

Innovation, Customer-Focus, & ServiceMax: The 3 Keys to Arbon Equipment's Service Business Success



Customer Quick Facts

INDUSTRY:

Material Handling

SIZE:

800 employees

HEADQUARTERS:

Milwaukee, WI

WEBSITE:

www.arbonequipment.com

Solutions

- Work Order Management
- Scheduling and Dispatch
- Installed Base Management
- Mobile App
- Entitlements and Contracts
- Parts and Returns Management
- Dashboards & KPIs
- IoT & Preventive Maintenance
- ServiceMax Partner and Customer Communities

Arbon Equipment Corporation, a Rite-Hite® company, is part of the Rite-Hite global distribution network of exclusive representatives. As a material handling equipment manufacturer and service provider, Arbon helps customers become safer and more efficient at their docks and in their warehouses.

Arbon transformed from service as a cost center to a successful service business over the years through hard work and innovation. When they found themselves facing the digital transformation, service leadership had a desire to grow further as well as continuously innovate for customers and become more proactive as the world began to change at an exponential pace. This prompted the beginning of the digital transformation journey with ServiceMax.

Today, Arbon relies on ServiceMax's industry leading asset-centric field service management platform. The Arbon service business leverages ServiceMax's powerful installed base, work order management, scheduling, contracts, and reporting capabilities to gain visibility into the service business, improve first-time fix rates and technician efficiency, and innovate for customers like never before.

The Desire to Innovate Service Kicks off a Digital Transformation

Before embarking on its digital transformation, Arbon Equipment's service business was primarily run on paper and disparate tools. This created major inefficiencies that hampered the growth of the service business. In 2013, the Arbon service team dipped their toes into digital, turning to their ERP system, JD Edwards, and a homegrown service management application.

"ServiceMax is enabling us to do things we haven't been able to do before. It's allowing us to get the right people, tools and equipment to the right places at the right time, which greatly impacts our efficiency and efficacy."

Ed Blau, VP and General Manager, Arbon Equipment

This solution sufficed for a while, but a clunky user-interface and the inability to build out the functionality they needed—such as to schedule jobs, view routes on a map, send surveys and forms to technicians, and integrate into other systems—put Arbon on a hunt for a more robust, dedicated field service management tool.

In the search for a new solution, Arbon prioritized finding a tool that was easy to use and intuitive. They wanted a solution that would enable them to quickly create and process work orders, automate repetitive tasks, easily transfer information to and from technicians, provide complete visibility across the organization, and enable them to move rapidly toward proactive service.

And most importantly, the Arbon team was looking for a platform that could grow and innovate with them. “We wanted a software program that would grow with us because with the previous one, while it worked, a lot of our great ideas got blocked because of the time and cost of development,” says Tim Bellows, Northeast Operation Manager at Arbon.

Service Moves from Cost Center to Competitive Differentiator

Following a comprehensive search, Arbon Equipment selected ServiceMax as the provider that could transform service delivery and become a long-term innovation partner. ServiceMax’s asset-centric field service management solution had all of the functionality that Arbon needed to manage its service business and extended partner network. In addition, the extended

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Mirian Herold-Young, *Business Process Manager*, Arbon Equipment

ServiceMax product and knowledge ecosystem provided the platform for innovation and insight to allow Arbon to grow and innovate for its customers.

The ServiceMax solution has had an impact on every person in the service and installation organization, from back-end administrative staff to customer-facing technicians. Install & Service Schedulers have a scheduling tool that allows them to coordinate schedules rather than just plug holes. Regional Managers have a method for capturing tribal knowledge that used to reside in the heads and notebooks of employees. And by using ServiceMax, Service & Installation Managers now have the data and reports needed to manage their business, allowing them to manage by exception, rather than having to dig into every work order.

Results

- Dramatic improvements in visibility including 10 high-level dashboards and 100 strategic reports
- Improved execution of customer requests as measured by response time and first-time fix
- Increased utilization by Service technicians, now active or training 85% of the time
- Significant decrease in training time and training burden for new hires
- Hugely successful COVID-19 Reporting Program delivered within hours of request
- Implemented KPI-driven goals and objectives for Service team members at all Levels
- Enabled exception reporting for aged WOs
- Improved subcontractor coordination and communication for installation and project work

Out in the field, technicians have all the information they need to manage their work, execute work orders, and confirm entitlement coverage right from their iPads. And key information like surveys, instructions, and manuals are seamlessly shared with them in a consumable, mobile-friendly format. On the business side, salespeople have visibility into what is happening in their districts—when jobs are scheduled, when work orders are completed, when jobs are billed, and more. With this, they are able to build customer relationships and generate the positive outcomes necessary to grow the overall business

“Our ability to execute is our biggest competitive advantage. Customers know that when they call us, we’re going to dispatch efficiently with the right tech at the right time,” says Tim Bellows.

