Considerations when sourcing Time and Attendance Systems

Summary:

Many businesses can profit from basic electronic time and attendance tracking while a more complex operation may require time tracking and job costing by department.

Article body:

Are there any limits on the maximum number of employees that can be tracked by the products you are considering? Some apparently comprehensive products have severe limits on staff numbers in their proposed basic versions, requiring costly upgrades to meet future business needs.

What is the installation effort for the Badge or Card Reader terminals you require? Do you need to have an online reporting system with cable connections to your computer, or would an offline system better suit your work practices and totally eliminate installation costs?

Should you consider a battery-operated system that makes power cabling redundant? This allows your ID-Badge Reader to be installed anywhere inside your facility and even provides mobility of the terminal to places where no infrastructure is available. Think of the potential savings by going cable-free.

Are magnetic swipe ID-Badges included in any proposed solution? Optical barcode badges are extremely rugged compared to magnetic stripe and cheaper than proximity badges.

Will you have to spend additional money on service contracts or would you prefer a maintenance-free product that has no moving parts?

Are additional ID-Badges (ID-Cards) quickly available from your potential Time and Attendance Systems supplier on the next working day? There is little point waiting a week or more for extra cards when the next payroll period is already in sight.

Can ID-badges be personalised by you to suit your company requirements and, if not, could you wait many days for your supplier to produce personalised ID-Badges?

Can your potential supplier's solution grow from a modest time tracking requirement to a sophisticated system without buying additional software licences? Unexpected upgrade costs at a later date will not help your bottom line results.

Look for a software application that is fast to implement and easy to learn. Does it run under a MS-Office® application? If not, are you prepared to spend time learning yet another proprietary software package? Are you prepared to train someone else to run it during the absence of the regular user?

Is the collected time stamp data protected from unauthorised data changes? Data disruption is the last thing you need for your business process and errors in payroll administration are not what you, or your staff, desire.

Do you have remote sites that need to provide time and attendance information? If yes, how will you receive remote data quickly and efficiently at your office computer? Double data-entry is a poor solution for today's business requirements.

Many businesses need basic time and attendance and vacation tracking while a more complex operation may require time tracking and job costing by department. Can your potential supplier handle both of these issues in a single solution with a small additional cost?

About:
The author is active in the Sales & Support of Time and Attendance systems in the UK & Ireland and has been an IT professional for over 40 years. The author can be contacted at http://www.T-Data.co.uk.