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Matthew Pitts Named as 2011 Workforce Management Professional of the Year

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE – April 18, 2011 – The Society of Workforce Planning Professionals (SWPP) has announced Matthew Pitts as the winner of the 2011 Workforce Management Professional of the Year Award, which recognizes a workforce management professional who has shown outstanding leadership in the industry.

“We are so pleased to announce Matt as the winner of this prestigious award,” said Vicki Herrell, SWPP Executive Director. “His workforce management knowledge, leadership, and vision have helped him achieve great results for his company. We believe he is truly representative of the great workforce management professionals around the world.”

According to Angela Blevins, VP of Club Services at Bluegreen, “Matt exhibits a complete understanding of his role's responsibility, authority, accountability and his importance to our organization's success. He promotes a cooperative behavior to build a stronger sense of purpose and manages change with minimal resistance.” She adds, “Matt is well respected by the senior management team and strives to work harmoniously with each department.”

Matthew Pitts has 13 years of call center experience, and has been in Workforce Management since 1999. He is currently the Resource Planning Supervisor for Bluegreen Corporation's owner contact center in the Indianapolis area. Since joining Bluegreen in August of 2007, Matt has been responsible for supervising the Workforce Management team and overseeing the various aspects of the team including forecasting, scheduling, and real-time contact center management.

Matt was born and raised in suburban St. Louis, but thanks to his parents relocating to Indianapolis, after spending a year after high school in the Rotary Youth Exchange Program

in Bremen, Germany, he found his way to Indiana University. He graduated Phi Beta Kappa with a Bachelor of Arts in Germanic Studies and Political Science, and was fortunate enough to spend his junior year studying at the University of Hamburg. Prior to working at Bluegreen, Matt worked for Resort Condominiums International of Indianapolis, IN.

Matt's primary goal is ensuring that Bluegreen is meeting the service level goals they have outlined for their owners as well as the owners for whom Bluegreen provides resort management services. This has required a heavy attention to forecasting and adapting to change in what proved to be an extremely volatile economy and industry over the past several years since the credit and mortgage industries took a turn in 2008. Bluegreen management adapted quickly and appropriately, created new revenue streams, brought in new management contracts, and increased online servicing. Throughout it all, Matt and his team weathered all of these changes and achieved an annual forecast variance of 3% in 2008, 1.5% in 2009 and 2.4% in 2010, often done with little or no historical data for all the various changes that were implemented.

In 2009, the WFM team was given a challenge to get even more creative with associate schedules. The directive was just another component of a global "do more with less" theme in the midst of struggling economic times. Within a short period, Matt had led his team in developing a fairly robust Flex Scheduling pool of phone associates.

The biggest challenge to successfully implement this commonly-used concept was the existing culture and mindset within Bluegreen's contact center. To provide a little background, Bluegreen's hours of operation are 8AM - 9PM, Monday through Friday and 9AM - 5:30PM Saturday. The 13-hour business day lent itself to traditional 8-hour schedules overlapping during the mid-day and often causing staffing overages. Since 95% of the associates are full time at 40 hours, WFM desired a large pool of part-time associates to offset the overages. However, the 160-hour new hire training, vast resort knowledge, complex systems and customized customer service expectations do not make it easy to keep part-time associates who are just looking for an "easy second job."

Matt and his workforce team partnered with the operations department to target 20 to 25 associates (or 25% of the targeted department of associates) who were willing to flex 30-40 hours worked weekly while providing 50 hours of schedule availability. Under Matt's diligent leadership, a flex-scheduling program evolved and was tested for 90 days during the 2nd quarter of 2010. Matt was able to extend a shift differential to pilot participants to include \$1.00 per hour for weekday flex plus an additional \$1.00 per hour for Saturday availability. After modeling, Matt was able to demonstrate the ROI for the shift differential to show a payroll savings in number of hours worked per associate and efficiencies gained by the program. He also proposed flex-schedule participants get first rights at vacation bidding. Matt also partnered with Human Resources to have participants sign an acknowledgement form and make a commitment to participate. He also trained them on the details of the flex-scheduling; how to mark their availability selections, submit schedule change requests, and use the program to their personal benefit.

During the pilot program, Matt and team realized a savings of 1087 scheduled labor hours; an estimated payroll savings of \$16,500 with only 20% of the department in a 3-month time period. The average associate worked 33 hours weekly; a total savings in 3 months of 84 hours per associate. The increased ability to efficiently place schedules decreased overtime needs by 600 hours; an additional estimated payroll savings of \$13,500 in 3 months or nearly \$54,000 annually.

The pilot program was a hit for both WFM and associates and flex-scheduling has become a permanent part of Bluegreen's scheduling options. Associates willingly volunteer to participate on a quarterly basis and the flex team is now approximately 30% of the targeted department. All new associates are now hired in as part of the flex team.

Under Matt's leadership and flair for creativity, his team has actively participated in the development of contests targeted to increase staffing on Mondays; Bluegreen's peak volume day. Matt implemented the now famous "Manic Mondays" contest soliciting overtime targeted to Mondays during peak season. Each hour of approved and worked overtime

earned the associate 5 tickets. The tickets were collected and a winner from each department was drawn weekly the following day. The associate had to be present to win (no absences the day of the drawing). The motivating prize was being able to turn the tables on WFM -- the associate got to tell WFM what schedule they wanted to work for an entire week. This contest was a huge success within the center. And one that virtually motivated many without costing a dime.

Matt is heavily involved in a company initiative of driving transactional activity to the web instead of a phone call. He has recommended several “what-if” staffing models to support a reduction in inbound volume and is depended upon to routine provide initiative reporting and year-over-year comparisons, along with a rolling staffing model to support the trending efforts in this area of focus.

Matt has also implemented a Workforce Committee with agents from the call center and a Job Shadow program in which an agent spends 90 days with the WFM team to learn the basics of what goes on in the workforce management area.

The other finalists for the award were Jackie Reeves of West Corporation, Greg Samos of Computershare, Sean Stewart of Permanent General, and Jonathan Waller of Good Sam. The SWPP Board of Advisors selected the five finalists from nominations submitted on the SWPP website. The Workforce Management Professional of the Year award is chosen from the five finalists by the Board of Advisors and announced at the 2011 SWPP Annual Conference.

About SWPP

The Society of Workforce Planning Professionals (SWPP) is an organization devoted to facilitating education and networking opportunities among workforce planners across all industries. Membership in SWPP is available to all workforce planning professionals and other interested parties from consulting and vendor organizations. Both individual memberships and corporate membership options are available, with full benefits and costs outlined on the organization’s website at www.swpp.org.

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