



FROM THE FIELD NOTES BLOG

3 Ways to Build Stronger Connections with Your Customers



The field service team is often one of the most crucial points of contact that customers will have. That means that the field service operation is in an ideal position to bolster your company's connections with its customers. Of course, that also means that if things go south with the customer experience, you're likely to be held accountable.

And keep in mind that the customer's experience often boils down to a matter of perspective and perception. If the customer is unhappy, the facts and the perfectly reasonable extenuating circumstances won't necessarily enter into the equation.

In an industry like the explosive fiber-to-the-premises arena, customer satisfaction is often a make-or-break factor that quickly differentiates the leaders from the rest of the pack. Frustrated customers can easily switch to a competitor – whether it's another fiber provider or a company using a different broadband technology. So it's critical to keep your customers as happy as possible.

Fortunately, a well-equipped field service operation has a broad assortment of tools available to ensure that the customer experience – and customer perceptions – wind up in positive territory. Many of these tactics start with a simple premise: Treat the customer as a full-fledged stakeholder in the field service operation.

It's easy to fall into the trap of viewing the customer as just some outsider that you need to pay attention to – the way you need to be aware of unusual weather or traffic that could affect your performance. Instead, think of the customer the same way you think of the rest of the members of your team.

Visibility: Field operations often think about visibility as something that only involves employees and contractors – the backoffice personnel who manage scheduling, dispatching, inventory, and asset management, and the technicians who work in the field. But customers crave visibility into the operation as well – at least, into the specific piece of the operation that affects them.

A robust [customer portal](#) can provide them with all the information they need, giving them assurances that they haven't been forgotten, and providing them with real-time updates any time that unforeseen circumstances require a change in plans.

Customer-centric OKRs: Many OKRs (objectives and key results metrics) are directly related to financial performance – reducing costs or increasing revenue. Those OKRs often drive the countless day-to-day decisions you'll make. So if your OKRs don't reflect anything that your customers care about, those day-to-day decisions aren't likely to help much in bolstering your customer satisfaction.

Prioritizing your CSAT score helps. But there may be more specific KPIs you can target that will have a much greater impact. For example, most customers will be delighted if you can give them shorter appointment windows. Whatever your current windows are, consider aiming to make them shorter, something which you may be able to accomplish by enhancing your scheduling capabilities. For example, the ability to instantly match the right technician (based on, say, their skills, experience, current location, and tools and inventory on hand) with the needs of a new task can not only shrink your appointment windows, but is also likely to boost the customer's satisfaction with the high quality of their overall experience.

Responsiveness: Many companies ignore the opportunity to get extremely valuable insights on how they could improve their processes. How so? They ignore customer feedback. Either they don't ask for it, they don't believe, or they don't act on it.

One of the main reasons they don't act on it is because the changes customers might want to see are often simply not practical. Those changes might require changes in your workflows which, in turn, would require scarce IT resources or expensive systems integrators. Or they would take so long to implement that they wouldn't be relevant any more by the time they go live.

The good news is that a [no-code platform](#) like Zinier's makes it easy to implement changes in days rather than months, or even in real time. (And when you know you can respond quickly to customer input, you're much more likely to ask for it.)

You can dive deeper into these tactics (and more) in our ebook about how field service operations can [build stronger customer connections](#). [Download it here](#).

Contact us

hello@zinier.com | www.zinier.com

