



[A Special Edition]

Field Technologies

OPTIMIZE FIELD WORKERS, SERVICE & ASSETS



[How Real Users Are Leveraging Mobile Technologies]

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Field Service Software

The breadth of software solutions available for companies today is incredible. Whatever the process you're striving to automate, there is a software for you. What's even more impressive are the strides that have been made to make these solutions more attainable and affordable for companies to deploy

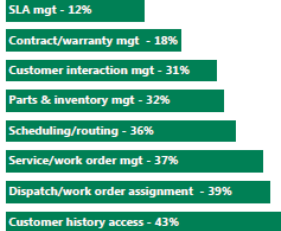
than ever before. More end users than ever are turning to cloud based solutions. In fact, data from a study conducted by research organization Strategies For Growth found that 67% of respondents planning to invest in mobile tools in the next 12 months are considering cloud computing.

Is your company's mobile workforce currently armed with any type of automation software?

Yes - 45%

No - 55%

What functionality does your company's current software provide?



Top 10 Features And Functionality

1. Ability to integrate with back-office systems
2. Ability to update remotely
3. Customizable
4. Ability to work untethered (w/o wireless connectivity)
5. Real-time data transfer
6. Scalability
7. Ability to support multiple goals/functions
8. Rapid deployment framework
9. Multi-platform support
10. SaaS/cloud-based



"Software Deployment Missteps You Can Avoid."

When we set out to deploy a mobile workforce optimization solution a few years ago, we made a number of missteps with our initial deployment. Luckily, we were able to learn from our own mistakes and turn things around to the tune of a 14% increase in field tech productivity. Here are some of the important lessons we learned.

Lesson #1: Don't Rush Your Technology Selection

Because of an impending billing system replacement, we were under some pressure to evaluate and roll out a new scheduling solution quickly. While we still did our due diligence in selecting the right vendors, it is best to avoid — if at all possible — putting yourself in a position where you're racing against the clock because that rush contributed to the other lessons we learned throughout the deployment.

Lesson #2: Speak The Same Language, Fully Understand The Solution

As we began our deployment, we quickly realized that there was much that was getting lost in translation. We had to work with the software vendor to get all the data entered into the software it would need to work effectively — including a profile for all technicians (technician names, skill sets, schedules, certifications, etc.) and information about each type of job they perform (type of job, average length of each job, etc.). The good news is that once the solution was set up, it would automatically schedule the most appropriate technician for the job based on their capabilities, availability, and the location of other jobs in their schedule. The bad news is that we made the initial rollout a bit more complicated than it needed to be because our terminology was so vastly different than the vendor's. We were implementing an advanced technology and we were coming from a manual, paper-based world. We just didn't understand their language. For example, we measure jobs in points (i.e.

this job takes one hour, which equates to 4 points) where the vendor measured jobs in minutes. While this may seem like a minor difference, it becomes challenging when many small differences all add up — and it was compounded by our pressure to get the system in place quickly.

Lesson #3: Create Employee Buy-in, Prepare For Culture Change

Not homing in on the feedback of the field representatives during the preparation and rollout of the solution had a direct impact on its effectiveness. We did a fine job of training the field techs on how to read and use the materials that were coming out of the software, but we didn't do a good job of teaching them the why behind the whole project — and that is what led to their lack of adoption. We needed to work with them more one-on-one and address their concerns individually. We knew the solution we rolled out was the most effective tool we could have chosen, but we needed to spend more time making the field workers see that.

It's important to remember that when you're introducing a technology like this into your organization, you may see the benefits loud and clear and have a perfect vision of the good it can do for your company — but your employees may not. You have to show them. We didn't think of this project as a culture change from the beginning, but our employees did. If we'd have known we were changing the entire culture, we'd have communicated differently with our employees than we did.

Weldon Feigbtner,
regional VP, Knology



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