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# Improve Technician Adoption with Rapid Solution Deployment

Is your field service organization still working off of spreadsheets – or worse, pen & paper?

If so, don't feel bad – you're in good company. In our recent survey of field technicians (conducted by independent creative market research agency Atomik Research), we found that 52% of field service companies are still using manual methods for field service management.

Those manual methods are creating some big inefficiencies:

→ Aberdeen research found a **37%** industry average repeat job rate.

→ McKinsey learned that **40%** of a field service technician's workday is wasted on non-value-added activities.

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Spotting Your Pain Points
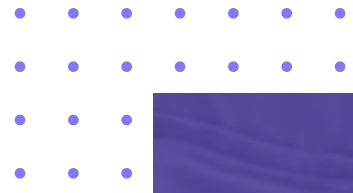
How much of your field technician's day is consumed by routine manual tasks?

If you're like many field service organizations, the answer is...too much. In Atomik's survey, 63% of respondents said they spent more time on low value-added tasks than on supporting customers and maintaining services.

And if you get a change request? Even more headaches and more time lost. That's a lot of money tossed to the wind when you consider how much of that time your field technicians could spend on the next job.

Even worse, old-school methods of reporting and tracking jobs dramatically reduces your visibility into the field – and opens the possibility for fudging the numbers.

Our survey revealed that 75% of field service workers believe some technicians lie about completing work orders – and get away with it.

Flying Blind

If you're struggling with these outdated tracking methods, you're not the only one feeling the frustration. The majority of surveyed field technicians – 53% – feel like they're living at least 10 years behind the times at work. Almost a quarter of them – 18% – feel more like two decades or more behind. That's Excel-as-a-new-innovation and briefcase-sized cell phone days.

Speaking of Excel, 60% of our survey respondents said they use clunky spreadsheet systems to record information. And half of them still use handwritten lists (and 41% use sticky notes) to help manage day-to-day field service tasks. With bits of information living on so many spreadsheets and slips of paper, it's virtually impossible to get a firm grasp of your team's in-field activities.

This inefficiency has real consequences for your customers, too. In our survey, 11% of field technicians said they strongly doubted they'd be able to send or receive information that could prevent a major service outage or disruption.

Behavioral Trends

Several behavioral trends can also have an impact on your team's efficiency:

Lack of understanding and unwillingness to use enterprise field service solutions that are obsolete	Lack of unambiguous and reliable information flowing across your organization	A workplace culture dominated by an improvisational "MacGyver-ing" approach by technicians, instead of standardized workflows

While not exactly new, the effects of these trends feel more acute as the marketplace gets more competitive and customer expectations get more demanding. And with an outdated field service solution in place, your business will be slower to adapt to changing customer and business needs.

These obsolete solutions are like a huge ship, full of spreadsheets and stacks of sticky notes, trying to navigate a 90-degree turn – when what you really need is a sleek speedboat.

Skimming the Waves

The answer to these challenges is a solution that allows lots of customization (without a whole team of highly skilled in-house developers) and an easy way to update features as your organization needs them.

Legacy solutions can take a year or more (and a truckload of money) to deploy. By that time, your needs may have changed and now you're still using a solution that doesn't quite fit your organization.

A low-code development platform that properly incorporates artificial intelligence is the speedboat zipping past your legacy ship. It gives you the technical agility you need to either innovate new applications or adapt legacy systems faster and more securely. You'll be able to turn on a dime to meet new business challenges and customer needs.

It can also help your developers work more efficiently, so they can focus on more complex technical tasks. Your newer developers can get up to speed faster, while your experienced developers can complete more projects in less time.

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Digitization & Automation in Action

Here's a real-world example of how updating your field service solution with a customized-to-you platform can bring huge benefits:

A network carrier needed to update their closeout package process. Before, their vendors had to use a multi-tab spreadsheet with more than 700 fields to fill out. The spreadsheet had roughly 400 mandatory fields, along with yes/no, fill-ins, photo uploads, and more.

