



# 7 Steps to Guide Your Field Service Technology Purchase

Field service leaders across industries are looking for ways to modernize and streamline their service organizations. With increasingly complex service lifecycles, ambitious revenue models, and the proliferation of mobile—technology solutions can help optimize end-to-end field service operations. In fact, The Service Council found that 84% of service executives have little or no reservations about using a cloud-based offering to run their Field Service operations<sup>1</sup>.

If your service organization has not purchased software recently, or you could simply use some tips for navigating the buying process, this guide is a great place to start. Use the questions and ideas below to drive your research and evaluation process. The best practices in this guide come from working with hundreds of successful buyers to help you:

- 1 Understand modern field service solutions
- 2 Get to know each solution provider
- 3 Do a self-assessment
- 4 Think through internal processes and stakeholders
- 5 Evaluate field service solution capabilities
- 6 Engage IT: integrations, reliability and security
- 7 Consider total cost of ownership and return on investment

## GUIDE LEGEND



Buyer's Tip



Question to Ask



Field Service Trend



Project Management Tip

<sup>1</sup> The Service Council, "5 Things to Consider When Evaluating FSM In the Cloud," May 2013





## STEP ONE: UNDERSTAND MODERN FIELD SERVICE SOLUTIONS

Often, other departments get new technology and systems before field service. Once it's your turn, make the most of it by knowing what the latest technology offers. Modern field service tools enable you to have a holistic view of field service management—connecting and automating everything from scheduling and work order management to contracts, entitlements, warranties and business analytics. You may also benefit from connecting field service to other departments from sales and manufacturing to marketing and IT. This view across your organization can empower you to transform your entire model to deliver flawless field service and delight your customers.

### Mobile Access that Works in the Field

With the rapid rise of tablets and smartphones, service technicians can access all of the information they need on the go—in a way that's simple to learn and use. Here are our top three things to look for with regards to mobile capability:

- Mobile tools should provide a full range of functionality, even while offline for extended periods of time, so your techs can use them in virtually any work environment.
- Apps designed for tablets and phones or laptops separately make the most of each type of device.
- Calendars, work order details, parts pricing lookups, integrated service reports and more should be designed for mobile field service professionals.

### Agile Operations

When you start to combine dashboards with scheduling optimization, social tools and real-time data, you'll find that it's easier to adapt and continuously improve. Here are our top three things to look for with regards to agility:

- Real-time reporting tools and dashboards help you identify and fix problems quickly.
- Technology that connects your field team to experts and information can improve first time fix rates (FTFR).
- Status confirmations, scheduling and location tracking can minimize calls to dispatch.

### Easy-to-use Tools

The easier your tools are to use, the more likely your staff is to adopt them. Modern field service software focuses on making everyone more productive and helping you measure improvements. Here are our top three things to look for with regards to ease of use:

- An interface designed for end-to-end management of field service delivery can drastically improve productivity while reducing warranty leakage.
- Software in the cloud provides a more economical adoption model, simplicity and extensibility.
- Implementation in a reasonable time frame with top-notch professional services should be included.

Nine countries  
have over

50%

of their population using smartphones in 2014. US, UK, Japan, Norway, Sweden, Finland, the Netherlands, South Korea, and Australia.

Source: eMarketer, June 2014 <http://bit.ly/1uORPEX>



## STEP TWO: GET TO KNOW EACH SOLUTION PROVIDER

Learning more about the company you will partner with is critical to a successful outcome. Here are some questions you should consider when evaluating potential technology providers.

### Does the company have extensive experience in field service software?

- How much of their business is focused exclusively on field service?

### Have they shown that they can implement and deliver?

### Do they have other reference customers in your industry?

- Are they able to share success stories in your industry?
- Do they have customer metrics on user adoption?

### Are they stable and growing?

- Have they been in existence for at least 5 years?
- Are they public or private? If private- who are their investors?
- Is the company financially stable?

### Are they easy to do business with?

- Will you have a dedicated account manager, clear points of contact, and a positive overall experience?
- How easy is it to communicate with them?
- Do they have a customer success group?
- Do they include customer input in their solution roadmap?

### Are they contributing to thought leadership in the space through conferences, user groups, or other means?

### Are they rated well in the most recent Gartner Magic Quadrant for Field Service Management?

### Do they have any partnerships with other software products I use?

### Do they have a product roadmap and ongoing commitment to enhancing their products?



## STEP THREE: SELF-ASSESSMENT

Knowing the key issues and business goals that are causing you to evaluate a field service management solution will help you understand what to look for in a solution. This will also help you be prepared to make a business case for your preferred solution at a later time.

