

CAPABILITY DEEP DIVE

From Intelligent Dispatch to Rapid Reimbursement

Automate Field Service to Simplify and Leverage Your Contracted Workforce





The [shortage of skilled field technicians](#) has been plaguing service-centric companies for over a decade, with the situation continuing to intensify. Organizations often struggle to recruit and retain enough skilled field workers to meet customer demand. Third-party contractors can help supplement their workforces -- or organizations may opt for contractors entirely. [Modern field service management software](#) helps manage the new dimensions of the service-centric workforce.

A recent [TSIA benchmark study](#) revealed that 30% of the organizations surveyed outsource the entire field service operation, 62% partially outsource service, and 11% use no contractors. When asked why they outsource work to contractors, the top answers were:



To increase **geographic coverage** (93%)



Quickly adjust to **fluctuating workloads** (71%)



Increase **service availability** (64%)



Reduce **labor costs** (50%)

The [use of contractors](#) solves many issues, but it can also trigger a wide range of other challenges, such as how to efficiently schedule and dispatch contractors. Managing contractor payments is another challenge, and one that must be resolved to keep contractors pleased with arrangements and willing to keep accepting assignments.

The extra work involved in [managing a blended workforce](#) can be a high hurdle for companies already stretched beyond capacity. Skeptics may contend that service companies are trading one set of complications for another one. This can be true — if the organization is attempting to use manual systems or outdated legacy solutions to manage contractor relationships. Risks can certainly offset benefits if the organization doesn't take precautions.

With the right software in place, contractor relationships are easy to embrace as part of the day-to-day routine of [scheduling/dispatch](#) and reimbursement. ServicePower's leading AI-powered field service management platform for enterprise organizations helps organizations manage contracted and employed workforces, providing solutions that make scheduling, dispatching, and rapid reimbursement of third-party contractors simple.

The pressure service companies face

The [Service Council reports](#) that the workforce and talent shortage is the top external factor having a significant impact on service businesses. The council's [Voice of the Engineer Study](#) points out that nearly half (49%) of surveyed field technicians say they do not plan to stay in the industry. Of those leaving, half say they will do so within three years.

Over 150,000 positions for general maintenance and repair workers are open in the US today, according to the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#), and tens of thousands more are vacant in Europe. While the Silver Tsunami is often blamed for the exodus of field service workers, [research indicates](#) many service workers in their 30s-50s are leaving traditional workplace roles to opt for independent contractor positions, citing the flexibility and reduced stress as their motivation.

61%

The annual [State of Independence research](#) shows that in 2024, 61% of contractors said **working independently was their choice completely**, while only 10% said it was a result of factors beyond their control, and 27% said it was a combination of both.

The number of full-time and part-time independent service professionals, people who provide services to businesses, increased 14% in 2024 to 11.2 million, and is up 50% since 2020, [MBO Partners](#) says.

These numbers convey that the issues are complex, have a high impact, and are not likely to lessen soon. If you have a blended workforce or are considering a blended workforce strategy, take time to further research your options.





More statistics on the technician shortage and blended workforces.



36%

According to the [Contingent Labor Imperative Report](#), the average contingent (non-permanent) labor share of enterprise workforces is expected to increase from 28% today to 33% in 18 months and 36% in five years.



\$4,129

[Business News Daily](#) reports that many companies are having trouble finding qualified candidates to fill open positions, and this can be costly. The average job vacancy costs an employer \$4,129 over 42 days.



\$8.5 trillion

A recent report by global consulting firm, [Korn Ferry](#), finds that by 2030, more than 85 million jobs will go unfilled because there aren't enough skilled people to take them. Left unchecked, in 2030 that talent shortage could result in about \$8.5 trillion in unrealized annual revenues.



71%

[Industry Today](#) reports that 71% of companies who outsource field service say it allows them to quickly adjust to fluctuating workloads.



Building a blended workforce

Service organizations may recognize that a blended workforce model has value but wonder how to make the transition. Because [service technicians are an extension of your brand](#) and have front-line exposure to customers, it is essential that the service engineers are professional, well informed about the products and your services, and well-trained on your processes, such as how to check for parts availability, confirm a service level agreement, arrange for follow up calls, or sell a replacement or upgrade unit while on the jobsite.

For example, will the contractor be allowed to accept payments from customers? Access customer account information? Special order replacement

parts? There are hundreds of small but important process details the contractor will need to know — just as if you were onboarding an employee. But, because the contractor is not an employee, there will likely be some different procedures, guardrails protecting customer data, and restrictions because of legal liabilities. Noncompete and nondisclosure agreements may be needed. All of these [procedural nuances](#) need to be well established before the technician is sent on a first visit to a customer's site. You don't want the technician to alienate customers by fumbling the assignment, admitting uncertainty about procedures, or appearing to be unfamiliar with the products. Thorough training should take care of those issues.

