



Städtische Werke AG

Reliable customer service meets reliable planning

Organization

Städtische Werke AG

Branche

Contact Center (Customer Service & Accounts Receivable Management)

Number of employees

approx. 900

plano in use

plano Roster

plano Optimizer

plano ESS (Employee Self-Service Portal) and myplano

plano Reporting

plano Interfaces

plano Service-Line

Overview

As a regional energy and water utility, Städtische Werke AG Kassel interacts directly with residents daily. Customer service serves as the central point of contact, handling inquiries in person, by phone, in writing, and online. This is complemented by a structured complaints and claims management system.

Approximately 50 employees, supported by trainees and interns, ensure reliable service, despite the high complexity resulting from varying service hours, areas of operation, external service providers, and individual work schedules. To map these requirements in a transparent, compliant, and employee-oriented manner, Städtische Werke AG opted for the workforce management solution from plano.

Initial Situation

Before the plano WFM solution was introduced, shift scheduling was primarily handled using Excel spreadsheets. Monthly planning, last-minute changes, sick leave, and vacation coordination resulted in a high manual workload and limited transparency for employees.

Vacation planning presented a recurring challenge: employee requests, coverage arrangements and service requirements had to be coordinated manually — often under pressure. For managers, this meant a constant additional burden in their already demanding day-to-day operations.

Project Goals

Planning certainty & operational stability

- + Ensuring reliable service hours in customer-intensive day-to-day operations
- + Early detection of understaffing and overstaffing
- + Quick response to absences, sick leave, and last-minute changes

Transparency & employee-centric approach

- + Clear and easily accessible shift schedules for employees
- + Accommodation of individual employee preferences, particularly when planning vacation time
- + Early communication of assignments and changes

Efficiency, Streamlining & Regulatory Compliance

- + Reduction of manual planning and coordination efforts
- + Relief for managers in day-to-day operations
- + Reliable compliance with collective bargaining agreements and statutory working time regulations



„With plano, we finally have planning certainty - for our employees as well as for us as managers. The system provides us with structure, transparency, and reliability in the hectic day-to-day of customer service.“

Heike Müller-Brachmann
Department Head
Customer Service and Accounts Receivable Management,
Städtische Werke AG

Result

Professionalized Staff Planning in Customer Service

With the implementation of the plano Workforce Management solution, shift scheduling in the customer service department of Städtische Werke AG has been fundamentally professionalized. Shift schedules are now centralized, digital, and always up to date. Changes due to sick leave, vacation, or last-minute adjustments can be incorporated in a structured and traceable way. Planning is no longer dependent on individual staff members or manual lists. Instead, a stable, reliable process has been established that ensures daily operations and remains effective even during peak times.

Greater transparency, security, and acceptance

Employees benefit from clear, early communicated schedules. Absences and tasks are transparently visible, which reduces uncertainty and fosters personal responsibility. Managers receive a solid basis for decision-making and can respond early to bottlenecks.

The result is a high level of acceptance of the new scheduling system - among employees as well as managers and employee representatives.

Improvement

Planning Certainty and Process Stability

plano provides a reliable framework for staff planning in customer service. Staff shortfalls, policy violations, or critical situations become apparent early on. This allows measures to be taken in a timely way before service disruptions occur. Overall, planning becomes more stable and less susceptible to last-minute disruptions.

Relief for managers and planning officials

By digitizing the planning process, numerous manual coordination steps, follow-ups, and correction loops are eliminated. Managers gain time for their core responsibilities, such as leadership, management, and employee development. At the same time, the quality of planning improves thanks to system-generated prompts and clear structures.

Increasing employee satisfaction

Transparent vacation planning that takes employees' preferred time frames into account is viewed particularly positively. Employees receive feedback early on and can better plan their personal appointments. This strengthens trust, acceptance, and motivation within the team.



„When you consider how quickly we’ve managed to achieve all these goals here, we can only once again extend our heartfelt thanks to our colleagues at plano.“

Norman Hanig
Chief Operations Officer (COO)
Professional Workforce GmbH

The Three-Way Constellation

Starting Point: Complexity in Customer Service

The demands on customer service at Städtische Werke AG are high: variable service hours, diverse skill sets, and last-minute changes in day-to-day operations. It quickly became clear that the existing complexity in customer service could only be effectively managed in the long term with a structured, system-supported solution. Modern workforce management software was the key prerequisite for creating transparency, regulatory compliance, and stability in planning.

The Role of Professional Workforce GmbH

As a specialized partner for Workforce Management as a Service, Professional Workforce brings in-depth expertise in forecasting, capacity planning, and operational management. This collaboration makes it possible not only to implement workforce management technically, but also to actively put it into practice.

plano WFM as the technological foundation

plano provides the technological foundation. The software digitally maps all planning processes: from work schedules and qualifications to absences and automated verification of collective bargaining and legal requirements. Shortages or surpluses are highlighted by the system, changes are traceably documented, and work schedules are centrally managed. This three-pronged approach combines technology, operational expertise, and business requirements, thereby creating a solution that goes far beyond traditional software projects.

Best Practise: Workforce Management as a Service

Collaborative Management Instead of Additional Operational Burden

With Workforce Management as a Service, Städtische Werke AG combines the capabilities of the plano WFM software solution with the external planning expertise of Professional Workforce. Professional Workforce handles the entire operational planning process administratively, i.e., creating demand forecasts, capacity planning, maintaining shift schedules, managing vacation and absences, and rescheduling in the event of short-term changes such as sick leave. The managers at Städtische Werke AG retain an overview without having to build up additional internal resources or intervene operationally in the planning process. This creates space for leadership tasks and the direct support of employees.

The “Chameleon” Project

Early Involvement of All Stakeholders

From the very beginning, the “Chameleon” project was designed to promote transparency and participation. The works council, human resources department, and employees were involved at an early stage to jointly define requirements, framework conditions, and expectations.

Communication and Willingness to Change

Regular coordination, open communication, and opportunities for feedback accompanied the project throughout. Changes were explained, made understandable, and further developed collaboratively.

Sustainable Acceptance and Success

Thanks to the close involvement of all stakeholders, plano was successfully integrated into everyday operations. The solution is perceived not as an external system, but as a support tool - a decisive factor for the long-term success of the project.

At a glance

Improvements for Planners

-  Consistent scheduling through forecast-based capacity planning
-  High transparency and a clear basis for decision-making
-  Legal certainty through regulatory compliance due to automatic consideration of collective bargaining agreements and legal requirements
-  Significantly reduced coordination effort

Improvements for employees

-  Access to shift schedules anytime, anywhere via myplano
-  Simple and transparent vacation and absence planning
-  Early planning certainty and greater personal responsibility
-  More fairness and transparency in the scheduling process



The Organization

Städtische Werke AG

Städtische Werke AG (STW) was founded in 1929 and employs approximately 900 people.

Together with KVV (Kasseler Verkehrs- und Versorgungsgesellschaft) and its subsidiaries, the group supplies customers not only in Kassel but throughout Germany with electricity, natural gas, and district heating. STW is a pioneer in the expansion of renewable energy in North Hesse. Together with partners, STW now operates four wind farms, with two more in the planning stages, PV systems in and outside of Kassel, a hydroelectric power plant on the Fulda River, and two biogas plants.

KVV, a subsidiary of the Group, also operates Kassel's public swimming pools, Städtische Werke Netz und Service on behalf of Kasselwasser and the City of Kassel, as well as KVG (Kasseler Verkehrs-Gesellschaft).

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