# LET'S TALK POPS

People Operations and why it matters to the community association management industry

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# UNDER WATER, UNDERESTIMATED, UNDERAPPRECIATED.

## The rise of employee burnout cannot be understated.

No one predicted that 2020 would bring a global pandemic and sudden surge in unemployment - but what happened after job openings came back may be even more surprising. Four million Americans quit their jobs in July 2021 and employers across the country had 10.9 million jobs left unfilled over the summer and fall season. It's not over yet, either, as 41% of workers across the globe are considering leaving their jobs.

So what's driving the Great Resignation? There are many factors, but one that has always been prevalent in the association management industry is burnout. According to a recent study from John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 38% of workers are feeling neutral, dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their work/life balance and 78% are experiencing elevated stress levels.

It's time to reconsider how you are managing stress and burnout in your workplace. And POPS may be your answer.

"

"WE SPEND MORE TIME WORKING THAN DOING ANYTHING ELSE IN LIFE. IT'S NOT RIGHT THAT THE EXPERIENCE OF WORK SHOULD BE SO DEMOTIVATING AND DEHUMANIZING."

LASZLO BLOCK

CEO/FOUNDER, HUMU

FORMER SVP, PEOPLE OPERATIONS AT GOOGLE

# WHAT IS POPS?

POPS (or People Operations) essentially is the management of labor within an organization. It is a people-centric approach to work that emphasizes workplace empowerment to drive growth - and that empowerment comes through the lens of task automation. POPS shifts the focus from tactical administrative work to people and productivity.

People Operations is a fast-growing segment in the HR world, with more and more job title changes and job openings happening over the course of 2021. While you may not be planning to hire a People Operations Specialist to join your team, you can incorporate a POPS mentality into your organization to drive satisfaction and success.
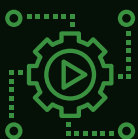
## POPS LOOKS LIKE:

### PEOPLE EMPOWERMENT
Enable employees to focus on the homeowner and the board, not the to-do list.

### DIGITAL FIRST
Cut the paper and the filing cabinets so that employees are running operations with greater ease and efficiency.

### AUTOMATION ASAP
Provide the right tools and training so that employees are completing as few manual, repetitive tasks as possible.

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# WHAT IS POPS?

Here are some examples of what POPs can look like in community association management. .

| | BECAUSE OF OPS... | PEOPLE CAN... |
|---|---|---|
| ACCOUNTING | Full banking integration, daily account reconciliation, and paperless journal entry | Complete reports with greater speed and efficiency, relieving stress and burnout |
| MANAGEMENT | Mobile management tools, homeowner self-service apps, and project management technology | Work one-on-one with boards and homeowners on ways to improve community spirit |
| ADMINISTRATIVE | Multiple self-service options for homeowners to pay bills and complete other tasks | Focus on keeping the internal team organized with little disruption and service issues |
| EXECUTIVE | Project management tools that provide a full perspective of employees' workloads | Coach employees on career development and alignment with the organization's mission |

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# WHY POP?

## You're focused on retention.

When operations are running smoothly, you're able to focus your time on developing your employees and building a strong relationship.

## You can stop burnout before it occurs.

Burnout is a huge problem in the industry. When you have a holistic view of your employees' workloads, you can recognize when burnout may become an issue and speak candidly with your employees on their needs.

WORK          LIFE
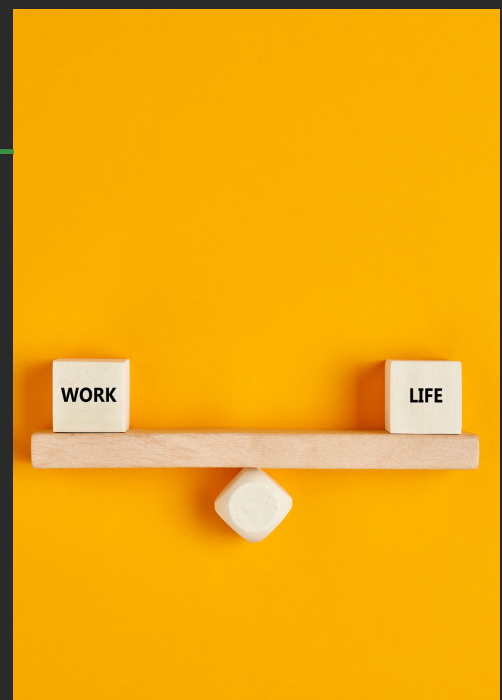
# WHY POP?



