# Praxis makes time for sales by scheduling the smart way

**Capgemini and RedPrairie collaborate with Praxis to implement an intelligent workforce scheduler to put the right employee at the right place at the right time.**

### The situation

The workforce is one of the biggest assets for a retailer. Scheduling employees in such a way that they can work as efficiently and effectively as possible can decrease employee cost, increase revenue and lower work pressure. Ultimately improving customer satisfaction, by taking time for customers into account when scheduling. Hence the name of the Workforce Management project at Praxis: Time for Sales.

Praxis is one of the largest Dutch DIY retailers and part of the Maxeda DIY Group. Praxis operates 139 stores, including 29 mega stores and eleven with a gardening center. Praxis employs almost 4,500 people.

After a pilot for labor standards Praxis decided to select an advanced scheduler to replace the various ways of scheduling the labor hours in their stores. Changing the way Praxis schedules would standardize the way of working, reduce work pressure and align the budgeted labor hours with the amount of work in the stores.
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### The solution

Praxis selected RedPrairie's Workforce Management solution for retail as a scheduler and Capgemini as their implementation partner. No other Dutch retailer had implemented such an advanced Workforce Management tool on a large scale before.

> **It's about the right people, in the right place at the right time.**
>
> **Frits Voorhout**
> **COO, Praxis**

At the beginning of the project the following challenges were identified:

- No Praxis store is laid out the same way;
- the labor standards were not yet available to Praxis for implementation;
- integration of Praxis' own task management solution.

Capgemini was asked to facilitate the design process, and configure, test and roll out the scheduler. Capgemini also developed the store training program and carried out part of the training. Praxis took responsibility for the business change management required by the project.

**Workforce Management at Praxis**

- Historical data (sold items, customers, sales)
- Events

Forecasting

- Labor standards

Labor Demand

Reporting

Scheduling

Employees

- CLA
- Contracts
- Availability
- Skills

- Name, Address, etc
- Balances
- Home site

## The result

The scheduler is currently live in all of Praxis' own stores and some franchise stores as well. The solution was rolled out in two phases (first in the big stores, secondly in the smaller ones). Praxis trained employees in the big stores mainly themselves; Capgemini and Praxis together trained employees in the 80 smaller stores which all went live in only four weeks time.

Now that the scheduler is implemented, it clears the way to harvest the advantages on all levels of the organization. For employees there is more time for customers, they are scheduled when they are needed and they get insight into the degree of work pressure. Store managers can achieve higher productivity, have a better grasp of the scheduled hours and have real-time insight into the availability of employees. Department managers within the stores are fully empowered to work with the store managers to achieve the best results. At headquarters there is improved insight into schedules and the use of hours, helping to better support the stores. HQ can also use long-range forecasting for more parts of the organization and investigate integrating Time & Attendance with their scheduler.

## How Praxis, Capgemini and RedPrairie worked together

Praxis wanted to start working with labor standards and use a scheduler that aligns with those standards. After conducting a successful pilot focused on labor standards, Praxis decided they needed an advanced, user-friendly scheduler to plan their employee hours according to the labor standards. They selected RedPrairie WFM for retail and Capgemini as implementer.

Praxis chose to work with Capgemini because of our knowledge and experience within the retail sector, our joint offer with RedPrairie, a prag-

matic implementation approach, the capability to deliver interfaces, maintenance and first-line support, and because Capgemini already maintains a large part of Praxis' IT.
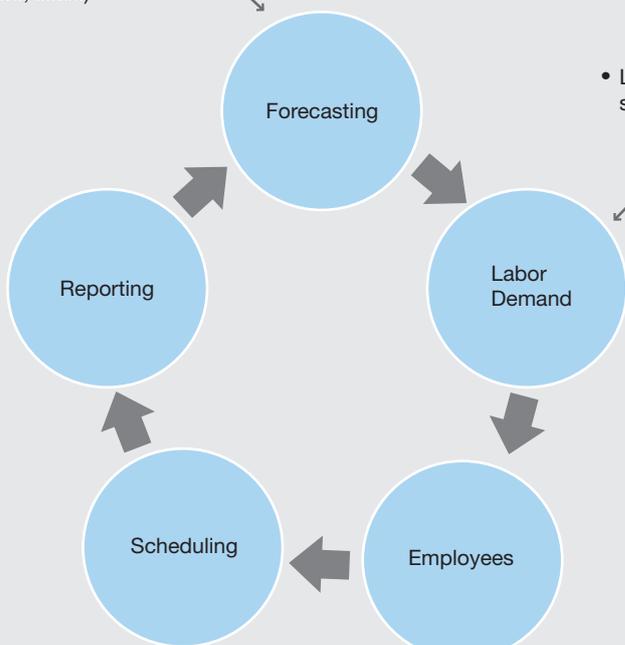
The project team comprised employees of Praxis, Capgemini and RedPrairie. This proved to be a good match. The pragmatism and knowledge of the Praxis members, but also a careful preparation time where stores were involved and their feedback taken into account meant that Praxis could make fast decisions. RedPrairie brought their knowledge of the system to the table. Capgemini was responsible for a thorough approach making sure the promised results would be delivered. Later in the project Capgemini took over the system knowledge from RedPrairie.

