

# SMART MOVES TO BOOST EFFICIENCY



You're staring a global economic crisis in the eye – and you're surviving. It's now time to break out of survival mode, re-charge your engines and catch the worldwide wave of renewal. Challenges abound and so do opportunities for the shrewd and the bold. In our industry, as in most others, the key to renewal is greater productivity. Service providers must boost customer satisfaction, while keeping costs to a bare minimum.



Here are 10 tips to make your company more productive, competitive and profitable and better equipped for growth. These strategies can be achieved through the automation of your field services department, using a high-quality copier dealer software solution (such as Miracle Service/Service Accent, etc.).

## 10 Tips for Service Departments

### 1. Don't let billing slip.

**Invoice every job promptly.** The most reliable way to do this is through automated billing. Old-fashioned manual approaches are error-prone, leading to payment delays or even failure to invoice at all. It's easy to overlook an invoice, especially when the job is small. Those small mistakes add up. When you generate invoices automatically, your billing stays ahead of the game.

### 2. Don't let high fuel costs burn up your profits.

**Driving paperwork back and forth to the customer site** can send profits up in smoke. Instead, have your technicians complete work orders in the field, entering data instantly through their laptops or handheld computers. This starts the seamless process of generating invoices right away. You save on technician time and fuel

costs while speeding up the billing cycle.

### 3. Boost worker productivity.

**Even small efficiency gains from improved dispatch and technician productivity add up to big savings.** When dispatchers have up-to-date customer, contract and service information at their fingertips, this allows them both to process calls faster and to ensure more efficient scheduling of technicians.

### 4. Share information to work smarter.

**Enter information once into a central database and instantly share it with your sales, service and parts departments and contract administrators.** Thereby, you significantly reduce – or even eliminate – repetitive functions to increase productivity.

### 5. Boost efficiency through mobile communications.

**A business that fails to communicate with its field staff and clients in real-time** is at a serious competitive disadvantage. Nowadays, a variety of wireless, Internet and e-mail-based solutions allow for fast, accurate exchange of information and with fewer misunderstandings. More time for your staff to get things done

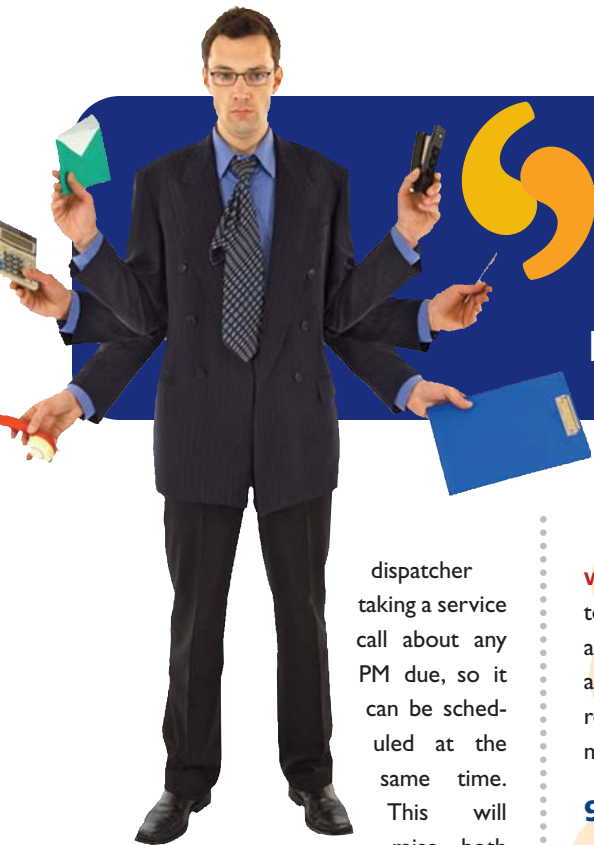
Watch your company's productivity increase when you use remote solutions to free up valuable human resources.

### 6. Automate your parts inventory.

**Service technicians need ready access to the right parts to be effective.** But an overstocked warehouse can be money down the drain. Automation software geared to service company needs enables you to achieve that important balance between parts supply and demand. It will reduce inventory loss and lower inventory carrying costs, adding up to increased profits.

### 7. Plan your preventative maintenance wisely.

**Set up your PM schedules according to the contract terms and generate the jobs automatically,** when required. A good system also informs the



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**8. Pay attention to existing customers.**

**A customer in the hand is worth two in the bush.** It's always easier to keep a customer you already have than find a new one. Service software will help you to anticipate your customers' needs, improve responsiveness and reduce callbacks, thus maintaining a solid customer base.

**9. Know the value and the cost of each contract.**

**In these challenging times, you can't afford to lose money on an unprofitable service contract.** Does each of your contracts actually cover the cost of providing service? Analyze the profitability

dispatcher taking a service call about any PM due, so it can be scheduled at the same time. This will raise both

efficiency and customer satisfaction. Extra tip: Don't forget the non-contracted customers. Set up all PM's in the system then call non-contract customers whenever a PM is due to generate added business.

of each individual contract to determine where the profits and losses are, so you can respond accordingly.

**10. Know your team.**

**Do all your team members work as effectively as they could?** Weak performers can drag the company down. Service software will give you valuable data about the productivity of each technician, including: average times to complete service calls, average response times, parts used, call-backs, and revenue generated per technician. Such information helps you determine the strengths and weakness of your staff to generate improvements and make needed changes.

There is much to be gained by exploiting technology's extraordinary potential to the fullest. Automated tools geared to your business needs can help you work harder and smarter, seize opportunities and be ready for a brave new world.

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