

GE Healthcare Global Services Puts Customers First With Cloud-Based Field Service Platform

ServiceMax provides GE with a globally scalable tool to meet customers' needs for all aspects of its services business.

Technicians for GE Healthcare Global Services are not direct patient care medical professionals, but they play an essential role in the overall quality of care that medical facilities provide to patients. These skilled troubleshooters diagnose and treat problems on medical equipment that help keep patients healthy. Their role in maintaining and servicing these devices has almost as much impact on quality of care as the attending physician's. The ability to service equipment efficiently and effectively is a key reason the company implemented ServiceMax for cloud-based field service management.

Five years later, the system has resulted in significant gains. They include:

- A 50% reduction in the call center abandon rate
- Post-call work reduction of 30% from its peak
- A simplified parts ordering and debrief process
- A fully integrated call center, dispatch, remote support and debrief process resulting in a 25% reduction in field engineers' travel times
- A reduction in call center volume of 40% with introduction of self-service portals.

ServiceMax provided Global Services with a single, standardized system to manage field service orders. It's allowed the field service team to focus on managing their daily operations instead of the technology.

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In the past, every region had their own processes and their own tools, said Matt Ausman, Vice President, Digital Field Services in GE Healthcare's Digital Service Technology team. So, if we wanted to make a change to any of our field service engineers' processes, we had to go make changes in over five different systems. In our future vision state, I spend more time on business value and less on how to make the systems work by only changing one or two systems.

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TOO MANY SYSTEMS TO MANAGE

Prior to implementing ServiceMax, Global Services managed three legacy mainframes, all 20-plus years old. The organization also used multiple smaller customer relationship management (CRM) systems. The lack of an integrated, streamlined approach to the company's field service systems led to many inefficiencies. For example, developers needed to create applications separately for each mainframe. Also, any attempt to standardize the interactions among call centers, remote engineers and field engineers was nearly impossible.

The size of the organization created additional challenges, with 8,000 service engineers in more than 140 countries. Global Services must deal with varying upstream supply chains, regulatory requirements and local regulations across all the countries it services. That leads to an inherent complexity that manifested itself in completely separate tools. In the past, this meant that when Global Services leaders wanted to implement global initiatives, they spent more time trying to understand their systems' capabilities instead of how to increase value for their customers. For example, if they wanted to implement capabilities for remote triage or FMIs, they would need to make changes to 10 different systems, including design, architecture, build-out, testing and deployment.

“The cost and complexity to make one major change in how our field engineers order parts around the world took 12 to 18 months and required an extensive investment across all the systems and regional processes,” Ausman said, adding that 18 months is too long to wait for productivity improvements.

LESS COMPLEXITY, MORE SCALABILITY

Global Services deployed the ServiceMax field service software in 2015 to address many of the field service issues the organization faced. The group's disparate

and disconnected systems simply couldn't grow with its global service organization. ServiceMax addresses this by providing a single source of truth in the cloud.

Over the next four years, Global Services migrated the bulk of its field service management information to the cloud. Global Services uses ServiceMax for call center operations, remote support, field order debrief, parts ordering, dispatch, installed base management and self-help customer portals. One of the core components of ServiceMax is the ability to gain a 360-degree view of the organization's assets. Agents and technicians can access critical information about an asset's maintenance history, serial number and subcomponent attributes, location on customer's site and bill of materials.

The company now has a globally scalable platform with advanced capabilities that provides the efficiency, optimization and scalability to meet customers' needs for all aspects of its services business. All of this translates into faster response times at customer sites, more efficient diagnosis and repairs, and less documentation work through simplification and automation. This leads to a better overall customer experience — including improved triage, which drives up FTR (First Time Right), having a direct impact in delivering patient outcomes.

Key decision makers can refocus on driving business value rather than figuring out how to make changes in the system because it's too complex. Access to a cloud-based system also allows for more remote customer solutions, which is a significant benefit during the pandemic.

“In the COVID world today, we're trying to do more remote-type solutions for our customers,” Ausman said. **“ServiceMax provides us the scalability to handle increased data volumes and integrate in with GE specific remote tools to provide remote, value-based offerings for our customers.”**



FUTURE PLANS: MORE CAPABILITIES

Looking ahead, the Global Services team expects even more efficiencies as the organization further consolidates systems into the cloud-based platform. Currently, Global Services primarily manages dispatch services using Excel tracking or semi-automated systems. This approach leads to missed opportunities to further optimize processes and improve customer service. In the future, the organization plans to use the ServiceBoard module to increase the efficiency of its dispatching process.

ServiceBoard is a planning and scheduling dashboard that provides visibility into a field engineer's availability, location and skills. Dispatchers can use the information displayed on their screen to match work orders manually or automatically through assignment rules and intelligent, score-based resource recommendations. This will allow Global Services' call center agents to identify the best person, at the right time, to send to a hospital or clinic.

Global Services has deployed ServiceMax to Japan and Latin America. The organization has plans to expand ServiceMax to Europe, the Middle East and Africa in the next year-and-a-half, then the rest of Asia Pacific, China, Australia and New Zealand by 2024.

Future deployments will include improved tool-management tracking capabilities and enhanced functionality in Global Services' channel partner management portal to extend the benefits to third-party servicers. Global Services also plans to add additional functionality to ServiceMax through upgrades to Salesforce Lightning, the addition of automated software downloads and installs as well as new remote servicing capabilities.

Listen to the "[Digital Transformation for Long-Term Sustainability](#)" webinar hosted by *IndustryWeek* to learn more about the ways GE Healthcare Global Services leverages technology to optimize its field services business.