

Blue Man Group conquers creative chaos

Employees
525

Industry
Entertainment

Location
**Las Vegas,
Nevada**

Solution
Dayforce

The world-famous entertainment company turns to Dayforce to simplify and streamline HR processes so the performances can shine.

A dynamic combination of art, music, comedy and technology, the global entertainment company Blue Man Group has been delighting audiences for nearly three decades with its euphoric celebration of human connection.

The theatre company, the brainchild of three college friends, today dominates stages in New York, Las Vegas, Boston, Chicago, Orlando and Berlin with nightly performances. Since 1991, Blue Man Group has visited more than 20 countries, entertaining more than 35 million people.



The show must go on

As the old saying goes in theatre, the show must go on. Operating seven days a week, nearly 24 hours a day, Blue Man Group's staffing and scheduling requirements are as dynamic as the show itself. Every role and associated function needs to be carefully coordinated and

scheduled, from performers and actors on stage, to wardrobe, props personnel, lighting and stage management, to the front house employees who interact with guests. “There are so many different aspects that come together to put three people on stage,” says Thomas Randall, Senior Company Manager for Blue Man Group.

“From the moment someone buys a ticket to the moment they leave and meet the performers at the end of the show, or enter the retail shop, every single touchpoint with Blue Man is part of the experience. The logistics of our staffing must address many needs and many different moving parts.”

Thomas Randall, Blue Man Group

Blue Man’s approximately 525 employees come from a variety of backgrounds. Their diverse experiences blend together to create a “nuanced community” where creative chaos reigns, says Randall, an HR and finance professional who himself once worked both audio and props for the company. The key in managing this dynamic creative chaos is keeping the administration burden to a minimum so staff can focus on what’s important: staging a performance that engages the audience and inspires people. “If we can make people’s lives just a little bit easier administratively, that frees them up to be creative and put on an even better show,” explains Randall.

Flexibly managing a dynamic staff

Blue Man Group began using Dayforce about a year ago for staff scheduling, timesheets and payroll. Dayforce is now used to manage schedules for the majority of the company’s hourly staff.

“We bring people in on a contract basis as needed, and we need a certain degree of flexibility in terms of how we staff and schedule to allow people the opportunity to do the work they need to do,” says Randall. “We have a lot of people who actually cross departments in our organization. For instance, in the morning, a staff member may be working in lighting. In the afternoon, they may be working in audio. The number of people on the team and the departments and roles they are serving in can change from day to day, and week to week.”

Dayforce ensures Blue Man can build a schedule that addresses the dynamic nature of the company’s staffing, while ensuring there is always adequate coverage – not only in total number of people required, but also at the departmental level. The Dayforce mobile app then puts the power of HCM in the hands of Blue Man staff members to access schedule details.

“People can get their schedules on their mobile phone and see where they are supposed to be at any moment in time,” says Randall. “That easy-to-use, hands-on user experience has really helped with system adoption, especially in terms of timesheets and scheduling.”

Simplifying lives to let the show shine

Dayforce’s ease of use was also a pleasant surprise for Blue Man Group’s payroll administrators, who were accustomed to using an older system that was sometimes clunky due to its complex structure.

“We were pleased to discover how user-friendly the Dayforce system was. It was very easy to train people. Dayforce has made life a lot easier and more streamlined for our end users, and it has eliminated many redundant processes,” says Randall.

“One of our end Dayforce users said ‘I feel like I’ve been using a typewriter my entire life, and you just handed me a tablet.’”

Company payroll administrators also saw a near-immediate improvement in the time it took to process payroll. One member of the Las Vegas team was able to shave four hours off her run time just a few weeks after the move to Dayforce.

For Randall, one of the biggest wins is in the area of consistency and compliance. “It is the kind of stuff that keeps me up at night,” he confesses. “I’m always trying to figure out how to make things more consistent, without making it a huge burden for them so they don’t have to stay awake at night. Dayforce is very stable and configurable, which is really important for us as we aren’t your standard nine-to-five, Monday through Friday business. The ability to configure Dayforce in a way that works for us really simplifies our lives on the finance, HR and payroll side of things.”

One system for one unique act

Dayforce has allowed Blue Man Group to consolidate many independent moving parts of HR – payroll, timekeeping, scheduling – into a single centralized system, removing many redundancies and manual steps that bogged staff down and kept them from their creative pursuits. “Dayforce’s centralized and streamlined approach has allowed us to become more quick on our feet when it comes to getting to the job done because we are no longer burdened by process, process, process,” says Randall.

“It has given our people the time and room to breathe and be more creative. It has made it easier for people to come to work and do the stuff we all get excited about. One of the things that makes Blue Man Group unique is our unique-ness. We began as a grassroots arts organization founded by a group of friends, and we’ve kept that innovative ‘startup’ mindset as we have expanded. We’re ever-dynamic, ever-moving and ever-developing. Dayforce allows us to manage that creative chaos and break down all the walls that get in the way.”