Building a Bridge Between Sales & Service with Asset Data

A Guide to Leveraging Field Service Data to Drive Revenue and Customer Satisfaction
# Table of Contents

3 Executive Summary  
4 About the Respondents  
6 Key Insights  
7 Most Service Teams Need More Visibility into Assets, Contracts, and Warranties  
10 Organizations Have an Opportunity to Leverage Cloud-Based Software  
14 Technology Upgrades Will Help Teams Leverage Data for Marketing, Sales, and CX  
17 Conclusion: Using Data Across the Organization  
18 Key Suggestions  
19 About the Authors
Executive Summary

At service organizations, large quantities of data are now collected in the field. Connected IoT devices inherent in deployed assets deliver operational data directly to the organization remotely. Other types of data, such as qualitative data collected by service representatives and through customer surveys, are also being collected.

Most organizations already leverage this data in some capacity. Data collected via the Internet of Things can provide the organization with insights into their deployed assets. When connected with tools like artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML), this type of data enables the service organization to generate models and prescribe predictive maintenance schedules to devices, optimizing uptime.

However, there is untapped potential in this data. Data collected in service can be leveraged for smart marketing and sales, and for enhancing the customer experience. As such, assets themselves, and the data collected from them, are now critical for driving smarter operations and realizing new opportunities for revenue generation and margin contribution.

This report explores how service organizations are currently using their field data to optimize their revenue operations by merging service, sales, and marketing. It provides benchmarking data, suggestions, and best practices from service leaders to help the reader identify new opportunities in their data.
About the Respondents

The WBR Insights research team surveyed 100 field service leaders from across the U.S. and Canada to generate the results featured in this report.

The respondents represent organizations that provide service to a variety of verticals, such as manufacturing (14%), information & communication technology (12%), the semiconductor industry (11%), and the utility sector (11%).

At 36%, a plurality of the respondents is from large organizations that make more than $1 billion per year in annual revenue. Meanwhile, about one-third of the respondents (33%) represent mid-sized companies that make $500 million to $1 billion per year and 31% represent companies that make $100 million to $500 million per year.

Which of the following best describes the area in which your organization provides service?

- 14% Manufacturing
- 12% Information & Communication Technology
- 11% Semiconductors
- 11% Utilities
- 10% Appliances & Electronics
- 10% Construction & Industrial
- 10% Medical & Scientific Devices
- 7% Enterprise Network Equipment
- 6% Commercial Computers
- 6% Transportation
- 3% Domestic Computers

What is your organization’s annual revenue?

- 31% $100 million to $500 million
- 33% $500 million to $1 billion
- 36% More than $1 billion
At 64%, most of the respondents are directors. The remaining respondents are either department heads (19%) or vice presidents (17%).

The respondents occupy roles in service operations (30%), service sales (26%), service management (22%), and service technology (22%).
Key Insights

Among the respondents:

- 83% claim they need more visibility into their customers’ contracts, warranties, and entitlements by asset or location.
- 43% claim they need to improve their asset uptime and availability.
- 62% claim they currently have a solution that provides a 360-degree view of their assets in the field. Among this group, 66% claim their solution integrates seamlessly with their CRM.
- Most claim their field service solution is either “packaged” software (31%) or it is a combination of “homegrown” and “packaged” software (32%). Among only this group, a plurality claims those solutions are cloud-based (41%).
- 71% currently leverage warranty and contract management capabilities while 51% leverage mobile field service apps through their field service solutions.
- Most either currently leverage or plan to deploy the seven additional capabilities measured in the study within the next 12 months—including asset management, case and work order management, scheduling and optimization, and others.
- Although all currently aggregate and analyze data from their field service operation, only 22% trust their field service data completely. Most remaining respondents “mostly” (38%) or only “somewhat” (36%) trust their field service data, while 4% don’t trust their field service data at all.
- 61% currently leverage the data they collect during service for marketing, sales, and/or CX. Among only this group, most have realized benefits by leveraging service data for these purposes—including more targeted and personalized marketing campaigns (69%), higher margins and more revenue (64%), and greater ease demonstrating ROI in sales conversations (62%) in each case.
- 57% plan to adopt or update their virtual service solutions or augmented reality technologies in the next 12 months. Most will either adopt, update, test, or pilot the six other field service technologies measured in the study within the next 12 months—including remote support tools, asset data analysis solutions, IoT devices and sensors, and others.
Most Service Teams Need More Visibility into Assets, Contracts, and Warranties

“Real-time visibility and location tracking can help the organization analyze the potential for including sales into the service functions.”

