

Seattle International Film Festival (SIFF)

Using Shiftboard, SIFF successfully schedules 4,500 positions with 24-hour online scheduling.

Summary

The Seattle International Film Festival (SIFF) is recognized as one of the top film festivals in North America. Founded in 1976, it is now the largest, most highly attended film festival in the United States, reaching more than 140,000 annually.

The 25-day annual festival is renowned for its wide-ranging and eclectic programming from over 80 countries, presenting over 400 features, short films, and documentaries. Their 600 screening events require coordination across a dozen venues throughout the city. In addition, SIFF Cinema exhibits premiere theatrical engagements and film showings 365 days a year at three different venues, reaching an audience of more than 300,000 viewers every year.

Shiftboard's cloud-based scheduling software provides a round-the-clock scheduling and communications solution for every SIFF festival.

700+
volunteers

400+
featured films

4,500+
positions filled

80
countries

140k+
venue attendees

Challenge

It takes well over 700 active volunteers and at least 100 paid/regular, contract, and hourly staff to smoothly run the festival operations each year. Like most festivals and seasonal events, many SIFF volunteers are new and need to be brought on-board quickly.

With such a steep volunteer ramp-up before each event, online scheduling and recruiting tools that require minimal training are critical. SIFF needs trained staff to host over 400 films across multiple screening venues, as well as stage numerous industry parties, special events, and other activities.

SIFF requires at least 4,500 positions to be scheduled and reliably filled by qualified volunteers and staff members. Such roles include: usher, box office, theater operations, special events and hospitality, office/clerical, promotions, and dozens of others.

"Shiftboard has revolutionized my job at SIFF and makes organizing at our size possible. Using Shiftboard makes event scheduling both fun and rewarding as opposed to stressful."

Monica Hinckley
Volunteer Coordinator

Results

Easy, 24-hour online scheduling of volunteers and paid workers

Ability to handle large volumes of shifts by allowing team managers to schedule their own team members

Powerful reporting features to track hours worked, percentage of coverage, and other key metrics

Event volunteer scheduling with no training required



SIFF is a leading 501(c)(3) non-profit arts organization reaching more than 300,000 annually with the Seattle International Film Festival, SIFF Cinema, and SIFF Education.

Solution

“Everyone within the SIFF organization uses Shiftboard, our paid workers and volunteers. Being user-friendly and flexible, everyone, including our most loyal retirees and senior citizens say to me, ‘Shiftboard is great!’”

Monica Hinckley, Volunteer Coordinator

Round-the-clock Schedule Access

Shiftboard’s hosted software system provides SIFF with 24/7 access to scheduling and staff communications. SIFF is one of Shiftboard’s earliest not-for-profit customers, having used the system for event volunteer scheduling since 2005.



Opening Night 2017, SIFF

Designed and updated for the unique, ever-changing SIFF look and feel, the system includes:

- Web registrations, group communications, and complete access to online scheduling 24 hours a day, seven days a week -- from any web browser.
- Color-coded schedule views, sign-in sheets, email reminders and confirmation of upcoming shifts.
- Ability to view, print and report entire schedules from a single source.

Easier Scheduling

Monica Hinckley, SIFF’s volunteer coordinator for two consecutive years, says that scheduling continues to get easier. *“Getting people on the system went exceptionally well this year. Everyone within the SIFF organization uses Shiftboard, our paid workers and volunteers. Being user friendly and flexible, everyone, including our most loyal retirees and senior citizens say to me, ‘Shiftboard is great!’”*

Better Communication

Hinckley also says that Shiftboard has made a huge difference compared to what the volunteer coordinator’s job has traditionally been. *“Typically, managers had to ask the volunteer coordinator to schedule shifts for them,”* she explained, *“but now we have at least 10 team managers on our Shiftboard site, each of whom can schedule and communicate directly with their volunteers any time of day.”*

Reports and Sign-ins

Hinckley uses Shiftboard’s reporting and sign-in sheets every day. *“I use the visual charts to see where and when I need people and also to compare my current coverage expectations to any previous years results.”*

