

# Overcoming the Technician Talent Shortage in Field Service Management

A Playbook for Winning Today's Workforce Challenges



Many organizations face a plethora of changing and evolving workforce-related challenges which include an aging and retiring workforce, increasing demand for skilled labor, and fewer people entering the field service industry. Over 70% of field service companies say they are experiencing a skills shortage gap. Meanwhile, various global health situations and economic instability also add to the fluctuating workforce challenges.

Forward-thinking organizations are deploying strategies – and cutting-edge field service management technology – to overcome the technician talent shortage in field service management. It is critical for organizations to provide high-quality service to customers and their evolving workforces.

The following are five strategic best practices organizations can use as a guide to win the workforce challenge and assuage any concerns. Armed with these insights, organizations can remain innovative, agile, and competitive in the face of a shifting field service workforce. Even with the challenges, the time is now for field service organizations to prepare and position themselves for success and growth.



**“Over 70% of field service companies say they are experiencing a skills shortage gap”**



# 1

## Extend Your Workforce

The high demand for field work and a gap in talent from the shrinking workforce mean that these positions will continue to be hard to fill. To obviate the need for focusing solely on recruiting full-time in-house field technicians, many companies are deploying a “blended” or “hybrid” workforce that includes both employees and contractors.

The use of network contractors allows companies to expand their workforce and remain agile; for example, your organization can tap into this stand-by workforce as seasonal work demands shift. 71% of companies who outsource field service technicians say it allows them to quickly adjust to fluctuating workloads<sup>1</sup>.

Deploying the right field service management (FSM) software that integrates a blended workforce promotes greater agility and management. At the end of the day, customers don't care if it is a full-time employee or a contractor on the service call as long the job is completed and it is a great customer experience. Quality of work is critical to field service excellence, according to a recent IDC report<sup>2</sup>, because customers evaluate which organizations will retain their business based on service and work quality.

77%  
of field service  
organizations are  
using freelancers  
or contractors to  
handle field technician  
shortages.

*Source: Blumberg Advisory Group and  
Field Service Insights*



1. The future of field service staffing. <https://fieldnation.com/resources/field-service-staffing>  
2. Field Service Excellence Drives Enhanced Customer Experiences and Outcomes, IDC white paper, October 22

## 2

## Improve Technician Productivity

Due to the pandemic and economic fluctuations, improved first-time fix rates and fewer truck rolls have become important KPIs for companies. Improved inventory tracking, customer equipment service history, efficient technician selection and routing, and better communication between dispatch and the field technician are all strategies to increase first-time fix rates.

As fuel costs rise, your organization can deploy field service management software and Artificial Intelligence (AI) to better enable field techs to achieve these important KPIs. These efforts can also augment sustainability initiatives by reducing your organization's carbon footprint, driving fewer miles, and consuming less fuel, while improving productivity.

Augmented Reality (AR) superimposes 3D visualization over real-world objects and can be used to remotely diagnose and triage equipment

problems. With remote triage technology powered by AR, technicians see exactly what the customer is seeing to better understand the space and layout of the product at hand. This improves productivity even if the technician is not physically at the service site. Technicians can communicate with customers visually, employing AR pointers and markers to highlight specific parts of the equipment or system and guide the consumer. Leading companies are tapping into AR technology to remotely troubleshoot issues while offering end-customers an exceptional experience, while also improving productivity.



By 2025, over 50% of **field service management deployments will include mobile AR collaboration and knowledge-sharing tools**, compared to less than 10% in 2019.

Source: <https://dsnews.com/daily-dose/03-14-2022/field-services-trends-year>

## 3

## Enhance The Technician Experience

Improving employee and contractor workforce satisfaction and retention is another critical initiative for field service organizations who are managing these workers separately or as a blended workforce. Happy workers usually stay in their jobs, and that's obviously important in addressing talent shortages.

By providing the support and modern technology technicians need to better perform their jobs, technician satisfaction improves. They are empowered to use their institutional knowledge of products, parts, and routes to respond in real-time to problems in the field.

Field service management software empowers businesses to efficiently select, schedule, and dispatch the right field technician workforce. Invest in an integrated solution that is mobile-enabled, built for agility and scale, and is easy to adopt by field technicians.

For non-employees, deploying modern tools (such as mobile and innovative technology) can help contracted field technicians feel empowered, perform their job better, and increase job satisfaction. Modern FSM technology also helps contractors get paid faster, which makes them happier and more inclined to keep working with you.

Your company should make the effort to reach out to its contractor workforce for continuous input. Listen to feedback from field teams, hold informational meetings, and learn what needs improvement, and

make it easy for field technicians to share their suggestions. Asking independent contractors about their perspectives and opinions makes them feel validated and can provide perspectives on what pain points your clients and contract field technicians are feeling. In short, the happier the workforce is, the better worker engagement and retention will be.



## 4

## Deploy More Proactive Initiatives

Fewer field technicians have amplified the need for organizations to be more proactive in strategically deploying service calls. Predictive maintenance is an approach where the field service business proactively improves its customer experience and customer retention rates, while increasing profitability.

IoT technology can be used to remotely monitor equipment. IoT devices can relay critical real-time data to field technicians who can properly diagnose what is needed. This improves field technician knowledge of the service call and helps them improve efficiency. In short, more proactive strategies can aid your company to do more with fewer field technicians.



**“Predictive maintenance... improves customer experience and customer retention rates, while increasing profitability.”**



# 45%

According to research on the current state of AI in field service, up to 45% of organizations are planning to deploy AI within their organizations within the next 2-4 years. However, the most forward-thinking business leaders (up to 20%) are taking immediate action to deploy AI in the very near future.

## 5

## Deploy Customer Self-Service Portals

Modern organizations realize the advantage of customer-focused strategies, which include customer self-service portals. Customer self-service portals enable customers to schedule, reschedule, and cancel their own appointments, find answers, and check the status of scheduled field technicians.

Meanwhile, your business can reduce the number of inbound calls to the call center and decrease the need to hire additional staff. The better the customer experience, the greater chance that these customers remain long-tail customers, and in some cases, share their positive experiences with other potential new customers. This “customer-first” strategy empowers the customers while providing multiple benefits to the business. An added benefit? Today’s consumers generally want self-service, and portals are a great way to provide it.

5%

Overall, customer satisfaction and customer retention help drive field service business profitability; in fact, a 5% increase in customer retention can potentially increase company revenue by 25-95%, according to HubSpot Research.



# Adapting To The Technician Talent Shortage



Field service organizations that are proactively deploying these strategies are positioning themselves to remain competitive and do more with less. As a result, these companies are also tapping into a myriad of return-on-investment benefits while overcoming the talent shortage. These strategies empower organizations to maximize the efficiency of their workforce while improving the customer experience, workforce retention, and sustainability efforts, while also driving revenue and improving operational efficiency.

ServicePower's innovative integrated field service management software is one of the industry's leading solutions and is uniquely designed to help companies manage their field service workforces – even blended workforces of employees and contractors. The field technician talent shortage and talent gap doesn't need to hold you back or hold back growth when you have the right strategies and field service management technology partner in place.

Some of the key benefits of deploying the ServicePower field service management technology realized by its customers include:





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 increase revenue, improving the customer experience, and reducing costs.

“With ServicePower, we have the best providers available when our customers need them, and continually drive improvement in our network through AI-based logic and real-time scheduling and warranty processing.”

- Field Service Operations and Strategy, LG Electronics USA

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

