

# Embracing the on-demand service economy revolution



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Customer satisfaction has always been an important KPI for businesses. As technology transforms the ways customers engage with businesses today, customers expect service delivery in real time, putting immense pressure on businesses to meet these expectations in maintaining and improving customer satisfaction.

The on-demand nature of our current economy is visible everywhere. If you are at work and want lunch but do not feel like stepping outside, dozens of services -- from Favor to Postmates -- are available to bring that sandwich right to you. If you need to get across town for a meeting, pull up an Uber -- it will probably be there in three minutes or so, and you will know, in advance, what the driver looks like, what the car looks like, and the license plate number. Get home after a long day at the office and want some entertainment? You can stream seemingly anything with Netflix, Amazon Prime, or on-demand options from various cable companies.

The old picket line chant -- "What do we want? (Something) When do we want it? Now!" -- has become the mantra for the entire first-world economy.

This presents a challenge in field service organizations (FSOs), however. While field service has always been rooted in trying to provide the highest quality of service and first-time fix, it typically achieves these KPIs through scheduled appointments, not on-demand engagements. Moreover, service organizations do not always have the best reputation for service delivery. For years, comedians have roasted cable companies for having unclear service appointment windows. Clients who have called to note that machines are down at their plants have been told that the next technicians might not be available for two to three days.

Today, being on-demand is essential. How can field service organizations get there and make sure they are delivering quality customer experience while meeting customer needs and expectations?

This eBook will address a few of the key themes around transitioning an FSO into the on-demand service economy.

# Key elements of field service for the on-demand economy



**Characteristic matching:** Characteristic matching aligns technician skill with customer need. In short: You do not want to send the closest person to an appointment if he or she cannot perform the work required. Rather, you send the person whose skill set and current on-truck inventory will best solve the problem. This might seem contrary to the idea of on-demand economy. Why would you send someone who is farther away from the client need? Here is why: The on-demand economy is not rooted in doing tasks quickly yet incorrectly. Customers expect the service quickly, but also expect it to be done properly. That is how characteristic matching plays into the on-demand economy. It allows you to route the proper people to the right needs.

Characteristic matching also exposes training and hiring requirements. You might notice after two to three weeks that a certain technician is always on the go. This would indicate that that technician's skills are in high demand and other technicians should be trained or hired to help meet the demand.



**SLAs:** There is documented research from MIT that [most companies are very challenged by priority alignment](#), and that is often true in field service as well. With the right field service management (FSM) software, however, work priorities can be more clearly set. Customer SLAs can be prioritized and met while ensuring other customers are getting the best technicians for their needs.



**Narrow appointment windows:** It is crucial for FSOs who want to strengthen their positions in the on-demand service economy to dispatch technicians as soon as possible and share narrow time windows. Customers expect narrow windows so they can meet professional and personal obligations in tandem with their service appointments. Utilizing resource scheduling optimization (RSO) can be valuable in this context. RSO allows you to fit in the most appointments per day, which means you can service more customers each day. This pulls appointments earlier into the schedule and helps to ensure customers are being serviced in a timely manner.



**Customer communication:** FSOs should also take advantage of customer communication tools to provide details about upcoming appointments in real time. Integrating your FSM software with a service like Glympse allows customers to see detailed information about the technician, including:

- Technician name
- Vehicle type
- License plate number
- Real-time arrival estimate
- Live route view while traveling

Another customer communication tool is interactive voice response (IVR). IVR automates outbound communication with customers through SMS or phone. Typically, in order for service work to take place, the customer needs to be at home or on-site when the technician arrives. Interactive voice response technology helps decrease customer no-shows by sending reminders -- "Do not forget you have an appointment!" -- which helps ensure the customer will be there within the right time window as well.



**Remote monitoring and self-healing:** Because customer satisfaction is the driver behind the on-demand economy, FSOs need to be able to identify problems proactively and repair them remotely whenever possible. Connected field service enables this ability and provides a two-way connection between a device and a field service management tool. Because simple commands like device reboots can be transmitted remotely, technicians can focus on more complex issues at other accounts instead of being tied up with tasks that can be automated. The best part about leveraging connected field service is that you can identify and solve problems before the customer does and do so before the problems impact them in any way. That is true customer satisfaction!

# Conclusion

The essence of the on-demand economy implies that customer expectations have changed. People want service now. We all understand that some degree of waiting will need to occur, but those windows are rapidly shrinking in terms of what is tolerated. To consistently grow your FSO, you will need to make sure you are moving forward as an on-demand service provider, not a “when we get to it” service provider. That latter category is already being left behind in the creation of new SLAs.

If you have any questions about how on-demand field service might work with your specific business models, [do not hesitate to contact us.](#)

Contact us for more information  
on how we can help you.

Master the service call 

