

How AI is Dramatically Impacting Cost Savings for Maintenance & Field Operations



How can asset and maintenance-heavy companies evolve their operations while keeping an eye on future implications? Industry experts point to operational software embedded with artificial intelligence as the answer. But it's important to take a closer look at why AI-enabled field service and work or asset management software are able to achieve significant cost savings over legacy systems and proprietary cloud solutions—and how it's changing the very structure of the industry.

The Evolution of Field Service

Three things have contributed to the evolution of field service in recent years: the growth of digital transformation, the recognized need for unification of field service and asset management, and the shift in field service's role from a cost center to a true revenue-generating component of the larger enterprise.

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Many businesses were hesitant to take a risk on cloud solutions when they first came on the scene in the early 2000s. Teams were content with their on-premise technology and had concerns about the security of the cloud and its ability to protect large amounts of proprietary information. Over time, the cloud went mainstream and gained the trust of companies around the world. The new efficiencies it introduced helped service operators work more on their business instead of in it, leveraging technology to offer a better customer experience. The cloud has proven its value and shown great potential for professionals in the field service industry. And as more organizations embrace digital transformation and invest in the growth of their technology stack, whether the cloud will play a part in new software solutions is no longer a question.¹

ASSET MANAGEMENT INTEGRATION

Historically, in nearly every industry—from telecommunications to electric and gas—field service and work or asset management have operated independently. Their rigid separation led to two separate and distinct software solutions that meet the needs of predominantly one or the other of these siloed departments. It has become abundantly clear that the work process needs of these two areas are tightly interconnected, and as such, the technology used to function would be far more effective not as two integrated solutions but as one fully combined solution architected to interconnect all work and field operation needs. Service companies must be able to address these types of challenges with capabilities that span across categories and align with the requirements of short-cycle and long-cycle work. To effectively connect products and assets, the integration between field service and asset management is essential.¹

REVENUE GENERATION

Asset and field service organizations have achieved strong differentiation by developing new revenue streams, shifting from their traditional identity as mere cost centers to true revenue-generating components of larger business systems.¹ This change has increased the value of businesses, and more leaders are following suit, investing in cloud software infrastructure to support long-term growth. CFOs and CEOs now understand why service teams require an investment to modernize their infrastructure. They are willing to have the conversation about how to add lines of service and make technology solutions more efficient foundations for revenue generation.¹

Field service has come a long way in the last fifteen years. With digital transformation a key force in the industry's accelerated advancement, organizations have kept up with changing customer needs by problem-solving from within—dismantling silos and improving internal processes that impact customer outcomes. An endless amount of data is now organized, available, and easily accessible. It's up to businesses to optimize and harness this data, taking a data-driven approach to successfully navigate the next stage of the industry's evolution.¹

As assets become even more connected and operators rethink the service paradigm across infrastructure and the entire service ecosystem, they'll have to lead with data to proactively address customer challenges and transform the customer experience.¹ And artificial intelligence is the tool that will help them do just that.



The Role of AI in Modern Field Service

Field service in particular requires close collaboration to reach optimal outcomes for professionals and their customers. Employees regularly coordinate activities with other staff and complete a wide range of duties by leveraging each other's expertise, multitasking often switching between paper and computer work.² This can slow down even the simplest processes and put a strain on team members, which can in turn reduce the overall quality of task outcomes.

Many software solutions have helped organizations manage some of the larger factors that contribute to the confusion, but new technology equipped with artificial intelligence (AI) can take things a step further. Most of these daily activities, especially those that are extremely repetitive and error-prone, can be performed by AI tools. With AI-enabled software, companies can lighten employee workloads, enhance worker safety, and focus their efforts on more important responsibilities, like improving customer experiences.² AI allows businesses to automate operations, instantly connect team members, and predict activities when managing their resources and personnel.²

Across every industry, creative minds are finding more ways to boost productivity, align their teams, and improve their customer service through artificial intelligence. In real time, businesses can enhance nearly every element of what goes into providing next-level field services.

