

Smart Care's Recipe for Scalable Service Success



Achieving service excellence through a data-driven approach

Smart Care Equipment Solutions is the largest independent provider of commercial kitchen repair in the United States. You can tell by a quick visit to the company's website the clarity that exists around how service acts as a competitive differentiator and significant growth opportunity. The company's vision is clearly articulated on its site, stating, "By 2024, we will become America's Best commercial kitchen service company by: Delighting customers through the entire service experience; Being the first choice for top technicians; Acquiring service companies that strengthen our offering and reflect our culture; and tangibly improving the success of our customers and technicians by leveraging the industry's richest set of data."



Gyner Ozgul, Sr. VP of Operations at Smart Care, has a long tenure with the company and is not only passionate about what the future holds but bullish on how to get there. Ozgul knows that a strategic vision for the future is imperative but laying a strong foundation to build that future upon is the critical first step. Since Smart Care grows a lot through acquisition, the company has recently focused on reshaping its IT infrastructure to provide the cohesiveness, consistency, and visibility needed to build its vision for the future. "On the commercial side of the business, data is our enabler for differentiation because of scale. To put that in simple terms, Smart Care would like to be the consumer reports of the repair industry for kitchens. Our data and our size will allow us to do that, but it's a big vision and getting there is a journey. Knowing the right steps to build toward that outcome is how we'll ultimately achieve that goal," says Ozgul.

Know Your Truths, Set Your Priorities

Ozgul and the Smart Care team realized that to work toward that vision as well as address the evolution in customer expectations and the opportunity to better optimize resources, it was necessary to invest in more modern technology. "We needed technology that would help us build a better customer experience.

From an end user perspective, I call it the Amazon mentality or consumerization that's happened so this whole expectation of service delivery and timing a service delivery and great communication and constant communication flow, but also things like information on the equipment you're working on and work order management systems," explains Ozgul. "Impacting the customer experience was first and foremost for us."

The technology in place at Smart Care was around 15 years old, outdated in terms of functionality, relied heavily on integrations which made it complex to maintain, and wasn't going to be effective in supporting the goals Smart Care had for the business. "We knew we needed to invest in a platform that would enable us to scale over time, that could support our growth," says Ozgul. "We wanted to take the opportunity to focus on optimizing processes and to determine how to optimize the utilization of our technicians, which are a finite resource. They're repairing very complex pieces of equipment in high-pressure environments with customers that have very high expectations, and being able to manage that workforce remotely, especially during the pandemic. To do this all well enough so that the customer sees the service level impact is a challenge for our organization, but one we knew we needed to take on."

Smart Care began its search for more modern technology with clarity on three primary objectives: delivering a more modern and consistent customer experience, improving optimization of its resources, and investing in technology that would enable the company to scale service delivery as it grows both organically and through acquisition.

A Data-Driven Future Isn't Possible Without Modern, Cohesive Technology

Smart Care chose to deploy a technology suite from IFS that includes Applications Enterprise Resource Management, Field Service Management, and Planning and Scheduling Optimization. "At the highest level, we chose IFS because we believe the platform gives us the ability we desire to scale as a business," says Ozgul. "Looking at our future vision, we wanted to make sure we had a partner in a technology that allows us to dictate the inflow of the data. In all data reporting or monetization out there, the inflow of data is critical. In our case, part of the challenge we had is that inflow was really difficult because of our antiquated technology. Just as an example, on a work order, a tech could opt out of certain fields which is very disruptive if you're trying to do data aggregation and monetization to customers. With IFS, we've been able to institute a process that techs are required to follow which not only improves the customer experience as we desired but helps us improve our data integrity which expands our opportunities for its use."

With IFS, Smart Care sets the stage for its journey to differentiation through data. "IFS helps us to master the seemingly simple things first, like building labor and parts accurately," explains Ozgul. "That seems very fundamental but believe it or not it's easy to do wrong and provides a ton of value when we get it right. With IFS we have a simpler platform with less integrations – and every integration is a breakage point, so this improves integrity."

