From Admin Overload to Manager Empowerment: How First Watch Reduced Friction Across Five Core Systems

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Restaurant managers at First Watch were facing productivity roadblocks due to inconsistent training, low system proficiency, and inefficient tool usage across their restaurant operations.

By embedding Apty across five business-critical systems, First Watch enabled in-app, task-specific guidance—helping managers complete daily tasks faster, improving data accuracy, and reclaiming time for team leadership and guest interactions.

THE HUMAN IMPACT

Managers were expected to master complex workflows while handling day-to-day restaurant operations. But training resources were limited, and traditional PDFs and videos failed in live environments.

> "Managers didn't need more content—they needed help in the moment, inside the systems they were already using."

This gap led to frequent support requests, slow adoption of updates, and time away from the floor—affecting team performance and the guest experience.

THE SELECTION JOURNEY

First Watch found that traditional system training—PDF manuals, videos, and static SOPs—was incompatible with the real-time demands of restaurant operations. Managers couldn't step away to read instructions or watch tutorials during peak service hours.

The team sought a solution that would:

- Deliver in-the-moment guidance without disrupting workflows
- Eliminate the need to leave applications for help
- Improve consistency across tasks like payroll, hiring, and reporting
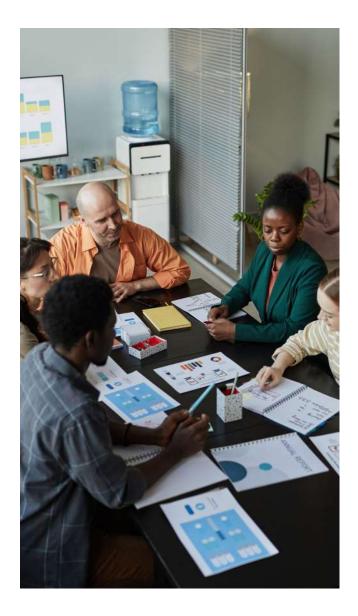- Scale to new locations during rapid expansion

After reviewing multiple tools, First Watch selected Apty for its lightweight, in-app guidance, tooltip capabilities, and operational fit for hospitality environments. The ability to embed help directly into ADP, iCIMS, and PowerBI workflows was central to the decision.

THE IMPLEMENTATION JOURNEY

01	Regional pilots on iCIMS and Service Channel
02	Focused guidance on payroll, hiring, and facility reporting tasks
03	Tooltips and validation for error-prone data fields
04	Announcements integrated into routine system access
05	Gradual rollout to national footprint with feedback loops for refinement

THE BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION

- Faster onboarding for new managers in newly opened locations
- Reduced support ticket volume for how-to questions
- Streamlined process execution across back-office and operational functions
- Increased manager visibility and engagement on the restaurant floor
- Better compliance with operational procedures

THE PATH FORWARD

First Watch continues to scale Apty across new applications and is embedding it into the new-store opening playbook. They're also tying adoption metrics into restaurant performance dashboards to track ROI and efficiency across units.

Spotlight Quote

"We're not just teaching managers how to use systems—we're helping them lead better, faster, and more consistently. Apty is now central to how we scale with confidence."

— Director of Restaurant Technology, First Watch