

FIELD SERVICE SPECIAL

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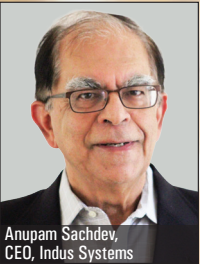
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Marne Martin,  
CEO, ServicePower

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Anupam Sachdev,  
CEO, Indus Systems

## ByBox:

Rewiring the  
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Blueprint



Stuart Miller,  
Co-Founder & CEO

#202, Fremont, CA-94538  
44790, S Grimmer Blvd.  
CIO REVIEW





R. Steven Tungate

# Transforming the Field Service Business Model

By **R. Steven Tungate**, VP/GM, Service, Supply Chain and Innovation, Toshiba America Business Solutions

With the increasingly connected world, service has emerged as a key area to make a real difference in a company's success. Today's technology trends in leveraging the Internet of Things (IoT) and cloud computing are transforming field service. The questions for all field service executives are "how can my field service organization leverage the technological capabilities of today and what can we do to leverage this great technology to gain a competitive advantage?"

Toshiba is well down the path of providing solutions and services that are of incremental value to a customer. Very few organizations can compete as solely providers of products. Just providing products relegates them to tighter margins and less growth. As companies continue to evolve as solution and service providers, the service delivery model is changing.

As a line business executive I've tried to adapt to this change by creating a vision to deliver exceptional service through the use of new information technologies and tools.

Once a vision is created, many joint brainstorming sessions between our information systems and engineering leaders help define which activities would be critical to success in achieving the vision and objective.

The necessary knowledge of new technology offerings is often not well understood by the line business functions. Improving the joint responsibility to innovate and deliver new solutions belongs equally with the technology and business teams. Delivering this innovation belongs to business, engineering and IT staff.

As in most all organizations the difficult part is not the idea, it is the execution. This execution needs to be jointly managed and delivered by IT, engineering and the business, hand-in-hand.

Two recent examples of delivering innovation to field service are new capabilities enabled by the cloud and IoT. At Toshiba, our business products have recently been enabled with technology to allow the service team to manage a configuration, monitor performance and perform service tasks on a device through the cloud. The lead for this change has come from the group that touches the customer the most, field service. This new capability

**I**nnovation is known to fuel sustained organizational growth and is the engine that allows businesses to maintain their vitality within an incredibly competitive global economy. At my company, Toshiba America Business Solutions, our executive leadership team considers continuous innovation as the best defense against the threat of ever increasing competition.

Clearly organizations that constantly innovate can respond to environmental change quicker and perform better than those that lack the capacity to innovate. Often field service delivery is the last area that comes to mind for many organizations when discussing unique ways to develop a competitive advantage in the marketplace.

Toshiba is recognized globally as a technology and product innovator that throughout its 140-year history has been on the leading edge in developing many important firsts both in Japan and globally. This innovation has not always been delivered in the often mundane world of field service.





enables us to provide better and faster service and support at an equal or lower cost. Customer service and personal touch are both paramount to client retention. These tools help provide that personal touch. In today's connected age, clients want us to understand their business and anticipate their needs. We are the experts on our product and are continuously demonstrating incremental value when we share value with our customers. Customer retention more directly correlates to service delivery than any other aspect at Toshiba. We are fortunate that our retention is extremely high. Maintaining this edge is survival. As we continue to innovate with this new platform and toolset, our team is exploring self correcting devices, automated service triggers and improved product development through real-time cloud-based analytics. Starting from only a year or so ago, we now have more than 30 percent of our install base connected to the cloud. Our ability to retain customers is enhanced by delivering more value than others can easily replicate. As new hardware technology enters the marketplace, it eventually becomes commoditized. In the world of exceptional service, your value always is a differentiator.

This is a journey that is still at the beginning of what is capable with the many new technologies that emerge daily. It has been surprising in the number of new ideas and processes that have sprung from the introduction of some basic cloud and IoT capabilities.

Field technicians are getting creative and using their intimate knowledge of the product and what they do every day to exponentially leverage this new technology. It all starts with a CIO and a business partnership. Once the ball starts moving it keeps rolling.

As the individual that represents the business function, I cannot deliver the innovation needed for a competitive advantage without the cooperation and support of a very involved CIO or CTO. The CIO has to participate in the challenges that are facing the business and be the internal consultant that can deliver on the corporate promise.



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I've always found the internal knowledge within the IT team superior to the myriad of paid technology consultants who speed dial me daily. The task of a CIO is obviously to stay apprised of technology that meets the changing businesses requirements. The goal is to help provide tools that drive cost out while improving the customer experience. A CIO should help identify these opportunities and share a vision of how the technology can solve business challenges. **CR**