— VP of service operations, construction and industrial company

Service organizations have made significant progress toward digitization in recent years. The widespread deployment of IoT devices among deployed assets has granted field service professionals unparalleled access to data. This has resulted in more optimized customer experiences and has even prompted some service organizations to generate new sales models based on their data capabilities.

However, managing the service customer experience also requires complete visibility into each customer’s contract and warranty information as well as an effective read on how service functions contribute to the organization’s costs. Numerous technologies on the market can help field service organizations in this area, but not every organization has gained the level of visibility they require.

Currently, 83% of the respondents say they need more visibility into their customers’ contracts, warranties, and entitlements by asset or location. Based on this result, it’s clear that most service organizations are struggling to manage contracts, warranties, and entitlements in some respects, despite their current technology deployments. Customers that have purchased and deployed multiple assets at different times can be difficult to manage, as each asset may require the tracking of separate warranties and contracts.

Do you need more visibility into your customers’ contracts, warranties, and entitlements by asset or location?

- 83% Yes
- 17% No
“By reducing the cost of repair and maintenance or providing discounted services for regular customers, we could enhance the client base.”

— Director of service management, medical and scientific device company

Still, today’s service leaders understand that revenue generation now spans the entire lifecycle of a deployed assets. These lifecycles are generally a balance between service costs and service revenue generation. Although revenue generation through service is still a relatively new concept in field service, many organizations already have a decent reading of how much it costs to provide regular services and how that relates to their profit margins.

Many respondents (43%) believe they need to improve asset uptime and availability, however. Asset uptime can contribute directly to cost reduction in the service department, especially when major problems with assets are mitigated before they lead to downtime. This is also an important aspect of CX in field service—many clients and customers now trust that providers can guarantee asset uptime.

**Do you need to improve asset uptime and availability?**

- 43% Yes
- 57% No
“Now, it all comes down to experiences. With the onset of digital solutions, organizations must achieve more in terms of service experience.”

– VP of service sales, medical and scientific device company

At 62%, most of the respondents also say they are currently using a solution that provides a 360-degree view of their assets in the field. However, over one-third of the respondents are not currently using such a solution.

The latest service solutions can deliver better visibility and drive operational efficiency at a time when customer expectations have risen dramatically. Ideally, a solution of this nature should deliver real-time visibility into every asset in the field, allowing field service teams to optimize asset performance and deliver outcomes as a service to their clients and customers.

Service solutions also work best when they integrate seamlessly with a CRM tool. This allows service organizations to track asset data against client profiles, so they can deliver insights to CX teams and provide more personalized service in the field.

Currently, 66% of the respondents who have a solution that provides a 360-degree view of assets in the field can connect that solution with their CRM. However, over one-third of these respondents can’t connect their solution with their CRM. Organizations that have such a solution but lack this capability may be missing opportunities to provide better service to their clients or even generate new revenue streams by monetizing data.

Do you currently have a solution that provides a 360-degree view of your assets in the field?

- 62% Yes
- 38% No

Since you said, “Yes,” does your solution integrate seamlessly with your CRM tool?

- 66% Yes
- 34% No
Organizations Have an Opportunity to Leverage Cloud-Based Software

“Creating a platform that is common to customers and field agents and supporting these platforms with digital solutions is how field service organizations can bridge their sales and service functions.”

– Director of service sales, enterprise network equipment company

Field service organizations are using a variety of technologies in their operations. Many companies use a mixture of “packaged” and proprietary—or “homegrown”—solutions to manage their service commitments, measure the results of their business, and manage data collected from the field. But even a combination of technologies can amount to an overarching “field service platform” that guides the organization in its day-to-day business.

Although 37% of the respondents say they use a homegrown solution, a total of 63% of the respondents use either packaged software entirely (31%) or a combination of homegrown and packaged tools.

There has historically been a trade-off between using a packaged solution or a homegrown solution. Homegrown solutions that are developed onsite may be tailor-fit to the organization’s needs, at least in theory, but they may also be difficult and costly to develop and maintain. Packaged products are much easier to deploy and less costly to maintain, but they must meet the organization’s unique needs if they are to be effective.

Is your field service solution “homegrown” or “packaged” software?

- 37% Our solution is “homegrown” software
- 32% Our solution is a combination of “homegrown” and “packaged” software
- 31% Our solution is “packaged” software
For many companies, turning to a solution provider that specializes in cloud-based field service technology has been a way to harness the cost-effectiveness of packaged software while also migrating operations to the cloud. As they stand, many homegrown field service solutions are currently deployed on-premise at the organizations that use them, and it can be prohibitively expensive to migrate them to the cloud.

Among those organizations that utilize packaged software in some aspect, 62% say at least some of that software is cloud-based. This includes 41% who say it is entirely cloud-based and 21% who use a hybrid solution that is deployed partially in the cloud and partially on-premise.