Putting in the effort will pay off

[IDC](#) reinforces the overall benefits of leveraging contractors, saying, “Acceleration of blended service workforce is required to meet dynamic needs of the service operation. Service demand can wildly fluctuate depending on seasonality, new product introduction, customer expectations, and macro disruptions such as current labor shortages. The ability to leverage a flexible workforce that incorporates a variety of field service resources, both internal and third party, can ensure customer issues get resolved efficiently, effectively, on time, and profitably.”

After this endorsement, though, the IDC whitepaper goes on to discuss the hurdles and shares the top challenges service companies named in a recent survey. Companies named costs (47.3%), visibility in

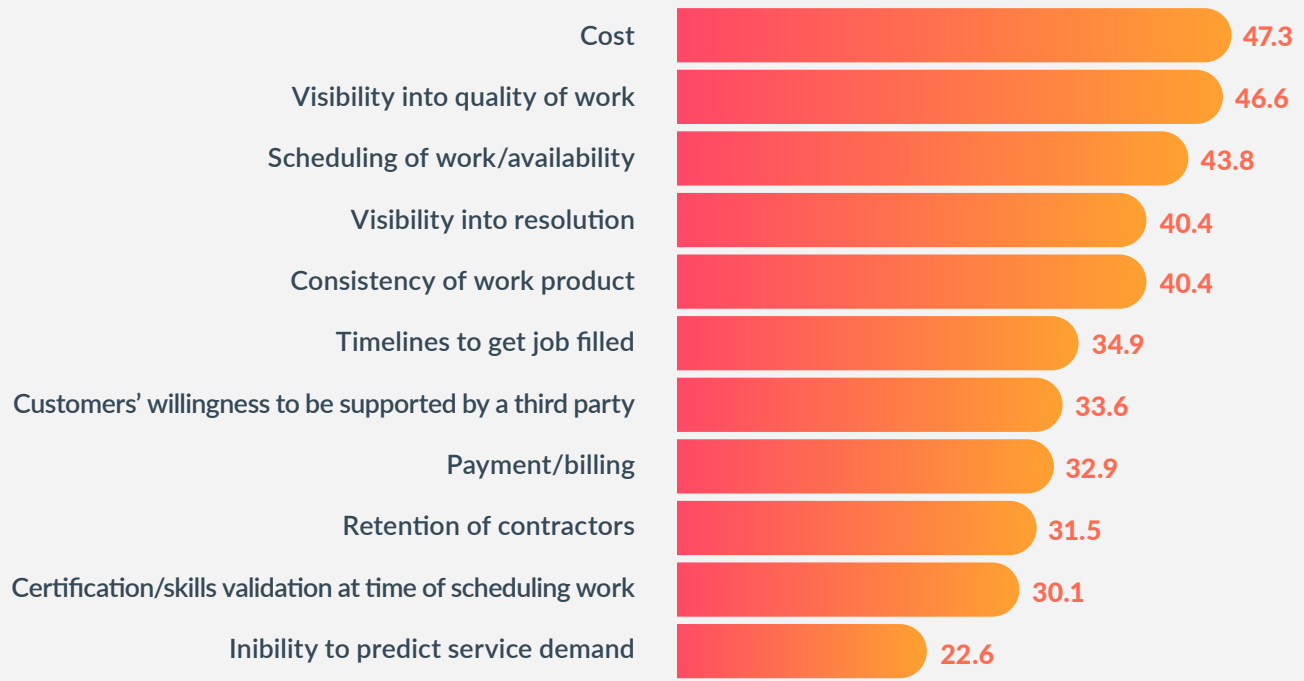
the quality of work (46.6%), and scheduling of work/availability (43.8%) as top concerns.

Scheduling and dispatch are naturally problematic because there may be lack of visibility into the contractor’s schedule and availability. Without technology to help, the dispatcher could spend considerable [back-and-forth time](#) trying to arrange a single dispatch.

Processing reimbursement is also a challenge. Manual processes are often tedious and time consuming. Duplications can creep into the system along with errors. When contractors aren’t paid in a timely fashion they are less likely to accept further work — negating the whole purpose of using contractors.

Top Challenges to Be Addressed as Blended Workforce Deliver Support

Q You noted you leverage third parties in your field workforce mix. What are the top challenges of managing third parties?



(% of respondents)

Here's a closer look at how software can help you manage your contractor workforce

Rather than muddling along with frustrating manual systems or outdated solutions, you can turn to software specifically built for managing contractor relationships. The best solutions automate, streamline, speed, and help reinforce relationships with customers and contractors.



