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# AI in Hospitality

Demystifying AI's impact on large operators



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We can think of next-generation technology as building the “self-driving car” of running a large Hotel group or a Restaurant chain. The last 20 years of workforce management were dominated by legacy point solutions that digitised simple paper processes and offered basic versions of AI assistance. This new wave of AI developments make up a truly intelligent platform that enables organisational leaders in complex, multi-location enterprises to put the right people, in the right place, at the right time; and to seamlessly manage their workforce end-to-end.

Ben Dixon  
CTO and Co-Founder of Sona



# People are at the heart of Hospitality, so where does AI sit?

Hospitality organisations are inherently complex due to their variety of activities and roles. The larger the operation, the more processes it needs to ensure a high standard of service.

The knock-on effect of this complexity can slow down operations and impact recruitment and retention rates, as Hospitality work becomes less about people and more about process. This is particularly evident in managerial positions, which slowly lose their aspirational appeal.

At the leadership level, this effectively stifles business growth and can pose an obstacle to potential acquisitions and expansions.

**Technology and the newest developments in next-generation solutions can help manage these complex operations and empower organisations to reach their full potential.**

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[Technology] has given us the confidence to grow. What it's allowed us to do is not use resources and processes as a barrier, so whereas before we may have said 'Actually, if we've got three opportunities [for acquisition], we'll only take one because it's going to take some time to bring it on board, we're going to have to bring in our processes.' We can now say 'We'll take all three,' because we know we can take them and streamline them into our processes, no problem, and while we're doing that, we can go and look for the next ones rather than have the team's entire focus be on a laborious implementation process.



**Claire Bunker**  
Growth &  
Development Director



# Building a foundation for AI - The next-generation approach

For high-performing leadership teams looking to formulate workforce strategies and implement the right tech, understanding the context around AI developments and what makes a solution next-generation is key. These are the characteristics to look out for:

- ◆ AI forecasting

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- ◆ Labour productivity

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- ◆ Auto-scheduling

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- ◆ AI co-pilot

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## ◆ AI forecasting makes ROI predictable

Being able to accurately forecast staffing requirements and labour costs puts leadership teams in a unique position to select which acquisitions will be the most successful. At the same time, it offers the ability to be proactive in managing staff levels and schedules, which enables work-life balance and flexibility (e.g. by sending out schedules 4+ weeks in advance). This also helps deliver an exceptional service, as it prevents overstaffing or understaffing, and saves costs through better team deployment.

Detailed forecasts coupled with the scalability that comes with next-generation technology are what enable operators to easily handle massive personnel and capacity growth without losing efficiency, lowering employee satisfaction, or risking administrative errors.

## ◆ Labour Productivity optimises staffing costs

Optimising staff schedules for maximum efficiency and compliance can significantly impact the revenue potential of a large operator.

These efficiency gains don't taper after the first year either; they continue as the organisation grows and makes full use of their tech.

## ◆ Auto-scheduling enables scalability

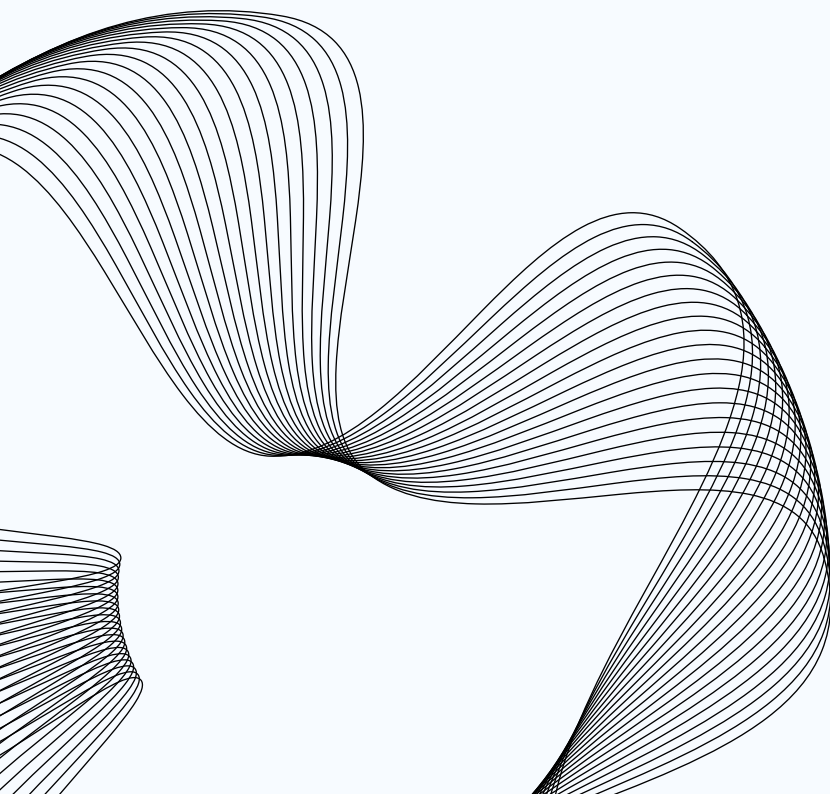
Auto-scheduling takes information from productivity engines and ensures an optimum schedule is produced, which conforms to regulatory requirements while accounting for staff metrics (e.g. visa limitations, specific skills, etc.). A manager only needs to check and publish this schedule, saving a significant amount of time.

Once set up, auto-scheduling can handle 2,000 employees with the exact same ease and process it would use to handle 1,000 and continue to ensure optimum staff deployment for every location. This means 100% growth in capacity would have no impact on operational efficiency from a scheduling point of view.

## ◆ AI co-pilot empowers every manager to drive growth

The Large Language Models which power modern AI mean that rather than overwhelming managers with charts and figures, a co-pilot style feature can surface real, actionable insights for activities they can do to drive revenue, organise operations, and support staff more effectively.

For example, using shift feedback and overtime data, it can highlight employees at risk of burnout and encourage team leads to check-in, effectively helping to increase retention rates and job satisfaction.





# Unlocking the time needed for exceptional customer service

Making career progression aspirational can significantly increase retention rates in the Hospitality sector. But moving into a more senior role usually means more responsibility and increased admin in order to handle a larger number of locations, a team of people, or more systems.

This can discourage some employees from looking to progress. AI can help operators shift the focus of managerial roles from processes to what attracts individuals to the sector in the first place: delivering excellent service.

Together, these features can help Hospitality operators fulfil their growth potential and offer their teams the best conditions to thrive, so that they can - in turn - provide exceptional service to their customers.

The last 20 years of workforce management were dominated by legacy point solutions. Now is the time to build the next generation of WFM - with a truly intelligent AI-driven platform that enables organisational leaders in complex, multi-location enterprises to put the right people in the right place at the right time, and to seamlessly manage their workforce end-to-end.



If you'd like to have a consultation on how next-generation technology can help your Hospitality organisation, book a call with one of our experts below.

[BOOK A CALL](#)