There are many notable benefits of cloud-based software that organizations are already taking advantage of. Cloud computing resources can be scaled affordably at peak periods of data analysis. The cloud also opens new opportunities for self-service, as customers can often access cloud-based tools anytime and anywhere—even from a smartphone.

Since all or part of your field service solution is “packaged” software, is that software cloud-based or on-premise?

- **41%**
  - It is cloud software

- **38%**
  - It is on-premise software

- **21%**
  - It is hybrid software—a combination of cloud and on-premise
“Time-management and automation technologies will streamline the core tasks, so field service personnel can perform sales duties occasionally.”

— Department head of service sales, manufacturing company

Indeed, many organizations are already leveraging a host of innovative capabilities through their field service solutions. However, the respondents say they plan to roll out many new capabilities in the next 12 months, many of which would benefit from cloud-based solutions.

For example, 71% of the respondents are already leveraging their tools for warranty and contract management. We previously learned that 83% of the respondents need more visibility into their customers’ contracts, warranties, and entitlements by asset or location. Notably, 50% of the respondents plan to roll out entitlement automation in the next 12 months.

Only 27% are currently utilizing their field service solutions for field service analytics. In the next 12 months, 57% will deploy this capability.

Although some organizations may be able to leverage these capabilities with their current technology deployments, others may require more robust, cloud-based technologies to reach their goals. This is often the case with data analytics, which requires an amount of computing power that isn’t always available on-premise.

Which of the following capabilities do you currently leverage through your field service solutions, and which do you plan to deploy in the next 12 months?

- We currently leverage this capability
- We plan to deploy this capability in the next 12 months
- We have no plans to deploy this capability
Data fidelity during aggregation and analysis is also a challenge for some organizations given their current technology deployments. According to this study, only 22% of field service organizations trust their field service data completely. Most organizations trust their data “mostly” (38%), “somewhat” (36%), or not at all (4%).

This suggests that field service organizations need to improve their data governance standards. Data that is collected in an ad hoc way may not be usable across the organization, even if it is aggregated through established service tools. To achieve true data maturity, data must be democratized across the organization and formatted in such a way that marketing, sales, and service can leverage it for insights, personalization, and more.

**Do you currently aggregate and analyze data from your field service operation, and do you trust that data?**

- 22% Yes, and we trust our field service data completely
- 38% Yes, and we trust our field service data mostly
- 36% Yes, but we only trust our field service data somewhat
- 4% Yes, but we don’t trust our field service data
- 0% No, we don’t currently aggregate and analyze field service data
Technology Upgrades Will Help Teams Leverage Data for Marketing, Sales, and CX

“Teams have to be more proactive in understanding the requirements of clients. Service feedback needs to be integrated into the sales pitch, selling the features customers like best.”

— Service management department head, appliances and electronics company

Although field service organizations have ambitious goals for the next 12 months regarding the deployment of new capabilities, this study has indicated that some respondents don’t feel their current technologies are sufficient to support those goals. And while field service organizations are aware of the opportunities inherent in their data, not all of them are taking advantage of those opportunities. Some may not have the capabilities to do so due to their current technologies, or they need to rework their processes to extend the benefits of field data to other areas of the business, such as sales and marketing.

At 61%, most of the respondents currently leverage the data they collect during service for marketing, sales, and/or CX. For example, these organizations may collect data via IoT integrations, work orders, asset telemetry, service history, and other methods. Once collected, these organizations analyze this data, then use the resulting insights to better inform their marketing, sales, and CX operations.

Do you currently leverage the data you collect during service for marketing, sales, and/or CX?

- 61% Yes
- 39% No
Marketing statements that guarantee a certain level of uptime for customers are, perhaps, the simplest form of evidence of this practice. Typically, these statements are backed by operational data collected in the field. Field service data can also be leveraged in service situations and customer interactions, granting customer service representatives more insight into the customer's specific needs.

The respondents recognize other benefits from this type of data collection and utilization as well. At 69%, most of the respondents who leverage data in this way are using it for more targeted and personalized marketing campaigns. Similarly, 64% of these respondents are using their data to generate higher margins and more revenue, while 62% are using it for greater ease when demonstrating ROI to potential customers in sales conversations.

Although the respondents aren’t using this data for some CX initiatives, such as generating higher levels of customer satisfaction, these results suggest an important trend among these field service organizations. Organizations that can leverage data in this way can launch more successful sales and marketing campaigns than organizations that don’t have the same data capabilities. This, in turn, can result in higher revenue generation or even new streams of revenue.

“Hi-tech solutions to monitor field efficiency can improve revenues by a good margin.”