At the most basic level, AI can reduce the scope of human error from complex work that was previously manual and demanded intensive coordination. This can lead to improved customer satisfaction when staff are able to achieve full field service mobility—even when offline—to document customer requirements and communicate them easily with field executives and technicians for superior service. Conversational AI solutions also simplify executives' work by enabling a consistent level of customer service quality, communicating updates like technician arrival times and job completion estimates to consumers through chatbots in a timely, cost-effective manner.

Traditional on-premise and proprietary cloud systems function primarily through batch, rather than real-time updates, which commonly cause potentially outdated information to spread across teams as soon as updates occur. Intelligent field services with machine learning offer greater opportunities to streamline scheduling and dispatching and accomplish everyday tasks with technology in real time. Teams can create work orders, perform case management, optimize schedules, manage inventory and predict and recommend field service management actions. With historical data from daily operations and customer interactions, businesses will be better prepared to satisfy future needs, whether that's offering predictive and preventive maintenance, estimating expenses, or addressing market change to operate efficiently.

Benefits of Artificial Intelligence

- ✓ Streamline tasks
- ✓ Organize resources
- ✓ Manage personnel
- ✓ Enhance communication
- ✓ Introduce mobility
- ✓ Intelligent scheduling
- ✓ Refine routing
- ✓ Improve customer service
- ✓ Predict maintenance needs
- ✓ Estimate expenses

The Benefits of Adopting a Cloud-Based Solution

It's clear that AI-enabled software helps organize and share the information that thousands of employees and subcontractors need to perform their job well. But what some solutions miss is the functionality to truly make the most of this data and allow organizations to adapt as the industry and their customers evolve. More benefits can be realized by swapping software that bolts onto a CRM for a fully integrated cloud-based solution that links data to relevant business segments, from billing and auditing to compliance and analytics.

Across all industry verticals, data is frequently siloed, left unorganized and underused. A single centralized model or database is the only way to obtain end-to-end automation, data sharing, and integration between field service and asset management. For complete visibility into the trajectory of a modern field service program, this requires mobile-first technology built with an integration engine that is designed as part of a conical no-code, low-code data architecture using RESTful APIs. And this type of solution is now affordable for companies of all sizes wanting to future-proof their field services.

	Standard, Siloed Field Service Software	AI-Powered, Integrated Field Service Software
Work Order History	✓	✓
Time Clocking	✓	✓
Dynamic, ML-based Real-Time Scheduling & Routing	✓	✓
Enterprise Asset Management		✓
Capacity Planning		✓
Generate Purchase Orders		✓
Service Contract Management & Billing		✓
Inventory & Procurement Management		✓
Fleet & Facilities Management		✓
Integrated GIS-based Workflows, Pin Drop, On/Offline		✓
Job Profitability		✓
Reporting & Analytics		✓

The Path to Well-Managed Maintenance & Field Operations

Cloud-based computing is touted as a future-proof solution because it allows companies to function using the latest technology, with updates remaining constant and invisible to end users. For work and field service operations, staying current with technology that can be deployed quickly and efficiently is critical. The same flexibility, process transparency, and collaboration that helped businesses adapt during the uncertainty of the pandemic will allow them to flourish in future times of change and when stable market conditions are reached.³

Choosing the right technology to harness the intelligence stifled by siloed systems and manual processes is fundamental to continued success. And approaching a software decision like this requires long-term thinking, as it is guaranteed to have lasting effects on business outcomes and costs.

To pave a path to well-managed maintenance and field operations, organizations must take a data-driven approach to connecting the ecosystem of employees, sub-contractors, assets, and customers in real time through a common language—a feat that is only possible with the assistance of AI-enabled, integrated, cloud-based tools.

References

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About KloudGin

KloudGin is a trusted provider of the only combined, one-cloud, industry-focused mobile field service, work, and asset management solution that connects customers, employees, and assets using AI-powered access to information, on any device. Built for the workers who use it most, KloudGin eliminates traditional information and process silos to enable clients to unify siloed systems, resources, and processes so they can transform the customer experience and improve worker productivity to effectively meet the challenges of today—and the demands of tomorrow.

Ready to see how AI
can benefit your operation?

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