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By Brian Albright, Field Technologies

Field Technologies talks with Zach McGuire of MasTec Advanced Technologies, who explains how a diverse approach to market shifts and self-driven technician practices keep business humming at this third-party service contractor.

MasTec's Advanced Technologies division is a third-party service contractor that provides technology solutions and installations for residential and commercial contractors.



Doing that manually was very painful. Just this year, we got to a place where we now have a full view of all our work by region or market, and we know technician skillsets. We have increased overall efficiency by being able to dynamically route those technicians. That's how we are using ClickSoftware.

Everyone has a smartphone and, in some cases, they have iPads. Our security clients, for example, require more technology. For the most part, though, the technicians use smartphones. They can turn that on and know where their first job is going to be each day.

It has definitely changed quite a bit. Originally, DIRECTV outsourced all of their work, and we handled all of that for them. After AT&T bought them, they had their own technicians, so now our coverage varies by market.

In New York, there is no AT&T U-verse, so we do all of the DIRECTV work in the New York area. In places like Dallas or Atlanta, we only have a certain percentage of that work.

We also have another client that has insourced resources, but now they are pursuing a strategy of using more external service resources. They are trying to eliminate truck rolls, but they also realize that we have the ability to perform that service at a lower cost than their in-house resources.

We just launched that formally in the past 30 days. There are a lot of technology companies like Google that would love to have access to the home when our technician is there. We're in the home putting services together, and the technician is a trusted resource.

The customer views that person as professional in the space. So when they notice that, for example, a customer doesn't have an HDMI cable between the box and the TV, they can say, "I have one in my truck for

"Having a trusted expert in the home and products that can enhance the customer experience — and offering that type of 'do-it-for-me' service — creates an upselling opportunity that is much greater than we ever thought."

Zach McGuire, MasTec
Advanced Technologies

We've had to adopt some technology so we could handle those transactions correctly, including the use of disclaimers and warranty coverage. This way, they don't call AT&T to cover something they bought separately.

We had to undertake training so they could utilize the new system, especially when they were moving from platform to platform for different clients.

But the bigger part of training is that not all of our technicians are natural salespeople. Some don't like to sell, so we created modules that enable upsell without requiring technicians be great salespeople. They can have a clean conversation about adding to the viewing experience or taking care of equipment without feeling like they're selling.

Different clients have their own upselling programs. One thing we sell for DIRECTV is a protection plan — a warranty on all of the cabling with a free upgrade once a year. We sell that at a rate of 52 percent; warranties are one of the biggest things we sell.

We have classroom and hands-on training. We did a one-day training session where they ran through the modules for each product. We are not only training them to sell, but we also do product training so they know what each product does.

We're also doing work for Amazon and providing a lot of different services. As we add SKUs, we have to have training for those products. We added exercise equipment, and the technicians needed guidance on how to put together a particularly tricky elliptical machine. That's something we can push out in a short video that the technicians can see on their phones.

We also use the SmarterU learning management platform. You can put content on there so the technicians can access it. If they are at an Amazon job and they aren't familiar with a specific brand of elliptical trainer, for instance, they can reference their phone to pull up little videos that show tips and tricks.

and we use a piece-rate system, so they get paid for the labor portion as well. That creates two opportunities for the technician.



Overall efficiency has increased for MasTec Advanced Technologies with

