

Case study



Blue Bird Drives Workplace Safety and Employee Engagement

If you see an iconic yellow school bus driving by, there's a good chance that it was built by the Blue Bird Corporation. The company has been manufacturing buses for K-12 schools across the country since 1927.

It could be very easy for a company that has been around as long as Blue Bird to stick to the same well-traveled road. But when it comes to workplace safety, application and database administrator Frank Burkhardt knew the company had to devote the same amount of attention to employee safety as they do to the schoolchildren who ride Blue Bird buses.

Customer

Blue Bird

Industry

Manufacturing

Solutions

Rave Alert

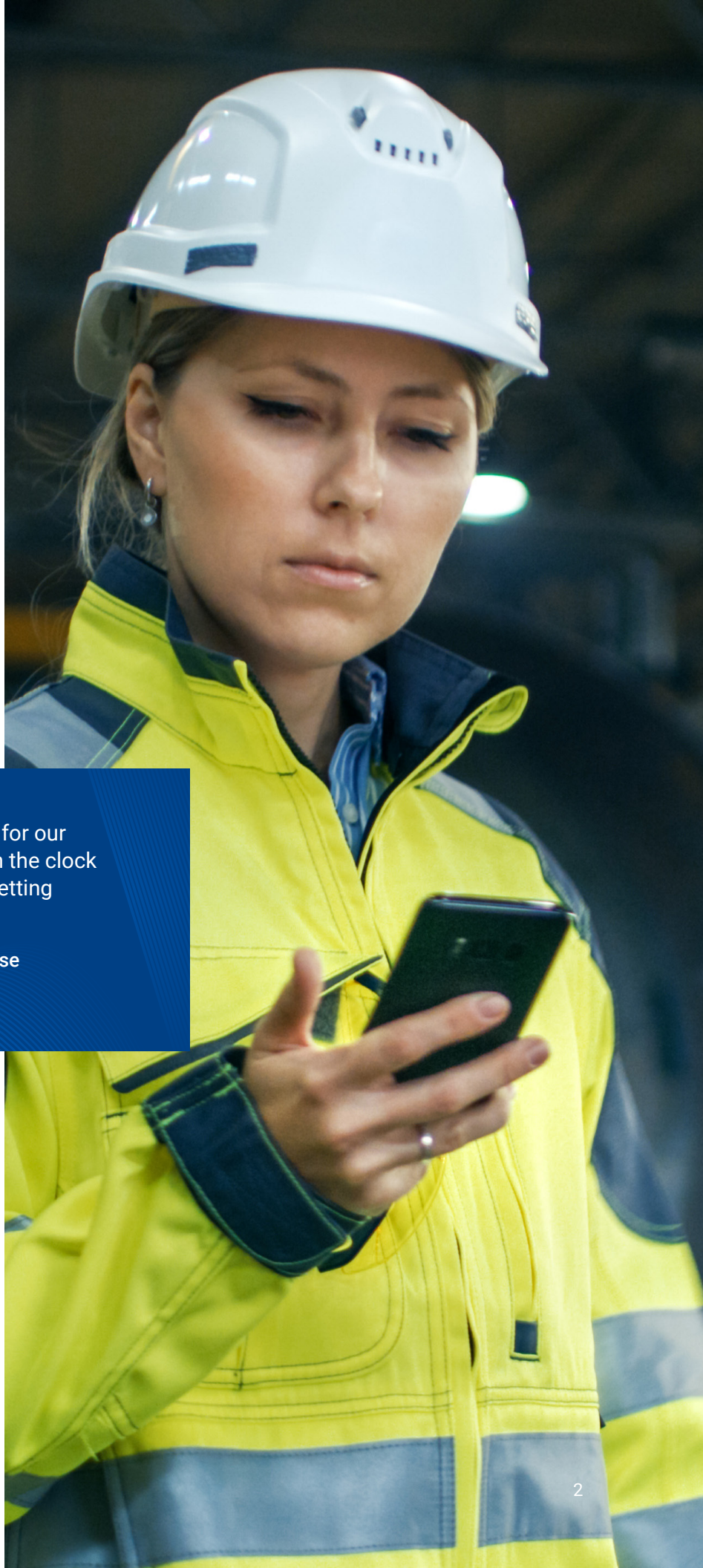


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The challenge

“Our factory is definitely old school,” Burkhardt said. “The plant in Fort Valley, Georgia is actually the original location of Blue Bird and the main manufacturing facility is a historical landmark.”

School bus production is a seasonal industry, which means Blue Bird’s production line can have a fluctuating headcount. Employees need to receive critical communication that concerns their safety. Similarly, they don’t need to continue receiving these notifications after their time with the company ends. Manually adding and deleting these workers from contact lists could take hours. Burkhardt knew the facility needed a solution that could automate this time-consuming task.



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– Frank Burkhardt, Application & Database Administrator, Blue Bird Corporation

Additionally, the Fort Valley location wanted a critical communication solution that allowed for concise message targeting. Without this capability, employees may receive too many messages that don’t pertain to them, which increases the likelihood that workers develop alert fatigue. If this happens, workers could possibly tune out an important alert that concerns their safety.





The solution

When Burkhardt first explored the Rave platform, he found it was a simple and straightforward solution that he was able to learn quickly. The easy-to-use interface meant that Burkhardt didn't have to spend a great deal of time training administrators, as they quickly understood how to send out messages with ease. Because the interface is so intuitive, even administrators who rarely used it would remember how to send critical communications when necessary.

Burkhardt says that adding and removing Blue Bird's employees in the system is no longer a cumbersome task. Through Rave's SMS opt-in feature, workers are able to sign up to receive messages as part of the company's onboarding process.

In addition, Blue Bird is getting more out of one safety investment by using the Rave platform to communicate with segmented groups of employees. In fact, the company is driving more value from this solution by using Rave for staffing tasks like messaging factory workers to find someone to fill an available shift on the production line.

"It's the primary source of information for our workers," Burkhardt said. "It doesn't matter if they're on the clock or outside of work. They appreciate getting messages ahead of time that let them know if an upcoming shift is cancelled, for example. And the administrators sending those messages appreciate how simple it is with Rave's preloaded template options."

The result

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the factory in Fort Valley stayed open as an essential transportation manufacturer. Burkhardt says the company used Rave to notify employees of specific changes, such as closing particular entrances in order to minimize the risk of illness exposure, or taking the temperatures of workers before they can clock in.

Regardless if it's a public health emergency or an ordinary shift change, Burkhardt says the factory feels confident using the Rave platform to handle whatever incidents may occur in the future.

"If we ever need to use it, we're locked and loaded," Burkhardt said. "It really is a great tool that just works, and that's why we have so much confidence in it."

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