THE TRUE VALUE OF MOBILITY: IMPROVED RESOLUTION BY ENHANCED SERVICE PERFORMANCE

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This Knowledge Brief highlights the best practices for developing and deploying a mobile, field service strategy; a process that maximizes the productivity and performance of field service delivery.

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Are your field technicians connected, not to a device but to an answer? Delivering customer value in this age of information means that the field service team needs to have access to the insights that empower action.

The evolution of customer expectations for faster resolution demands that service organizations adopt new technologies and processes. As detailed in Aberdeen's *Service Mobility: The Right Technology for the Tech* report (August 2014), the top pressure facing field service teams is the customer demand for improved service (75% of respondents). Organizations have realized that one of the first steps to hasten service times is to make use of the volumes of data available to field agents. To do this, organizations must evolve their mobile tools and evaluate how to connect with them for the practical use of the large data sets available.
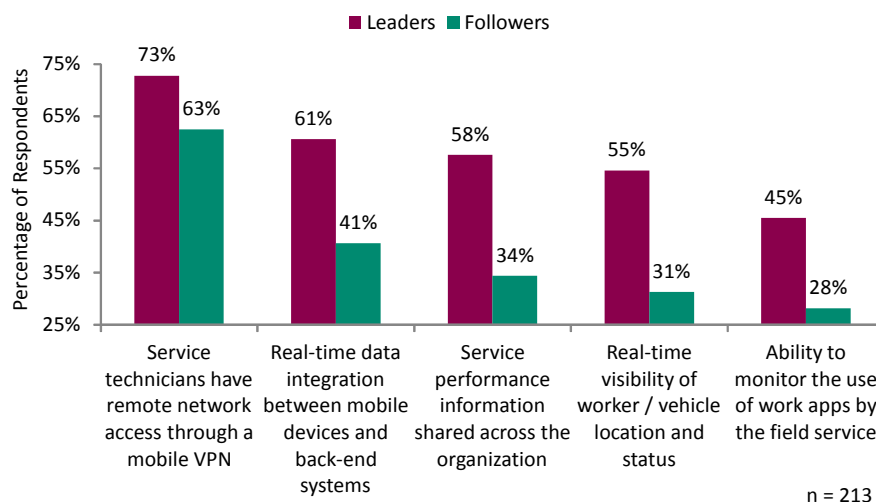
The proliferation of mobile devices, both in the business world and consumer world, has created a perception that mobile technology is ubiquitous. However, eight out of ten

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organizations (82%) sampled in Aberdeen's [2014 mobile research](#) stated that mobility is **still** a strategic initiative for service in 2014. Top performing organizations ensure their service teams are equipped with the mobile tools they need to excel. This is achieved by ensuring the organization's mobile strategy is designed and deployed to maximize productivity, in terms of efficiency in the delivery of services. Top performers have built a roadmap for mobile deployment success that follows three best practices:

➔ Data integration between back-end systems and mobile devices

➔ Visibility into worker performance and challenges

➔ Insight into the status of service

The attainment of these best practices is not easy. Figure 1 highlights the gap between the Leaders and the Followers in regard to building on capabilities that lead to success in service delivery.

Figure 1: Mobile Capabilities Yield Improved Service Performance

Leaders ■ Followers ■

	Service technicians have remote network access through a mobile VPN	Real-time data integration between mobile devices and back-end systems	Service performance information shared across the organization	Real-time visibility of worker / vehicle location and status	Ability to monitor the use of work apps by the field service
Leaders	73%	61%	58%	55%	45%
Followers	63%	41%	34%	31%	28%

n = 213

Source: Aberdeen Group, August 2014

Mobile Field Service Leaders vs. Followers Defined

In June and July 2014, Aberdeen surveyed 213 service and manufacturing organizations to understand the key trends in mobile field service.

The performance metrics used to define the Leaders (top 50%) and Followers (remaining 50%) among these organizations are:

- 83% First-time fix rate, vs. 37% among Followers
- 80% SLA compliance rate, vs. 38% among Followers
- 6.2% Average year-over-year improvement in workforce productivity (average calls completed daily), vs. 3.5% improvement among Followers.

73%

of Leaders empower service technicians with remote network access though a mobile VPN.

➔ Read the full report, "Rapid Insight with Results: Harnessing Analytics in the Cloud"

Best Practice #1: Data Integration

Has your organization witnessed the data "perfect storm"? If you have yet to enter the storm, beware. As highlighted in Aberdeen's *Rapid Insight with Results: Harnessing Analytics in the Cloud* report (June 2014), organizations are finding that data volumes are growing too fast, too much critical data is late (i.e., not accessible when needed to make decisions), and data is held in silos. These challenges also greatly impact the field service organization. In order to effectively navigate this data perfect storm, top performing organizations have implemented processes to integrate data between the field and the back office systems. This real-time integration ensures that important service data is made available to other functions (i.e., sales, marketing, engineering) and can be used to make decisions in real-time, to improve products and service.

Best Practice #2: Visibility into the Worker

Often when we think of visibility, we refer to aspects such as location, performance, or status, which are, in fact, integral to visibility into service. But in addition to these areas, top performers understand that it is important to know how technicians are reaching their current levels of performance (i.e., if the technicians are actually using the invested technology / systems). Top performers are 61% more likely than peers to have the ability to monitor the use of work apps by the field service technician (45% vs. 28%, respectively).

Best Practice #3: The Status of Service

The customer is still king, even in field service, and their thirst for insight into the delivery of service will not wane. This should not come as a shock. The end customer cannot afford to have down or unproductive equipment for any length of time, and thus the service organization must communicate internally and directly with the customer, in regard to the status of service. Top

performers are 77% more likely than peers to have real-time visibility into worker / vehicle status and location (55% vs. 31%, respectively). However, once again, if this information is kept in a silo, the insight will be wasted.

The Value of Mobility

Leaders understand that mobility is not about a device or a tool, but that the value comes when there is an improved path to resolution. Organizations find that the missing link in the resolution equation is the availability of, and access to, quality data. Leaders follow these basic tenets - capture service data, make it accessible to the appropriate stakeholders, analyze the data, and use the insight - to make better decisions to solve customer issues.

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