They had some big process challenges:

→ Pen and paper checklists creating inefficiencies and inaccuracies

→ A lack of standardized processes ("in progress" status could mean thousands of different things)

→ Their subcontractors were delivering different results by region, market, and/or site

These massive spreadsheets, combined with scattered workflows, resulted in errors either in documentation or with the work performed. These errors meant repeat truck rolls to fix problems.

The carrier finally digitized their spreadsheet and made it easy to use. Transforming the review process in the form of end-to-end mobile workflows and incorporating real-time updates, they were able to standardize workflows. They also incorporated automation to the closeout package, freeing up time for coordinators to focus on more value-added tasks.

These efforts paid off in a big way: they resulted in 85% fewer truck rolls and a $3.6 million yearly reduction in revisit costs.

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Rapid Deployment Strategy: Crawl-Walk-Run

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Sold on the benefits of a highly customizable, modern solution?

Great! But before you grab every feature and install all the bells and whistles, consider a staged approach – crawl before you walk, and walk before you run. Why?

For one thing, movement from a paper- or spreadsheet-based system to an optimized an automated one can result in low adoption rate among your field service team if it's not steered smoothly.

In our 2020 survey, 14% of field technicians told us they considered quitting their job due to "complicated technology required to complete jobs." You don't want to hit your team with a solution that addresses the wrong operational parameters and ends up confusing, rather than helping them.

You also want to make sure your new solution is integrating well with existing processes and don't actually add extra steps to every job. More than 3 out of 4 of survey respondents reported using 3 or more web/mobile apps to complete a typical work order, and 55% said they use 4 or more.

With a highly customizable yet easy to use solution, you should be able to quickly streamline your workflows, rather than adding complexity – if you deploy carefully. Enter the crawl-walk-run stages.

Crawl your way out of the spreadsheet era.

The nice thing about a low-code, customizable platform is that you can tailor it to your current digital maturity – whether you're still using pen & paper or already work with large point solutions.

Focus first on high-priority use cases for your business. You can start small, iterate, and scale progressively to see value quickly across your organization. This allows to minimize the time-to-value of the solution. Your organization will see benefits sooner and avoid a "Big Bang" effect - waiting for the full solution to be completed in order to roll it out. This will also allow your technicians to ease into the new solution, familiarizing themselves with it and better adopting it in their day-to-day work.