### Make some notes:

- What issues are causing your organization to make a change?
- What are your field service goals? (Improving FTFR, MTTR, etc.?)
- What are your business goals? (Improving customer satisfaction, reduce service costs, etc.)
- Is there any benchmark data you can gather?
- Do you have a well documented service delivery process?



## STEP FOUR: THINK THROUGH INTERNAL PROCESSES AND STAKEHOLDERS

When initiating an enterprise solution purchase, it's helpful to identify key participants as well as roadblocks in advance to avoid potential setbacks.

### Build an evaluation plan

Create an evaluation plan to capture all the steps you know you will need to go through with the stakeholders in your firm, and agree to them jointly with your preferred solution partner. You can put the onus on the sales representative you are working with to take ownership of this task, but your participation will be key to your success.

### Make the business case

Once you are ready, leverage your preferred solution partner for help making the business case for the solution you want to purchase. If you need help putting together a document or presentation, they may be able to provide the proof points required. Also, see Step 7 in this document on TCO and ROI.

### WHO SHOULD I GET INVOLVED?

- **IT** – Check on compliance with internal standards; what impact a service solution might have on other internal solutions; any approved implementation and/or integration partners to use
- **Executive** – Ask to sponsor and tie to business goals; find out who needs to approve a potential project and solution implementation
- **Finance** – Obtain budget, give project approval and request an ROI model
- **Sales** – Explore how service history can impact upsell opportunities
- **Marketing** – Benefit from captured competitive insights during on-site service calls
- **Extended service team** - Help reviewing proposed solutions for the right fit
- **Legal** – Reviews and executes contracts
- **Procurement**- What are our internal RFP processes and purchasing guidelines

Event	Date	Team Responsible	Action(s)
Initial presentation	28 <sup>th</sup> March	X	KA/DH/JW/AL
Follow up Demo(s)	18 <sup>th</sup> April	X	DH/KA
Workshop session	W/C 9 <sup>th</sup> May	SMAX/X	DH/KA/SG/JW/AL
30 minute demo to CIO	W/C 9 <sup>th</sup> May	SMAX	DH/KA/JW
Perform Statement of Works	W/C 16 <sup>th</sup> May	SMAX	KA/DH
Present SOW to Company X	+ 10 days	SMAX	KA/DH
Draw up business case for SMAX	By end May	X	JW/AL (X)
Main board discussion and ROI presentation	1 <sup>st</sup> June	X	X
Final approval from main board	+ 2 weeks	X	X
Send Legal agreements	W/C June 6 <sup>th</sup> /13 <sup>th</sup>	SMAX	KA/DH
Gain legal approval	Last week June	SMAX/X	SMAX/X
Contract Execution	End of June	SMAX/X	KA?
Project Kick off	July	SMAX	SMAX/X
Go Live	December	SMAX/X	SMAX
3 month check-in	March	SMAX	SMAX

An example evaluation plan



## STEP FIVE: EVALUATE FIELD SERVICE SOLUTION CAPABILITIES

A modern field service software solution offers you a wide array of capabilities that automate the entire service delivery process. In order to impact key measures of success like revenue growth or reductions in warranty leakage, it's important to have the right tools for the right members of your team. Here are some important capabilities to look for:

### Service Quoting

- Service Estimates & Quoting with Revision History
- Product & Service Price Books
- Track Actual against Estimates
- Configurable Service Quote Templates
- Reports & Dashboards

### Work Order Management

- Service Request & Work Order Execution
- Field Change Orders
- Multi-Tiered Service Entitlements
- Track Field Repairs, Scheduled Maintenance, Depot

### Repairs & Projects

- Auto-Entitlement Checks at Case, Work Order & Part

### Order Levels

- Integrated SLA Monitoring
- Service BOM or "As Maintained" Configuration & History
- Single & Multi Product Debrief
- Configurable Service Summary with Digital Signatures
- Pro-Forma Invoicing
- Reports & Dashboards

### Scheduling, Assignment & Dispatching

- Resource Capacity Based Booking Windows
- Queue & Technician Based Interactive Scheduling
- Rule Based, Auto-Assign & Dispatch Scheduling
- Interactive Scheduling with Dispatch Console
- Territory & Zone Management
- Workforce Management; Service Team, Resource & Shift

### Scheduling

- Automated Job Costing
- "One Click" Time Sheets
- Multi-Criteria Matching Rules
- Continuous Resource & Route Optimization Engine
- Reports & Dashboards

### Warranty & Service Contract

- Warranty & Service Contract Plans
- SLA (Service Level Agreement) Templates
- Included Service & Planned Maintenance Offerings
- Product & Service Price Books
- Line Level Pricing – Fixed, NTE, T&M,

