

Synergy Projects

Improving efficiency and productivity with activity/time tracking and costing

Key industries:

- Manufacturing
- Production
- Agriculture
- Provision of services, including field services

Key features:

- Generate projects made up of single or multiple activities/tasks/jobs
- Track productivity and efficiency by gaining insight on the time spent on specific activities/tasks/jobs
- Realise Return On Investment (ROI) and save ongoing costs by identifying non-productive time within your workforce
- Report and export activity/task/job data to third-party platforms, such as BI or ERP systems
- Analyse data for optimising activity/task/job planning

Overview

Forming part of 'Synergy Workforce', Synel's advanced Workforce Management platform, Synergy Projects is a module that helps you maintain profitability by accurately tracking the costs of the various activities/tasks/jobs which your workforce is involved in. It does so by enabling you to capture and quantify the accumulative time spent by individuals, or groups of employees, on activities/tasks/jobs attributed to specific projects.

Synergy Projects not only makes it easy to see the total cost to complete a project against planned time, but also the time spent on specific individual tasks within that project.

The module, which can be customised in the settings to match your organisation's specific operational requirements, allows you to plan time for each activity and then track the actual hours worked. The recorded data can be allocated to specific cost centres and provide management information on productivity.

Synergy Projects is commonly used in conjunction with 'Synergy Time & Attendance', Synel's advanced time and attendance module, to give organisations full data. What's more, the same data capture devices used for Time & Attendance, such as Synel's Synergy 10 touch-screen terminals, can be also be used for starting activities/tasks/jobs with Synergy Projects, thus providing a convenient and cost-effective total workforce management solution.

Managing projects at multiple levels

Synergy Projects enables organisations to assess time spent and workforce costs through every phase of highly complex, multi-level projects, as well as monitoring the progress of a simple task to keep costs and resources on track. Either way, the benefits of tracking time, costs, and exceptions delivers major ongoing efficiency and productivity gains regardless of complexity or size.

Any number of cost-centres can be set up for specific activities/tasks/jobs, which can then be reviewed over multiple projects. For example, a paint department is set up as a cost centre for a business that manufactures trailers. It is possible to granularly capture the time and cost to paint a single trailer, as well as aggregate the data over multiple trailers to provide valuable insight into the overall efficiency of the paint department. When combined with data from other departments/cost centres involved in manufacturing the trailers, managers have a complete overview of the entire operation which is invaluable in making the right decisions to improve efficiency and keep costs under control.

Real-time display and reporting

A Presence Information Panel (PIP) within the module provides a real-time overview of employees' live activities by specific project, non-productive time, or any other activity/task/job.

Managers can also report on a wide range of data, such as cumulative hours by employee/project/task, project status planned vs actual time, and project costs by individual department/team; plus much more.

In addition, a Daily Activity screen gives a more granular view of project information on a day-by-day basis, highlighting any exceptions.

Activities

There is no limit to the number or type of activities/tasks/jobs which can be defined within the system, and its simple for employees to select the required project via a wide range of methods, including fixed data capture terminals, 'Synergy App' mobile app, Virtual Terminal via a web-browser, QR codes and barcode scanner.

Data capture terminals are the most common method in a manufacturing environment, often supplemented by barcode guns that connect directly to the terminal, whilst in service industries it is usually a mobile application that is used. Regardless of the method, they will identify the employee, present scheduled or non-scheduled tasks depending on what has been allocated by management and enable time to be tracked. All data is sent back to Synergy Projects, which is hosted in the Cloud, keeping all data secure and fully backed-up. On-premise server options are also available.

In another example, at a fulfilment centre, managers can direct employees in simple tasks such as pick, pack, restock, and clean down. Employees select the nominated task and attribute time to that task. Managers will then be able to break down the total time spent on each activity, for example 3 hours picking, 2 hours packing, 1 hour restocking and 30 minutes clean down, within a standard shift. This can be done by individual employee, groups, or teams.

Scheduled and non-scheduled activities

Synergy Projects allows for both scheduled and non-scheduled activities to be set by managers for employees:

Scheduled activities

A scheduled activity/task/job can be set to be started at a specific time and to end at a target end time. If a scheduled activity is started late, this can be coded as 'non-productive time', and early or late finishes will have an impact on the cost for the activity and be flagged as an exception.

An employee can easily see what scheduled activities they have planned via a data-capture terminal and select the required one to start the process. When completed, it's a simple case of returning to the terminal to end the activity, and/or start a new one.

Non-Scheduled activities

These are activities that don't have a pre-defined start time. Instead, employees can choose and start their desired activity. This gives freedom and flexibility for those organisations that require it.

Exception codes

In some cases, it may not be possible for employees to complete an activity. This may be due, for example, to a machine breaking down or a material shortage. Synergy Projects enables user-defined suspension codes to be created, and these can be used by employees to account for and categorise non-productive time, whilst allowing managers to see the impact on profitability and efficiency.

Billing

Whilst an organisation will usually use their accounting system to raise invoices for customers based on a set price list, Synergy Projects can be used to export data for billing worked hours on a bespoke project considering cost of materials and labour.

Field Management – optional submodule

Synergy Projects can be supplemented for your mobile workforce with a 'Field Management' add-on, which brings activity/time tracking and costing to any field-based employees, such as field-engineers, mobile mechanics, installation engineers etc.

Jobs can be scheduled by a coordinator or manager, as well as field-based employees using Synel's mobile application - Synergy App - to view, start and end jobs. GPS coordinates can be captured when the employee performs an action, such as checking-in on a site to start a job. Electronic job sheets can be filled in directly on the app and automatically stored in the Cloud.

For example, in a mobile vending operation, field operatives travel around the country restocking and maintaining vending machines. The head office schedules jobs, which are pushed to Synergy App to schedule upcoming jobs for the employee. The employee then checks in at the relevant site by scanning a geolocated QR code attached to the door of the vending machine., Their GPS coordinates are captured and matched for validation purposes to the location of the machine to ensure the employee is where they should be. Once the work is completed, the employee fills in the job sheet and then checks out of the location, ready to start the next scheduled task.

Free consultation

Synel offers a free, no obligation bespoke consultation service to organisations to find the right solution for their time/activity costing requirements. Please [contact us today](#) to book a demonstration and see how you can start improving efficiency and reduce costs within your business.