

Maker Faire

Using Shiftboard, Maker Faire slashed event management and scheduling admin time by 70%!

Summary

Maker Faire is a festival that attracts everyone from tech enthusiasts and tinkerers to engineers and artists, and has been called “The Greatest Show (and Tell) on Earth.” The event’s broad appeal resulted in exponential growth—expanding from a one-city event with 22,000 attendees in 2006 to a bi-coastal festival with 235,000+ visitors just a decade later.

Managing event production, costs, and logistics with out-of-the-box event scheduling software proved too limited to keep pace. Organizers turned to Shiftboard for its sophisticated scheduling, centralized management, and configurable reporting to help them effectively manage 560% growth in under 10 years.

950+
shifts filled

450+
event staff

4k+
worker hours

2,300
exhibits/sponsors

235k+
venue attendees

Challenge

Maker Faire celebrates the maker movement—arts and crafts, engineering and science projects, and Do-It-Yourself designs of all kinds. The focus on creativity and resourcefulness combined with a family-friendly environment led to explosive growth.

Staffing, budgets, and logistics grew increasingly complex at breakneck speed, while visibility into operations, such as scheduling and communication, became more important than ever. Email chains, phone calls, and spreadsheets quickly gave way to out-of-the-box event planning software that required managers to work around inadequate shift scheduling capabilities and wrestle with clunky spreadsheets.

With no way to organize or interpret the data flooding in, organizers’ ability to make fully informed business decisions was jeopardized. Plus, a lack of mobile access severely limited on-the-go coordination, which is essential on event day. Straightforward event management had evolved into a web of extremely complicated processes, and something as simple as confirming how many people had arrived on site and who was where was impossible.

“Shiftboard’s Dynamic Scheduling System changed everything for us. We’re able to manage scheduling more effectively, and in about half the time it took previously.”

Kerry Moore
Project Manager

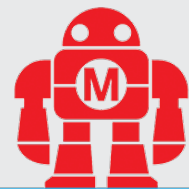
Results

Cut event management and scheduling time by 70%

Reduced time spent on legal compliance processes by 50%

Helped organizers manage more than 560% growth in 10 years

Centralized event staff & vendor coordination & communication



Maker Faire

Maker Faire is a family-friendly festival founded in 2006 by the publishers of Make: magazine to celebrate the maker movement. This wildly successful event is billed as “part science fair, part county fair, and part something entirely new.”

Solution

“Shiftboard has fundamentally changed the way we work. Instead of using disconnected spreadsheets, we now have a command center that allows all managers to coordinate from the same place.”

Kerry Moore, Project Manager

Maker Faire organizers chose Shiftboard—highly adaptable, user-friendly, and fully customizable event staff scheduling software.

“Shiftboard’s advanced features and adaptability were able to show us the big picture, allowing us to efficiently manage our growth,” said Kerry Moore, Maker Faire Project Manager. *“We were up and running in no time, and the difference was night and day.”*

Due to Maker Faire’s size, complexity, and continued growth, organizers made broad use of Shiftboard’s comprehensive functionality:

Quick, Accurate, Staffing

By organizing all profile information into one database, Shiftboard helped Maker Faire reduce the time needed to fill 950 event shifts from weeks to a few days.

“We’re able to manage scheduling more effectively, and in about half the time it took previously,” Moore pointed out. *“Before we had their scheduling tool we relied on a spreadsheet. Now we can upload 200 shifts to the calendar in about 4 hours, putting us 2 weeks ahead of where we’d be doing it manually.”*

Centralized Visibility

Rather than each manager using separate spreadsheets and systems, Shiftboard consolidated information into a single, coordinated command center, making it easier to synchronize efforts and oversee the entire event.

Compliance

Maker Faire must comply with extensive communication and documentation regulations for each of its many staff classifications. Shiftboard consolidates compliance data in one place, and the advanced reporting feature reduced the time required for legal processes by 50%.

Configurable Reporting

By managing all staffing and event-related data in Shiftboard, organizers are able to run detailed reports to make informed decisions based on relevant information in real time. By adjusting reports for specific needs, they can quickly assess everything from how many hotel rooms are booked on a particular night to how many radios are checked out at once.

Data Clarity

Event details like schedules, transportation, and meals had been managed and confirmed through an inefficient system of cross-referencing email threads and voicemails. *“With Shiftboard, we’ve secured all our staffing information in one database. Our workflows are greatly improved and our managers have a clear view of reliably accurate info 24/7,”* said Moore.

On-Site Agility

Shiftboard’s real-time functional agility improved efficiency and relieved management stress during the multi-day festival. For example, Shiftboard’s QR Passport automates things like distributing food vouchers using a simple QR code. *“Shiftboard allows us to contact anyone we need at a moment’s notice,”* explained Moore. *“That helps us adjust on the fly to maximize efficiency.”*

Cost savings

Shiftboard’s operational visibility helped Maker Faire save money and better manage their finances by avoiding “lost costs,” like avoiding extra lodging fees and planning airport shuttles to maximize passengers per trip.

User satisfaction

Shiftboard’s intuitive, user-friendly interface received positive feedback from workers with all levels of technical backgrounds, and easy schedule access to confirm details and update availability improved overall morale.