### Usage/Consumption

- Pricing Policies & Exception Pricing Rules
- Contract Renewals Monitoring – Fixed & "Evergreen" Contracts
- Pro-Forma Billing
- Case, Work Order & Part Order Related History
- Reports & Dashboards

### Inventory "Spares" Management

- Configurable Rules Based Inventory Transactions
- Manage Serialized, Batch, Lot & Quantity Based Transactions
- Stocking Locations; Field Technicians, Forward Stock

### Locations, Depots

- Product Stock; Costing & Part Allocation
- Automated Replenishment Requests
- Substitute/Alternate Part Replacements
- Container & Kit Management
- Cycle Counts
- Reports & Dashboards

### Service Chain Management

- Returns or RMA Management
- Forward & Reverse Logistics Operations
- Full Service Chain Visibility with Complex Routing Rules
- Receive, Pick, Pack, Ship & Fulfillment Operations
- Depot Repair Management
- Substitute/Alternate Part Replacements
- Engineering Change Orders
- OEM Warranty Tracking
- Reports & Dashboards

## Mobile

- Mobile Apps for tablets, laptops and smartphones
- Store & forward "disconnected" field use
- Streamlined functionality from mobile devices designed for techs
- HTML5 for consistency and ease of deployment on any device
- Integrated signature capture

## Social Collaboration

- Customer Communities
- Partner Communities
- Vertical & Specialized Communities
- Social collaboration tools

## 360-Degree Customer View

- Account Management
- Contact Management
- Job Site Management
- Installed Base Management
- Reports & Dashboards



## STEP SIX: ENGAGE IT- INTEGRATIONS, RELIABILITY AND SECURITY

Your IT department is going to have a number of questions on their mind when you loop them into your field service software evaluation process. Here is an advance look at the questions they might want answers to:

### General System

- What is the overall architecture of the proposed solution (e.g. SaaS, onPremise, Both, Mobility)?
- What is the system uptime?
- What is the physical architecture of your firm's Data Center/Network?
- Can custom fields and objects be added to the solution without coding during or after implementation?
- How often are new releases available? Is there a cost for new releases?
- Does it support Single Sign On (SSO) and what methods are used?
- Does the vendor offer standard implementation packages and services beyond the initial implementation?

### Platform Security

- How is the data center and application secured?
- What audits are conducted against the site? how often? Please list certifications received.

- Does the application have a configurable password policy with expiration limit, minimum character, complexity, history, invalid login attempts, lockout period, password hint and other requirements?
- What types of access control are used by the application? Are roles defined within the application?
- Explain communication between the end user and the application, i.e. how are they secured?
- Do passwords and other sensitive data travel in an encrypted format before they are transmitted at all times?
- How does your system monitor user actions to detect and report unusual activity?
- Describe policies, practices and technology to support data privacy compliance.

### Integration

- Is there a standard integration framework?
- Does your solution integrate to CRM systems?
- Does your solution integrate to ERP or accounting systems?
- Does it connect to flat files, databases, APIs?
- Can the solution be accessed via web services?
- What about support for integration appliances?



## STEP SEVEN: CONSIDER TOTAL COST OF OWNERSHIP (TCO) AND RETURN ON INVESTMENT (ROI)

The last step in our guide offers the most insight into whether or not each solution makes fiscal sense for your business and provides the results you expect. This can also help you make your business case for your preferred solution.

### Considerations for TCO

- License costs
- Implementation and initial service costs
- Upgrade costs
- Customisation fees
- Data migration costs
- Training costs
- Costs of purchasing and/or maintaining hardware or software required (on-premise)
- Savings on replacing multiple systems with one new solution
- Savings from automating processes that are currently manual
- Savings from systems that integrate tightly
- The cost of doing nothing (opportunity cost)

### Tools to calculate ROI

Here are some areas you can consider evaluating to help determine whether you will see a return on your investment. Talk to your preferred solutions partner for help calculating ROI.

#### Service Revenue and Profitability Data

- Attach rate (upsell and cross-sell)
- Service contract leakage rate
- Days Sales Outstanding (cash flow)

#### Warranty Data

- Warranty leakage rate

#### Field Service Data

- Technician utilization rate
- SLA attainment rate
- First time fix rate (FTFR)
- Mean Time to Repair (MTTR)
- Technician Productivity

#### Spare Parts & Logistics Data

- Fill rate for RMA orders
- Spare parts shrinkage rate
- Inventory carry costs

The step you are taking to automate your field service organization is a step in the right direction. With this document as a guide, you can make the most of this opportunity to evaluate and select the field service management solution that is the best fit for your organization.