Introducing remote services into your digital transformation process
[6 benefits]

Remote services can be used in many different settings. The benefits of offering and using remote service assist with safety, reduce travel, enhance training, and set your company apart from the competition.

Improving Health and Safety

While health and safety are always important, the recent pandemic has added more definitions around what is required for being safe. One of the significant changes is the need to **reduce or remove face-to-face interactions for employees and customers.** Modern remote service tools, like wearables for Augmented Reality, greatly help in improving health and safety for both field workers and end customers.

Remote services that allow hands-free calling with the use of wearables like the RealWear HMT-1, quickly enhance workers ability to **move safely and promptly.** Workers can climb equipment, wear PPE and carry out tasks while on calls getting support or information without risking their safety.

Additionally, the **increased need for limited or zero-touch work** and reduced human contact is also enabled through remote calls on wearables, tablets, or smartphones. Furthermore, the mental health of remote workers can be checked-in on more regularly by supervisors and managers as technicians are dealing with the fatigue and uncertainty from the pandemic and solo work.

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Increasing Geographical Expansion Opportunities

The cost of sending technicians on-site for maintenance, troubleshooting or repairs can be prohibitive for some companies to expand geographically. The price for travel and accommodation of in-house experts doesn't always make the most sense for a company, nor does hiring and training an external team.

Through utilizing Augmented Reality and virtual remote experts as a guide, users can be equipped with the knowledge they need to **conduct repairs or overcome challenges independently.** Users can receive step by step instructions with annotations, information slides, or hand gestures that appear "on-screen" merged directly with what they see in front of them. If the on-site engineer also adds a head-mounted tablet to their tasks, **the remote expert can guide them** with a clear view of what they are viewing, while that engineer has **both hands free** to undertake the work required.

These tools then allow end customers to be guided by companies to do their repairs or external technicians to support a company without formal training on their product. Therefore, the restriction for expansion becomes null and void.

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Reducing the Time it Takes to Get New Engineers Out Into the Field

Another challenge often faced in the Field Service sector is the **aging workforce** and the mass exodus of **retiring individuals.** The aging workforce is a challenge faced by industries worldwide. As baby boomers leave their jobs, their wealth of

knowledge and experience goes with them. To replace not only their tasks but also to **retain knowledge and train new recruits**, tools like Augmented Reality and remote collaboration can be used.

The benefits of remote service can be seen in four distinct ways when it comes to training:

1. **Limit travel:** technicians can deal with far more issues from one remote location.

2. **Reduce churn:** by transitioning the experienced engineer from a life on the road to one of a remote expert, based in a central location, or even working from home, the chances of keeping that engineer in the organization for longer are greatly improved.

3. **Save time:** service organizations can dramatically reduce the time it takes to get new engineers out of the classroom and into the field, where they are actively bringing value to the organization.

4. **Record and educate:** each call can be recorded and archived to be used as a training tool.

Empowering the Blended Workforce

Many Field Service organizations are beginning to move towards having a "deskilled" field workforce, where most field workers have a broad yet shallow skill set that allows them to handle most routine tasks across a wide spectrum of devices/assets in the fleet. These technicians are supported by subject matter experts who have a narrower -but deeper- knowledge and expertise in specific areas. These subject matter experts are then able to **offer guidance over remote service tools.**

The **blended workforce** model also includes **a mix of internal workers and third-party workers.** Accessing the gig economy within the field sector is a largely unutilized opportunity. By using the remote support model with an expert being able to **support many deskilled field technicians**, Field Service companies can expand and speed up their onboarding process.

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Embracing the Tools for Outcome-Based Services

Embracing the tools for **outcome-based services** and **servitization** is another emerging trend within the Field Service sector. In a servitized approach, the customer's key metric is no longer SLA adherence but, instead, **meeting guarantees of uptime.** With this shift in focus, the weighting on mean-time-to-resolution (MTTR) becomes an essential aspect of the service delivery program.

In a remote service delivery world, the service provider can turn to the closest available engineer, regardless of their level of expertise, and still, in most instances, achieve a first-time-fix by having a remote expert with the knowledge and experience available instantly to guide the user through the repair. Indeed, alongside the connectivity of assets, remote service delivery is a fundamental layer of technology that can **transition organizations to a servitized approach.**

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Differentiating your service against that of your competition

Determining your service against that of your competition can also be a benefit. Research by Field Service News outlined that, while nearly three-quarters of the Field Service companies had introduced remote service capabilities due

to the pandemic, only one-fifth of them were using sophisticated tools such as AR and head-mounted tablets to do so. By adding AR tools to Field Service processes, the opportunity for **standing out against the competition** increases.

As more companies begin offering remote service, it will become a battleground for customer satisfaction. Those who choose to adopt a more sophisticated approach to remote service delivery and who choose to leverage the latest technology within this space are more likely to be well-positioned when it comes to being able to differentiate on their ability to deliver service remotely.

Conclusion

Overall, introducing remote service into a broader digital transformation process has many benefits for FSM. Remote service **improves health and safety** while offering the chance to **expand into new territories.** Furthermore, **training times reduce**, which helps **to alleviate the challenges of an aging workforce** and a blended one.

By embracing these remote service tools, it stands out to employees and customers will see it as a **differentiator among the competition.**