– Service management and department head, medical and scientific device company

Since you said, “Yes,” what benefits have you realized by leveraging service data for marketing, sales, and/or CX?
Evidence from this study also suggests that field service organizations are interested in deploying the technologies that make this type of data utilization possible. For example, 44% of the respondents plan to adopt or update their asset data analysis solutions in the next 12 months, while 43% plan to pilot this technology. Similarly, 43% of the respondents plan to adopt or update their IoT devices and sensors in the next 12 months, while 29% plan to pilot new IoT devices and sensors.

Other technologies that could improve the customer experience and generate more revenue channels are also being adopted across these organizations. At 57%, most of the respondents say they will adopt or update their virtual service or augmented reality (AR) solutions in the next 12 months. Meanwhile, 42% plan to adopt or update self-service portals, providing customers with more options to resolve challenges at any time, from anywhere.

**Do you plan to fully adopt or update any of the following field service technologies in the next 12 months? If not, are you planning on piloting or testing them?**

- Virtual service solutions or augmented reality: 57% plan to adopt or update, 36% plan to test, 7% have no plans.
- Remote support tools: 45% plan to adopt or update, 34% plan to test, 21% have no plans.
- Asset data analysis solutions: 44% plan to adopt or update, 43% plan to test, 13% have no plans.
- IoT devices and sensors: 43% plan to adopt or update, 29% plan to test, 28% have no plans.
- Predictive maintenance software: 42% plan to adopt or update, 41% plan to test, 17% have no plans.
- Self-service portals: 42% plan to adopt or update, 35% plan to test, 23% have no plans.
- AI-driven flexible data models: 51% plan to adopt or update, 37% plan to test, 12% have no plans.

- We plan to adopt or update this technology across the organization
- We plan to test or pilot this technology
- We have no plans to adopt, update, test, or pilot this technology
Conclusion: Using Data Across the Organization

Despite differences in their current technology deployments, most of the respondents are working to get more out of their data. Through the deployment of new technologies and cloud-based solutions, they’ll be able to conduct more trustworthy data analyses, then apply the resulting insights to operations like marketing, sales, and CX.

The challenge for service organizations at this moment is determining how they can use their current field service solutions to achieve these capabilities—mainly, whether they can augment their current tools, or whether they need new solutions altogether.

Cloud-based solutions are increasingly important for streamlining field service processes and analyzing data in such a way that data will pose benefits for marketing and sales. Moving forward, these organizations must gain full visibility of their deployed assets, create a data culture that is shared across the organization, and leverage their tools in a way that benefits the entire business.
Key Suggestions

- Audit your current field service solutions to determine if they provide you with a satisfactory 360-degree view of your deployed assets. They should also provide you with visibility into your customers' contracts, warranties, and entitlements. These capabilities will be necessary for your data operation, as well as to bridge the gaps between marketing, sales, and service.

- Consider adopting cloud-based solutions where they would be advantageous. Many cloud-based field service solutions are accessible by employees and customers anywhere. They can also provide computing resources at scale when they are necessary.

- Focus on leveraging field service analytics, entitlement automation, and automated, optimized scheduling through your field service solutions. These are the capabilities that most of the respondents plan to deploy in the next 12 months.

- Update your data governance, collection, and formatting standards to ensure data you aggregate from the field is usable across the organization.

- Consider adopting or updating your virtual service solutions, remote support tools, asset data analysis solutions, IoT devices and sensors, and predictive maintenance software if you haven't already.
About the Authors

Salesforce Field Service, built on the world’s #1 CRM, empowers teams to deliver safe, mission-critical field service. It helps teams dynamically schedule work and streamlines complex assets to ensure every job gets done on time, every time. Connected customer experiences are elevated by equipping every frontline worker with the right data, regardless of cell signal. And because it’s built on the Customer 360, Salesforce Field Service enables collaboration and visibility across your entire workforce and other systems to build stronger customer relationships that are built to last.

For more information, visit www.salesforce.com/fieldservice

ServiceMax's mission is to help customers keep the world running with asset-centric field service management software. As the recognized leader in this space, ServiceMax’s mobile apps and cloud-based software provide a complete view of assets to field service teams. By optimizing field service operations, customers across all industries can better manage the complexities of service, support faster growth and run more profitable, outcome-centric businesses.

For more information, visit www.servicemax.com

WBR Insights is the custom research division of Worldwide Business Research (WBR), the world leader in industry-driven thought-leadership conferences. Our mission is to help inform and educate key stakeholders with research-based whitepapers, webinars, digital summits, and other thought-leadership assets while achieving our clients’ strategic goals.

For more information, please visit www.wbrinsights.com