Asset-Based Field Service

The Convergence of the Physical and the Digital

Introduction

Twenty years ago, the buzz everywhere was about how businesses were being transformed. In fact, one of the biggest buzzwords hitting newswires and feeds was our shift to the information age, from a manufacturing-focused economy to one being retooled to be more services focused that would use information as fuel to drive organizations forward. Although 20 years may appear to be lifetime for some, it’s a relatively short timeframe when you consider how many lines of business have been transformed by this paradigm shift.

During this time, manufacturing has been optimized and related supply chains have been transformed for enormous efficiency. Industries such as telecommunications went through their own “convergence” through mergers and acquisitions as new business models required a wider product portfolio as they evolved from a strict focus on telephony to include mobile, entertainment, Internet, and more. Retail reinvented itself too, with point-of-sale inventory management and predictive replenishment modeling to reduce waste and remain agile. And while all this was happening other changes were unfolding to support this new information age, such as consolidation in business intelligence, ERP, and customer experience technologies to help organizations successfully move along this transformation.

Field service today

Here we are 20 years later in a new a digital world where data and information drives everything from the advertisements we see on the websites we visit, to the directions on GPS devices in our cars. And yet, despite having advanced digital capabilities managing everything from our business pipelines, to financial forecasts, marketing recommendations, and more, service has primarily remained unchanged. Up until now it has remained customer initiated. The proliferation of mobile devices has increasingly become a source of contention in the boardroom with new digital customers who have different expectations not only with regard to service, but with how they interact with brands and organizations entirely.
The rise of the digital age and the Experience Economy will continue to deliver innovations across every aspect of our lives and economy. Customers are not only willingly providing a tremendous amount of information about their behaviors and preferences, they are now using connected assets that transmit data to service providers and manufacturers. This has resulted in the convergence of the physical and digital, which will create new opportunities for Field Service organizations.

**This creates new challenges**

What is the new normal for Field Service and what are the implications of these challenges? What needs to change in order for companies to compete and win? Four challenges rise to the top when you consider what Field Service leaders are facing today.

1. **Mastering complexity in service and Field Service** – This includes providing a new range of tools to digitize everything along the customer journey. It includes a connection across CX applications, but more importantly for Field Service, a connection between front and back office applications to provide mobile workers with key insights into information about supply chains as well as access to ERP applications in order to initiate invoicing, access accounts, and more.

2. **Everything is connected** – The idea that Field Service organizations can operate as they did in the past is over. Gone are the days when customers will accept the old break/fix model which involved customers being the initiators of Field Service engagements. A connected world means connected assets, which provide a tremendous amount of data that gives Field Service organizations the ability to proactively manage assets before a customer even recognizes there might be a problem.

3. **Keeping employees and customers engaged and informed** – Transparency might feel like an overused term but when we talk about the Field Service organizations of tomorrow, transparency will become an expectation. Customers expect visibility and immediacy and employees are no different. Mobile tools that provide visibility into the mobile workforce and that assist with collaboration and knowledge transfer will be key to transformation.

4. **Delivering on growth demands** – Digital transformation comes with benefits too, especially in the areas of helping a once heavy cost center become a more agile revenue-generating line of business. Connecting front and back office applications will finally provide the only in-person face of a business a means to deliver on all customer requests.
It’s clear from an organization’s perspective that customers now expect excellence. Field Service organizations also need to address employee expectations, more specifically how they will leverage technology to help the mobile workforce do their job better. Internal challenges also play a pivotal role slowing change in organizations that are reluctant to change.

Although we may not be able to anticipate a customer’s view toward our organization, we can be mindful of the assets they have under our management and how we deliver based on our service level agreements. We do that by paying attention and constantly listening and adapting to the digital signals captured from these connected devices in order to assess service needs and proactively fix issues before they become problems—using a data-first approach. These assets are transmitting data continuously without human intervention. And it’s up to service providers to collect, understand, and most importantly act upon that data.

But that’s easier said than done when Field Service leaders:

- Have difficulty delivering a total view of the field to the entire business and customers
- Can’t predict, respond, and proactively manage customer assets
- Don’t have the tools in place to empower mobile resources to resolve problems quickly
- Are not able to intelligently automate and schedule the mobile workforce
- Are plagued with disconnects between front and back office applications

Notes from the field: Virgin Media

Through advanced Field Service collaboration capabilities, Virgin Media dramatically improved their internal business processes, achieving:

- A 75% reduction in calls
- Reduced SMS usage
- Improved morale
- Higher productivity

What stands in your way

Disconnected systems and processes
Outdated and heavily customized technology
Inefficiencies caused by siloed knowledge and expertise
Empowered customers that are innovators
Imagine if you could transform your business and Field Service organization to redefine Field Service from an inbound break/fix model into a line of business that allows you to serve customers in their immediate time of need, both quickly and efficiently. Can you see a world in which you are able to delight customers and inspire loyalty with a level of service that puts the customer at the center of every service interaction in real time? How shifting your line of business from being a cost center into a key revenue generator?

Consider the impact your organization can make when you retool your operations to connect the digital and physical world, ensuring accuracy, consistency, and efficiency— all while leveraging data to deliver on customers’ ever-increasing expectations.

Andy Carter
Head of Business Process Improvement,
Morrison Utility Systems

“The system was paid back within a year. It is something we show our clients and potential clients. We feel it gives us a competitive advantage.”

These are the ideas that will drive business success in our new connected world.

Consider the possibilities

- Work in real time to react quickly in any situation
- Proactively manage assets using IoT and AI
- Empower your workforce with advanced mobile tools
- Leverage proprietary time-based, predictive and self-learning scheduling and routing
- Connect field to supply chains, inventory, contracts, and billing
Key success indicators for today’s service organizations

When you have the tools and technology to effectively manage assets under management, and modernize your mobile workforce, you’re able to redefine what service means and build even stronger relationships with your customers.

Deliver a total view of the field to your entire business and customers

Empower your mobile resources to work faster and more accurately

Close the loop on service by allowing your mobile workforce to better serve customers

Predict, respond and proactively manage your customer assets

Intelligently automate and schedule any mobile workforce

Notes from the field: Cisco
Cisco utilizes approximately 6,000 third-party Field Service contractors across every modern country in the world. Using Oracle Field Service, they were able to get all 6,000 contractors implemented, trained, and fully productive in under three months—accomplishing a 100% improvement in SLA monitoring.
Today, the Experience Economy drives every customer interaction, including those in Field Service—and it’s up to organizations to keep up, or risk falling behind. That starts by putting the customer at the center of every experience and meeting and exceeding customer needs at every moment. Achieving that level of engagement requires more efficient and automated processes at every step—all while still maintaining a human touch. It requires a deeper relationship with customers and prospects, and the same level of service at every touchpoint. Oracle offers the tools to make that happen—connecting data, intelligence, and experiences to build a customer experience that stands out.

Notes from the field: BSH

The largest manufacturer of home appliances in Europe, BSH oversees 20 million customer calls every year, across 48 countries worldwide. Their 5,000 technicians take on six million repairs a year.

Oracle Field Service has helped BSH introduce a more efficient workflow that allows their technicians to take on more jobs per day. In the UK, for example, technicians were able to get through an average of 7.2 repairs a day prior to Oracle Field Service. Now, with the help of Oracle, that number is up to eight repairs a day, a 10% increase in productivity.

Learn more about automating and optimizing with advanced Field Service management

Four keys to success

- Connect unlimited data across the customer lifecycle
- In-the-moment intelligence for adaptive real-time experiences
- Authentic, personalized interactions across channels
- Easy-to-use, scalable, reliable, and secure technology