For example, visibility is absolutely essential to effective and efficient field service operations. That makes adding visibility an important first step when customizing your new solution. With better visibility, you can improve your serviceable attach rate (increasing the number of customers you have under contract), and better plan for your technician service territory mapping. Visibility alone can give you real value from your new solution, quickly.
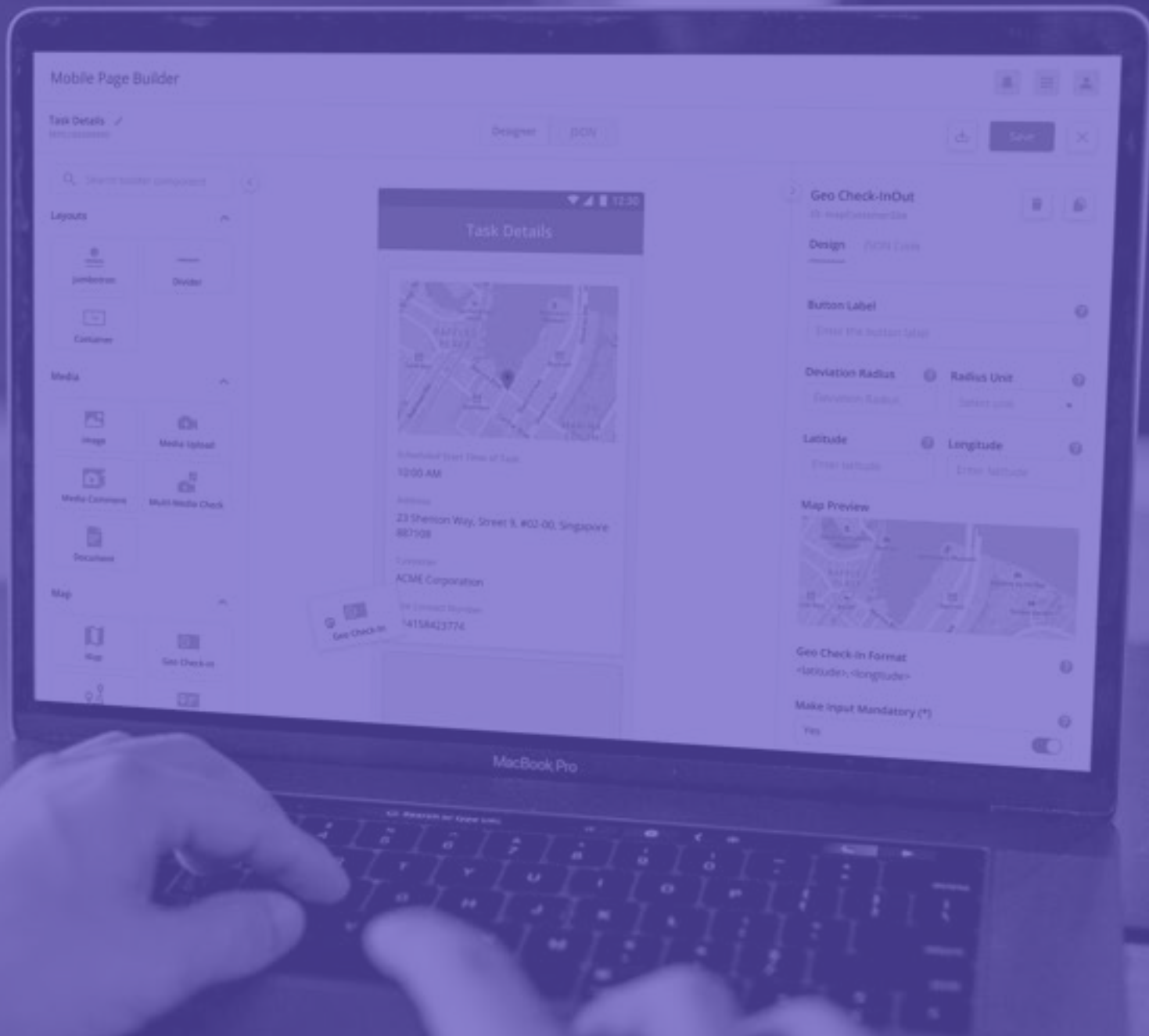
Walk into the digital age.

Once your organization's teams have adopted the new applications, you can expand the scope of how you use the platform and apply it to a broader set of needs.

The top two expenses for most service organizations are labor costs and inventory. If that applies to you, you'll want to add an in-depth understanding of inventory levels, get better control over seasonal hoarding of spare parts, and be able to reorder the right inventory at the right time.

You can also add warranty and entitlement features to the platform, connecting the asset to the customer to the contract – so you can see what each customer is eligible for as part of their work order. This helps you plug warranty leakages and save you time and money.

Run into the future.

A low-code builder's configurability and ease of use supports your business needs as they evolve over time. Your team will have all the tools they need to add, adjust, or modify your applications – without hiring expensive consulting partners.

That means you can easily add automation to your workflows. Once your dispatcher and service teams are confident with the new digital tools and processes, you can automate various tasks to open up time for more work orders or to focus on more strategic functions.

The crawl-walk-run strategy helps build comfort with the new tools and technology in your field service teams. Workers who have done field service a certain way their whole lives may be resistant to big, sweeping changes all at once – but this gradual approach lets them learn and get comfortable, improving adoption rates.

Sticking to manual or obsolete methods of managing and tracking field service operations is becoming more difficult as customers and the market keep evolving. Using a three-stage method of deploying a modern, nimble solution will drop your time to value while still allowing your team to adjust to new ways of doing things.

Want to learn more about using a low-code tool for faster and more easily deploy?

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Book your Zinier demo today.

hello@zinier.com | www.zinier.com