## You're building culture.

If your team is fully invested in homeowner experience and your company's mission, they'll grow with you, not away from you.



## You're improving your brand.

When teams are aligned and employees are empowered, they are talking more about everything they love about your company. This in turn builds your brand and helps attract new clients.

# LET'S ASSESS

Where are you in your POPS journey, and how can we help? Take this assessment to see where your organization stands:

### How does your company create the buildout of month-end reports for your HOA/COA boards?

A. A mix of paper and digital systems
B. Spreadsheets and digital documents
C. Multiple digital systems
D. One integrated digital system

### If you have to update homeowners' information, within how many systems do you need to make an update?

A. 5+ systems
B. 4-5 systems
C. 2-3 systems
D. One system

### How often do your accountants reconcile bank accounts?

A. Once a month by manually matching payment history with paper statements and invoices
B. Once a week by reviewing payment and invoice history online
C. Once a day with a quick click of a button

### What percentage of your community managers' site inspections can be completed through a mobile device?

A. Less than 25%
B. 25-50%
C. 50-75%
D. 75-100%

### What percentage of your homeowners' HOA needs can be done through a mobile device (EG, violations, work orders, payments, etc)?

A. Less than 25%
B. 25-50%
C. 50-75%
D. 75-100%

### What is the process for a community manager when it comes to completing a site inspection?

A. Violations are recorded in the field and submitted in the office
B. Violations are electronically recorded in the field and pictures are attached in the office
C. Everything is done in the field

# LET'S ASSESS (CONT.)

Where are you in your POPS journey, and how can we help? Take this assessment to see where your organization stands:

### How are community managers able to keep track of routine preventative maintenance projects?

A. We mark it on paper calendars in the office
B. We keep track through a project management system like Trello or Monday
C. Project management tools are a part of our software solution - it's all in one place

### How do you maintain a level of visibility and accountability to your managers' workloads and progress of responsibilities?

A. Email and 1:1 meetings
B. Excel or a third party system such as Trello or Monday
C. Through my software solution

### How often do homeowners call your office with issues related to payments and other day-to-day needs?

A. Quite often, especially when it's time to collect payments
B. Sometimes, especially when it's time to collect payments
C. Rarely

### How often do homeowners physically come into an office setting to make payments?

A. Often
B. Sometimes
C. Rarely
D. Never

### If a homeowner needs to contact their community manager or association management company, what communication tools are available?

A. Phone and Email
B. A community website and/or mobile app

### How long does it take for your team to complete their monthly income/management fees and administrative fees each month?

A. Several days
B. 1-2 days
C. Less than a day

# YOUR RESULTS

Add one point for every letter jump: A = 1, B = 2, C = 3, D = 4. Calculate your total at the bottom.

| | A | B | C | D |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Question 1 | | | | |
| Question 2 | | | | |
| Question 3 | | | | |
| Question 4 | | | | |
| Question 5 | | | | |
| Question 6 | | | | |
| Question 7 | | | | |
| Question 8 | | | | |
| Question 9 | | | | |
| Question 10 | | | | |
| Question 11 | | | | |
| Question 12 | | | | |

*YOUR TOTAL POPS SCORE:*

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## 35 +: POP Master

Your team is focused on the homeowners, you are focused on growth, and your software is focused on the rest. This is the nirvana of POPS, but the reality is, it's hard to remain in this stage. Be sure you stay connected with the Account Success Manager of your software provider to ensure you're taking advantage of all your solution has to offer.

## 25 - 34: POPS @ Scale

While most of your processes are digitized and your employees are surely feeling the relief, there's more work to be done (and that's okay!) Review with your team the areas that you want to grow at scale for the upcoming year and software that can support you in your needs. Then, work with your software provider to review add-on solutions that will drive growth.

## 14 - 25: Reactive POPS

At this stage, you likely have some basic processes digitized, but still have to manually pull information from various fragmented resources. Take inventory of all of your fragmented solutions and discuss with your teams the areas in which they have to pull manual information in a cumbersome fashion. Investigate what it would take to add more integration and consider next steps.