Automatic dispatch. Field workers are assigned to jobs based on ranking criteria, such as eligibility, skills, location, preferred relationships, contract costs, and real-time field status updates on in-progress jobs.



Real-time updates. Dashboards help monitor in-progress jobs and contractor availability in real-time so changes to the schedule can be made throughout the day.



Dynamic adjustment. For blended workforces, assignments of in-house and contractor technicians can be adjusted throughout the day to balance the workloads and ensure service requests are completed as quickly as possible.



Configurable. A rules-based engine based on your business requirements helps drive how jobs are assigned to contractors. For greater flexibility, you can tailor these rules to reflect your business priorities.



Comprehensive reporting. You receive [detailed reporting and analytics](#). You can monitor key performance indicators for the departments as well as the performance of individual contractors. The work of contractors is included in reporting for realistic team assessments.



Matchmaking. Advanced contractor management solutions allow you to rank contractors based on performance, response times, rejection rates, or other criteria, so the system taps the preferred contractors first. If the first-contacted servicer doesn't respond or rejects the job, the system automatically moves on to the next preferred contractor. You also can temporarily pause a contractor for poor performance or while they are learning systems, building skills, or improving their merit after a poor customer review.



Delight customers. Customers with service requests will [appreciate the prompt assignment](#) of service technicians so the job can be resolved efficiently.



Process claims quickly. An advanced solution can [automate processing claims](#), greatly speeding the time to completion. It will verify that the claim matches a job assignment by date, customer, and service request. This automation eliminates tedious steps, while ensuring the claims, whether in warranty or out, are processed properly.



Contractor reimbursement. A payment adjudication tool enables rapid reimbursement, matching contractor assignments and contractor invoices, helping you to build loyalty with your field contractor network, as servicers appreciate quick payment for their services. By authenticating that invoices match the work completed, duplication is avoided, as are accidental errors or even intentional fraud.



ServicePower Dispatch

This solution is built specifically for managing the dispatch of your crews and third-party contractors. It ensures only the most qualified contractors are dispatched to each service request by automatically assigning jobs based on your unique criteria. You can set priorities for dispatch criteria, such as which field resources should be assigned to the most complex jobs or service requests for certain products. The solution helps to streamline and dynamically adjust and dispatch workers, using seamless integration to your service management solution. You can scale operations as demand changes, up or down.



ServicePower Contractor Reimbursement

ServicePower Contractor Reimbursement is a real-time, automatic payment adjudication tool with built-in validation, auditing, and invoicing. It enables [rapid reimbursement](#), helping you to build loyalty with your field contractor network.



ServicePower HUB.

This application is a valuable tool that allows third-party, independent servicers to connect with service organizations that want to supplement their workforce or outsource it. The tool allows servicers to view potential jobs and select ones they choose to accept. Then, the application provides visibility on job status for both stakeholders.

CUSTOMERS REPORT:

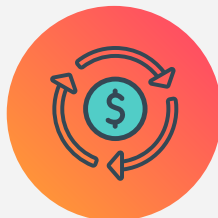
80%

increase in automation resulting
in **faster payment approval**



25%

reduction in overall
payment cycle time



50%

increase in **payment**
processing efficiency





The wrap up

With the pressing shortage of skilled technicians, organizations are turning to contractors to either supplement their existing teams or build 100% third-party technician teams. No matter whether they are employing a few contractors on-demand or a team of hundreds or thousands, the system for dispatching and reimbursing contractors can be cumbersome if only manual processes are in place.

Advanced technology, such as ServicePower offers, makes the contracted and blended workforces simpler to manage as well as more efficient and effective. You receive the specialized functionality you need to dispatch the right field resource to

the right job and process payments quickly, while minimizing risks. Automation makes the entire dispatch-reimburse cycle streamlined.

Data and analyst insights indicate that workforce challenges are likely to continue. If you have not put a system in place yet to manage contractors, now is a good time to consider the option. Acting now will help you be prepared for future surges in demand. Avoid the hassles of trying to manage contractors using only simple spreadsheets or legacy solutions. Tools built especially for this unique situation are key to success.

As a global leader in field service management, our solutions are designed and built with a focus on providing your customers with an exceptional experience, while delivering operational efficiencies and digital transformation capabilities. Our secure and flexible solutions provide organizations with the ability to optimally manage their workforces, while increasing revenue, improving the customer experience, and reducing costs.

“ServicePower has been a game changer for us through the years. Its automated AI-powered scheduling improves our workforce productivity and customer satisfaction daily, with every customer interaction, resulting in increased profitability for Siemens.”

- Pre-Job Process Owner, Siemens

Contact us today:

servicepower.com



**Our customers stay with us for the long haul – 12 years on average –
56% higher than the industry average.**

