Previously this information was written down and kept in folders. “It’s really great because when we get audited, we just generate reports and we’re able to prove that employees have received all of the training they’re supposed to have,” explains McRill.

Future plans

As part of its upgrade to Workforce Central v5.2, Bridgestone APM will be implementing Workforce Leave, which will allow the human resources department to more easily track compliance with regulations such as FMLA and employment eligibility. “We’re really looking forward to Workforce Leave,” says McRill. “The human resources staff is going to love it.”