The team was kept small during the whole project, proving Workforce Management implementations can be done with a small and agile team. To be agile and deliver the results the project members needed to play a lot of different roles. The Capgemini consultants proved well equipped for the task by leading in most of the roles. These roles included project manager, business analyst, configurator, labor standards consultant, facilitator, trainer and translator.

The Time for Sales project was a true team effort where every member played a valuable role. As a result of the partnership the scheduler was live in the first store within three months. This was possible because during preparation the team had identified and taken into account the big challenges.

Shortly after rolling out the scheduler, the first results were noticeable, especially those that are measurable: fewer hours budgeted or sometimes more hours depending on the department and improved productivity (sales-per-labor hour).

Maybe less obvious, but not less important, are the 'soft' results. Some stores are already doing a better job, while experiencing reduced work pressure. By reducing work pressure, employee satisfaction can be maintained and even improved. The use of labor standards and a consistent approach to scheduling enables store employees to learn from each other how they can work more efficiently and better serve customers.

At Praxis headquarters the quality of the sales forecast has improved too. Promotions, events and other store activities are planned more carefully now. This way the stores have a better idea of what is coming their way and centrally there is a clearer understanding of the future. Praxis also increased the speed and quality of planning information, making managing the stores more controllable for store and department managers as well as district managers and headquarters.

Implementing the workforce scheduler also creates new opportunities to further professionalize workforce management. Praxis are investigating the integration of Time & Attendance with the scheduler and replacing their own Task Management solution with an integrated one.

There are also new business opportunities for Praxis. By having their labor standards in a system, they can calculate what the effects of new processes (with matching standards) will be for stores. They can also predict what the effects will be of certain sales targets. In addition, forecasting can now be used by the commercial and marketing departments of Praxis.

**What we are proud of**

- First to implement such an advanced scheduler in the Netherlands on a large scale.
- Live within three months. Total time to roll out in a company about 1 year.
- Training and rolling out 80 stores in only four weeks.
- Getting the job done with a small team of all-round professionals.
- Making it a true team effort in the 'Collaborative Business Experience' style.

Capgemini

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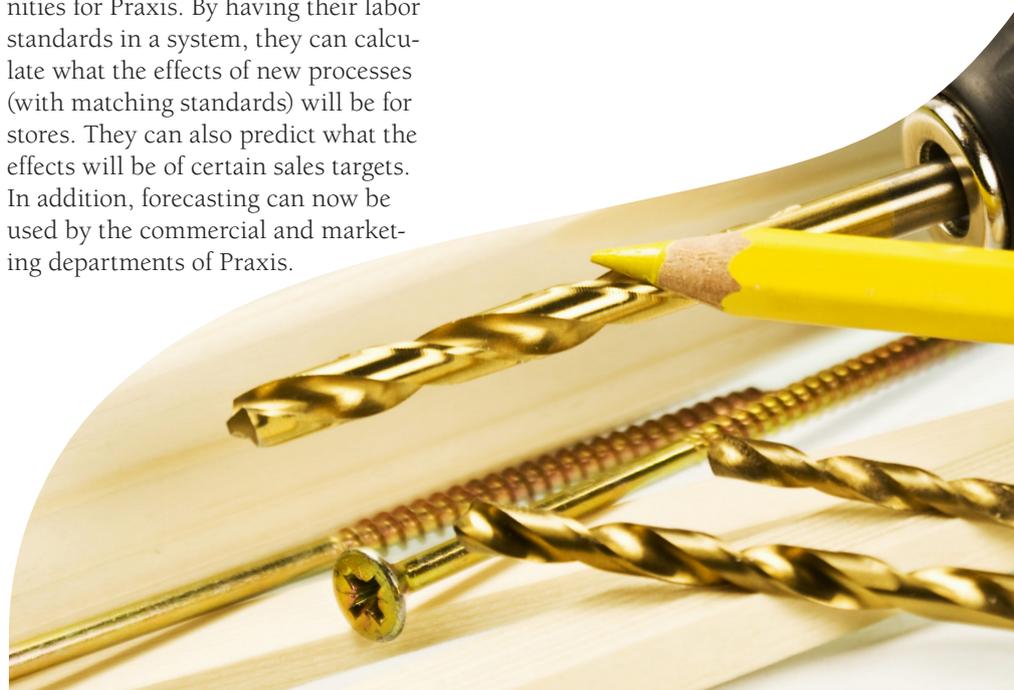
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Present in more than 35 countries, Capgemini reported 2009 global revenues of EUR 8.4 billion and employs over 100,000 people worldwide. More information is available at **www.capgemini.com**

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**Capgemini Nederland B.V.**

Papendorpseweg 100

P.O. Box 2575 - 3500 GN Utrecht

The Netherlands

Tel. +31 30 689 00 00

Fax +31 30 689 99 99

E-mail: info.nl@capgemini.com

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