## < 14: UnPOPped

Based on your answers, your operative process is likely causing friction with your employees, boards, and homeowners. All is not lost, though! We suggest you meet with your team and find out their biggest pain points. Then, review what it would take to switch your software system. You may find (and we think you will find) that your teams would rather make the change than stick it out for much longer.

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# MAKE YOUR ORGANIZATION POP

Ready to get on board? Here are steps you can take to implement POPS into your organization:

## It all starts with communication.

Hold a meeting with your team to discuss the what, why and how behind people operations. Take that time to also discuss your company's values, cultural goals and vision for the upcoming year to solidify alignment.

## Get a full view of the workload.

Use project management tools to understand the full breadth of the workload for each of your employees. Work with them to determine what tasks are holding them back from their developmental goals and where the priorities should be.

## Start automating.

Create a timeline and prioritize tasks that you can automate and enhance from a digital perspective. Focus on what will alleviate the most time and stress for your employees and determine the level of effort vs. level of impact for each automation.

## Work with your software provider.

Reach out to your software provider with your list of automations needed to run a smoother and more efficient team. See what products they have that you have not been utilizing and set up time to onboard and train your teams with the tools you see best fit.

# STRATEGY BUILDER

Prep your strategy by answering these people-centric questions.

**Q1** | What surprised you the most after completing your assessment?

**Q2** | Which team members within your company do you feel are the most burned out and overwhelmed, and how does software fit into their issues?

**Q3** | What are some software features that your employees have requested before that used to be "nice-to-haves," but now seem essential?

**Q4** | What are the first steps you plan to take to implement POPS into your organization?

**Q5** | Who are the key players within your organization that you need buy-in from to add POPS into your framework?

**Q6** | Whose careers do you feel will be most positively impacted by POPS within your organization?
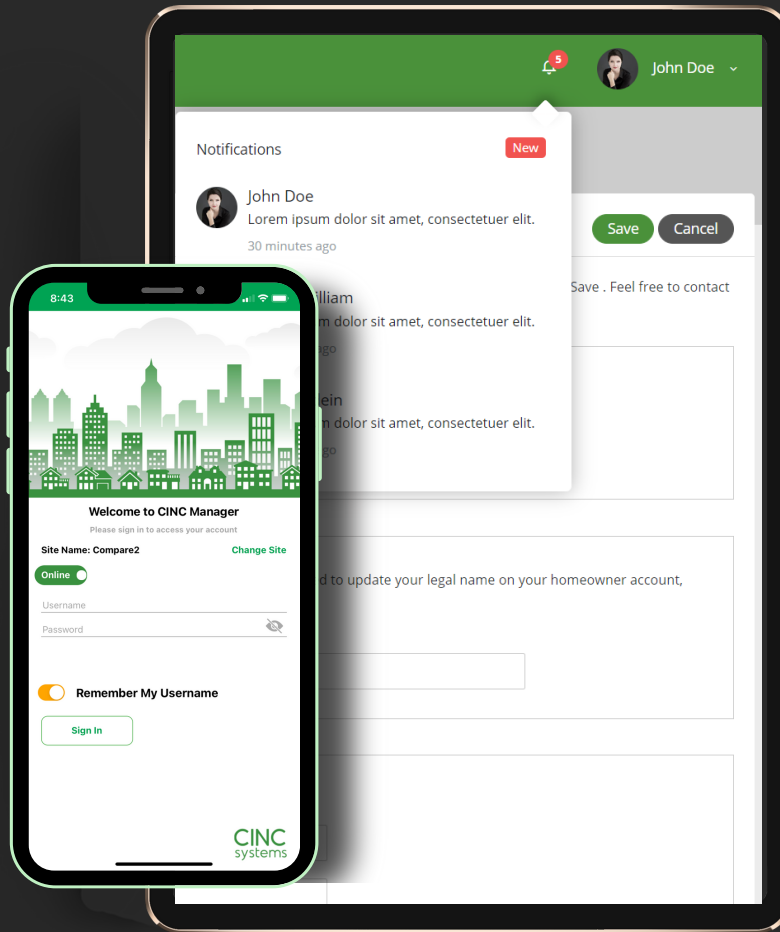
PRODUCTS THAT

# POP

At CINC Systems, we work to build an ecosystem of solutions that make things easy for your employees and seamless for your homeowners. Visit www.cincsystems.com/product-tour to see what we offer to accounting teams, managers, HOA/COA boards and homeowners.

# SOURCES

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