The end-to-end use of IFS technology, from order to cash, addresses Smart Care's need to provide a consistent customer experience. "We use IFS on the front end for CRM, then a call moves to dispatch and that's where we use IFS from a scheduling optimization standpoint. Our dispatchers now have full visibility of technicians and their work days, and the tool has levels of automation built in that we can configure to allow us to automate portions of the schedule in order to keep technicians busy all the time, keep calls flowing, and drive much better service to the customer at the end user level."

Parts management, work order management, and mobile capabilities are all being leveraged from IFS as well. "Things like parts management and warehouse management that we supply into those calls for technicians to do the repairs, we are

working on a few adjacencies to IFS with things like AI tools to help technicians with part and product identification, as well as self-help guides. We use the IFS mobility tool for our technicians which is an iPad-based work order management system that integrates with the back-office tools. It relays the information the customer calls in, as well as any new information that comes from us, in terms of directive to the technician to perform the service through his mobile device. For instance, we can dictate what questions he should be asking to the customer. All customer requirements and needs, the work order diagnosis and history, everything is notated in the mobile solution and then communicates back with the CRM in the background so we have optics into all of that information up until the closure of the service event."

Upon closer of the service event, Smart Care invoices and bills through IFS and can customize the method based on customer preference. "All of that functionality is built in on the billing side, so the lifecycle of a work order flows through the system," says Ozgul. "We are a national footprint business. A ton of complexity comes out of that. Geographic complexity, operating complexities. We need to be able to give customers a consistent level of service and IFS enables us to do that. But it also gives us the ability to aggregate data, which is very unique and imperative for our long-term vision. Every single work order in IFS generates hundreds of data points and over time this allows us to generate very valuable insights, which is where we feel we can drive a significant point of differentiation."

Early Wins and Future Vision

Smart Care has been live on the IFS platform since September of 2020. "Our earliest win with the system was in terms of what we call value capture. With the former mobility solution, there were instances where time wasn't being recorded or billed for accurately. With IFS mobile, we've configured the system so that there is an accurate reconciliation of the job time on site, the bill time to the customer, and the paid time to the technician, and in doing so we've seen a decrease in value leakage," explains Ozgul. "On the parts side, the chain of custody, in terms of when a part moves through our warehousing system to the technician and ultimately to the work order, it's much tighter, and there is less opportunity for that part to get lost in the process." IFS improved the value capture for both labor and parts and put an immediate stop to that value leakage, which improved Smart Care's gross profit by 5-8% within four months of go-live.

Current focus areas for Smart Care around use of IFS are around better understanding customer pipelines using FSM and further configuring the Planning and Scheduling Optimization (PSO) tool. “On the sales side, we are using the understanding our customer pipelines using FSM. So, where are the pipelines? What’s our close rate? How many customers convert from pipeline to sales? Because we’re using this whole IFS platform, we have an ability to see what our actual sell-through of a customer is end to end,” explain Ozgul. “With PSO, we’re putting in customer SLA expectations into the tool now so that we can let the system help us control that service expectation to a customer.”

The company is also continuing to evaluate and pilot technologies that work well alongside the IFS platform, such as Remote Assistance for remote service capabilities, Aquant AI to improve knowledge management, and more customer self-help tools. Perhaps the most exciting potential is to watch Smart Care’s data-driven service vision come to life, which will happen by building upon its success with the IFS platform. “Our customers have equipment that’s in excess of 100,000 to 200,000 dollars for a single piece of equipment so their understanding of the lifecycle, birth to death of that equipment, and how they extend their capital and where they should spend their capital and where they should be fixing the equipment versus replacing the equipment is something we see as very important, and something customers want that we’ll be able to provide because we now have the capabilities within IFS to house that data in a logical manner,” says Ozgul. “The ability to increasingly leverage data as a part of our service value proposition is the most exciting aspect of what our investment in IFS will enable.”

We’d love to show you how IFS can help you grow and transform your service business, save overhead and deliver for your customers.

To learn more, [e-mail info@ifs.com](mailto:info@ifs.com), contact your local IFS office or visit our web site, [IFS.com](https://www.ifs.com)

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