When comparing SmartRoster to other packages, does it have these essential features?

User support:

- Full context sensitive on-line help (try the F1 key)
- Full colour electronic manual in PDF format which can be freely copied and printed
- 24 hour email support (free in the first year, free for all evaluations, and a small optional annual subscription thereafter)
- All updates free for the first year (then included in the cost of annual support thereafter)

User interface

- An elegant and intuitive, cutting-edge, easy-to-use interface, great for both novice and power user
- Uses an intuitive spreadsheet like grid. Just drag and drop names in the spreadsheet from the various role-member and people lists always present on screen, or use the "right mouse button" click to access context sensitive menus in most panels
- exclusive to SmartRoster compared to other ministry schedulers
- Mouse over any name in the grid to see everywhere that person is scheduled *exclusive to SmartRoster
- Double-click on any name to access the properties of that person
- Lock down rows, columns, or cells with a single click to prevent the autofill overwriting *exclusive to SmartRoster

Absences

- Set absences for an individual or for a group or household
- SmartRoster never schedules a person when absent
- Absences can be arbitrary date ranges or a complex repeating pattern

Communication features

- Built-in emailer, and ability to email personalised schedules to each member, or to each family (containing the highlighted names of each person in the family) - and no extra annual charges!
- Full email management - preview emails before sending, view sent emails, archive emails, re-send emails *exclusive to SmartRoster
- Easy email reminders generated each time SmartRoster is started, or on demand
- Send bulk email to selected individuals, or all members of a selected group or household
- Seamlessly Share a single data file across your LAN, or across the world via SmartRoster WebShare

Minimal required hardware and software

- Very modest minimum system requirements
- Does not require an external word processor
- Does not require annual subscriptions to run the program (but is available for support)
- Does not require the internet (but can use it if available)
- Does not require annual payments or an "optional module" for email functionality
- Does not require an external database management system such as MS Access® or SQL

Auto Scheduling

- Set scheduling frequency preferences - which can be "average over the whole period" or exactly so many times in each consecutive period (week, month) *exclusive to SmartRoster
- Co-worker and Family work-together (or apart) preferences - no other product has the same degree of control as SmartRoster!
- eg. ensure families are all scheduled to the same service in a weekend, allow for childcare requirements (so both parents are NOT scheduled at the same time); make sure trainees are scheduled with someone more experienced, etc
- Set scheduling limits for an individual, household or group eg 2 times total for the whole schedule
- Define enforced breaks - global, per-person, per-group, or per-role-member *exclusive to SmartRoster
- Define restrictions for role/event combination such as: *exclusive to SmartRoster
- "at least x [members of group y]" or "at most x [members of group y]" or
- "all [members of group y] or none of [members of group y]" - no other product has this feature
- Automatically fills the schedule based on user preferences, role/event requirements, restrictions, absences - evens out usage frequency automatically
- User defined Look-back period allows SmartRoster to consider previous schedules (as far back as desired) when building the current schedule, a feature pioneered by SmartRoster!
- Define complex event patterns (no limit on complexity)
- Pre-assign individuals according to complex patterns
- Selectively schedule a subset of roles and/or events and/or people

Reporting

- Build-in report previewer - MS Word® or equivalent not required!
- Provides a rich collection of report formats including: schedules, address-book or lists, rosters, inventory, address and reminder labels, absences, analysis of usage frequency
- All reports can be exported to MS Word® (or equivalent), or exported in adobe PDF format for easy printing or publishing to the web - as easy as a single click!
- Attendance monitoring and reporting - record "after the fact" who actually performed their tasks, and reasons for non-attendance

Data access and integrity

- Stores all data in a single tiny file which can be encrypted for maximum security - one file, one file extension, nothing else to consider - and easy to email or backup *exclusive to SmartRoster
- Import and export your personnel data easily in industry standard tab-delimited format
- Auto-save and backup-reminder options reduce the likelihood of accidental data loss