While service may have started out as a necessity at Arbon, a commitment to innovating for the customer and a digital transformation with ServiceMax led to service becoming one of the most successful “products” offered by Arbon.

“ServiceMax is enabling us to do things we haven’t been able to do before. It’s allowing us to get the right pieces to the right places at the right time, which greatly impacts our efficiency and efficacy,”— says Ed Blau, VP and General Manager at Arbon Equipment.

KPI Visibility Drives New Levels of Service Excellence

One of the biggest benefits the team has experienced comes from ServiceMax’s data reporting capabilities. With newfound visibility into service metrics like first-time fix, response time, dispatch time, technician uptime, and more, Arbon has been able to establish a baseline, prioritize areas of improvement, and continue to enhance its ability to execute. At a strategic level, it allows the team to continually measure the utilization of their service offerings to help grow the service business from the ground up.

“The visibility into our service business has been life changing. It’s a dramatic improvement over our old system. Today, we have ten dashboards and roughly 100 reports, four of which are delivered to service and install managers on a daily and weekly basis so that they have the data needed to manage their business,” says Mirian Herold-Young, Business Process Manager at Arbon Equipment.

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“We can now use data to make informed decisions around goals and objectives for our service coordinators and technicians. We’ve increased billable hours per tech and first-stop completion rates and reduced end of day commutes and average travel times. Now we are turning our attention to tracking our first-time fix rate to give the sales team another value-add to share with customers,” say Tim Bellows.

On top of this, training and empowering global service teams has become much easier. “We are always thinking about how to make the day better for our service teams and ServiceMax has really made an impact. We’ve seen significant decrease in training time and training burden and have improved our admin’s workload and productivity since rolling out ServiceMax,” says Mirian Herold-Young.

A Promising Future of Proactive Service & Innovation Alongside ServiceMax

Since implementing ServiceMax, Tim Bellows and Ed Blau have worked to focus managers around a core set of KPIs that will help them make business process improvements. But they have much bigger plans for Arbon’s service business than just improving KPIs like first-time fix.

“The future for us is really asset management and Service Level Agreements—and we wouldn’t even be discussing that if we didn’t have ServiceMax to execute that with. This strategy will fundamentally transform what we’re doing in the service business and push us toward a true 360-degree relationship with the customer,” says Ed Blau.

The Arbon service team has never had the ability to provide proactive service, but with ServiceMax, they have the necessary tools and data to do so. They also have the groundwork to build a service contracts business, make use of sensor data from customer assets, and provide a consumer-like customer experience that is transformative in their industry.

“When I look five years into the future, my goal would be that we’re rolling a truck before the customer ever picks up the phone because we’ve got that information and it’s a part of their SLA. They don’t have to worry. We’re going to be able to be there. They don’t have to think about it,” says Mirian Herold-Young.

Tim Bellows envisions a customer experience at Arbon that mirrors today’s consumer experience. “I see using ServiceMax’s upcoming customer app in a way where the customer can simply click a button to request service and see the status of the work order, just like how you can see

your pizza being made with Domino’s. And I want to go one step further to where our customers can actually see their history, their equipment, and what we’ve done to it.”

In the short term, Arbon is gearing up to leverage more of the ServiceMax platform and pursue the ideas that their team is developing in partnership with the ServiceMax product, support, and innovation teams. “Collaborating with ServiceMax means we are not alone in innovating for our customers. ServiceMax is constantly adding new value for us that we can turn into better service for our customers,” says Mirian Herold-Young.

“Arbon has always been committed to innovation and service excellence, and now that we have undergone this digital transformation journey with ServiceMax, I think we’ve only hit the tip of the iceberg on what we can achieve,” says Mirian Herold-Young.

About ServiceMax

ServiceMax is the global leader in asset-centric field service management, offering cloud-based software that improves the productivity of complex, equipment-centric service execution. Enterprise companies across the globe have turned to ServiceMax to help them keep the world running. For more information, visit www.servicemax.com.

About Arbon Equipment

Arbon Equipment Corporation, a Rite-Hite® company, is part of the Rite-Hite global distribution network of exclusive representatives. Established in 1987 to assure industrial customers have a dependable local partner to work with, Arbon is committed to providing dependable service, extensive experience and quality products to meet and exceed our customers’ needs.