

Buddy Button Application



Instantly Improve the Impact of Temporary,
Seasonal and New Employees on Store Performance

Today's Situation

Employee turnover in retail can reach as high as 70-80% per year at some chains. With this being the case, store managers are constantly trying to get new employees to be productive as quickly as possible so they can make a contribution to the store's performance before they eventually leave and the cycles starts all over again.

A complicating aspect to this never-ending cycle is the question of "how much training to provide new employees and when?" Traditional employee training takes time and practice before a new hire is productive or truly helpful to shoppers. If a retailer opts to provide extensive new hire training and the new employee quits shortly thereafter, that can be an expensive few hours that the employee actually worked. On the other hand, if a retailer opts to only give a new employee a minimal amount of initial training, then obviously that employee is only going to be marginally productive and it could be a while before they figure out from "OJT" how a store operates and even how to really perform their own function well. To make matters worse, new employees are usually unwilling to use one of the legacy in-store communications systems (paging or walkie-talkies) to ask for help on how to do something...they don't want to appear stupid in front of everyone.

The constant inflow of new or seasonal employees can cause significant havoc on store operations, strain precious management resources, and have significant influence on a stores performance. Potential pitfalls brought on by new or seasonal employees are:

- **Store Management Productivity Loss** – Constant oversight of a store's new or seasonal employees negatively impacts a store manager's ability to operate the store at the optimal level.
- **Poor Customer Service** – A new or seasonal employee's poor execution of the store operating plan and or weak product knowledge can lead to frustrated customers and lost sales.
- **High New or Seasonal Employee Turnover Rate** – New or seasonal employees who have not had sufficient training often feel isolated and not "part of the team" which can lead to higher turnover.

The Theatro Solution

Pairing a new or seasonal employee with an experienced employee out on the retail floor usually results in a new employee who is trained quicker, more engaged and more impactful to overall store operations. Understanding this basic premise, the Buddy Button application was created to enable a cost-effective and seamless way to team experienced store employees with new or temporary seasonal employees without requiring them to be physically next to each other. With the press of a button on their wearable, a new employee instantly connects with their buddy no matter where they are: to ask questions, get clarify procedures or ask for assistance. From the first day a new employee learns faster and makes a bigger impact on the store's performance. Key Buddy Button features include:

- **Simple To Use** – By simply pushing a button on the side of the Communicator wearable, users are connected directly to their assigned experienced team member.
- **Simple to Manage** – Store management can easily assign and manage the buddy list through intuitive dashboard application or employees can use audible permission based commands to pair with another employee
- **Location Independent** – Paired employees are free to work different assignments or tasks in different parts of the store eliminating the “follow the trainer” paradigm.
- **Management Metrics** – Through analytics and modeling, managers gain immediate insight into a new employee's initial and expected performance and useful data on the experienced employee's leadership capabilities.

Results

Theatro's Buddy Button application solves the problem of how to quickly and successfully integrate new, seasonal and temporary employees into a store in order to maximize their productivity. Key benefits include:

- **Improve Top Line Sales** – New, temporary and seasonal employees have immediate access to a more experienced and knowledgeable team member so they can find answer to key customer questions and make sales.
- **Leverage Employee Talents** – Buddies can share selling tips, product information and customer service priorities in real-time to new associates.
- **Speed Integration** – The buddy button helps establish a group of friends and mentors to the fear of asking “dumb” questions so new associates can quickly learn the culture and products of the store. It's easy to ask your friends questions.
- **Increase Employee Productivity** – Reclaim labor hours by eliminating unnecessary “walk arounds” to find a friend when asking questions. Also reduces time for classroom training.
- **Improve Employee Performance** – New employees are immediately more productive and feel like they are a part of the team.