

The Memorable Ones

By Roger Henson, Southwest Training and Consulting

We have all had a car or two that was just something special, perhaps not to anyone else, but it was special to us. It had quirks and little things you had to do to it that only you could relate to. I have had more than one.

My first car was a black Ford. Was there any other color back in the early '50s? Keeping that car on the road was my real introduction to mechanical things, how they worked and what it took to fix them. You name it and I probably replaced it. Bruised knuckles let people know I had been under the hood and under the car as it sat up on – probably not too reliable – “jacks.” Then there was the Oldsmobile Convertible and my memorable trip on Route 66 with a couple of buddies after high school graduation. The extra status was the water bag hanging on the hood ornament as we cruised across Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico and Arizona.

While in the Air Force and stationed in Southern California, I had a Corvaair (unsafe at any speed according to Ralph Nader) that I drove at all speeds and kept spit and polished for a couple of years. After that there was the sports car that I totaled. I still have two pictures of it, before and after. As a Technical Service Representative, my first company car was a '69 Plymouth 4-door with blackwall tires. Back then everybody else had white sidewalls. What happened to them? The trunk and back seat were full of tools and parts. And, my parts depot was my apartment.

As a service manager I also drove many miles, and I still like to drive. There was my Camaro, Volkswagen, Volvo and finally my Jeep Cherokee. That Cherokee has seen just about every town in Texas. I bought it in 2000 and I still have it. It has been in one and hopefully only one accident. My insurance agent wanted to “total it,” but I convinced him to have it restored. It now has over 300,000 miles and I have had the same mechanic take care of it for the past 12 years. Good cars and good mechanics still go together; they are just harder to find, but I am very lucky. I also have a Volvo with 180,000 miles and have found a mechanic who specializes in keeping old Volvos on the road.

With today's computer-controlled cars, it is hard to be a part-time backyard mechanic. And, perhaps there are better things to do with our time and leave the tinkering to the professional skilled technicians. For me and a lot of folks I know, we like to be aware of the latest high-tech advances while still keeping a string or piece of baling wire attached to the electro-mechanical things of the past.

This finally leads me to the topic of the office equipment industry. I remember well the many names customers would have for our equipment. They would coax it, rub it, say sweet things (or just the opposite) trying to get it to finish a job. Then when it

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IFS Announces IFS Field Service Management 6



New version, built for the cloud but also available on-premise, offers a reimagined user experience and a 50% performance improvement

IFS, the global enterprise applications company, previews major updates of its IFS Field Service Management™ (FSM) offering at the IFS World Conference in Atlanta.

IFS Field Service Management 6 features a number of enhancements, including:

- **New user experience (UX):** With a completely reengineered, fully responsive front end, IFS FSM 6 will run on any browser and on any device at any time. The new UX features user-centric and intuitive action patterns as well as stunning graphic designs including high-resolution charts and diagrams.
- **Major performance boost in IFS Planning & Scheduling Optimization™ (PSO):** The IFS PSO component of IFS Field Service Management yields a 50% improvement in processing performance on Microsoft Azure. In addition, the maximum number of activities per standard Dynamic Scheduling Engine (DSE) for dynamic responsive processing has been significantly increased.
- **Next-generation configurability:** Written in an all-new scripting language that empowers customers to configure data fields, workflows, and user behavior, IFS FSM 6 eliminates the need for costly customizations, providing greater agility while evergreen service management capabilities ensure seamless updates.
- **Key functional enhancements:** Alongside these major new architectural changes, IFS FSM 6 introduces a multitude of significant new features and extensions to existing functionality in areas including increased scheduling optimization flexibility, warranty claims management, mobile synchronization, and UI improvements.

Company Culture Flaws That Inhibit Innovation

Source: *Field Technologies Magazine*

By Sarah Nicastro, publisher/editor in chief, *Field Technologies*



While innovation is undeniably imperative in today’s field service landscape, it doesn’t come easy for everyone or every company. It can be challenging to carve out time to “think big.” It can be scary. It can be difficult to determine what path to take among countless viable options. If an innovative mindset comes natural to you, that’s a great thing – but you’ll undoubtedly have to navigate co-workers who don’t share that trait. If innovation is outside of your comfort zone, that’s OK too – but you have to find ways to force the issue, because complacency is the kiss of death in the service-driven world we live in.

There seem to be some common company culture flaws that create roadblocks to innovation. Recognizing these flaws is the first step toward working past them to create an environment that fuels rather than smothers innovation.

#1: The Business-As-Usual Mentality

If business is going well, innovation may not seem urgent. Oh but it is. Just because things are going reasonably well doesn’t mean you don’t need to be thinking about how you can do better or what will come next. Leaders in service are always looking for ways to improve upon what they’re doing; even as they experience success. Going about business as usual is a trap, because before you know it, the competition that is brainstorming and roadmapping behind the scenes will be surpassing you. If you find yourself or your co-workers saying things like, “it’s going pretty well,” or “we’ve always done it this way,” or “if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it,” you have an issue. Set aside time for brainstorming and innovative thinking, no matter how uncomfortable it may feel at first. Force yourself to think outside the box. Ask your customers for insight on what you could do better. Whatever you do, stop standing still.



#2: A Lack Of Collaboration

When there isn’t a convention to promote communication both within and among departments and functions, things happen in a vacuum and in that it is very difficult to uncover opportunities for innovation. Creating the opportunity for different roles and functions within your business to communicate, brainstorm, and collaborate will contribute to a more innovative culture. Once your teams begin discussing their daily struggles, wins, and experiences, ideas for how to improve your organization will start to surface naturally. The first step is to enable regular, open communication – and while that sounds very easy, it’s more challenging than you’d think because everyone is hyperfocused on their own to-do list, strapped for time, and busy enough. But it’s worth the effort!

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The Memorable Ones (cont.)

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was past time to trade it in, they wanted to keep it. They did not care about new technology or the fact that we were going to stop making replacement parts. They wanted to keep what they knew, with its problems, versus trying something new. In today’s office environment, we do not have time to tinker with old technology even though we may spend many hours trying to get a new app to work as advertised.

What about your customers? Are they trying to hang on to the old because, perhaps, the service and the service reps are too good? I experienced that while in Texas and turned some of our best reps into service/marketing reps. They were much better at explaining the reasons why it was time to trade in “Nellie Bell” than many of our full-time sales reps.

Oh yes, The Memorable Ones. Hopefully that is what our customers will say about our present products and remember with great admiration the service reps who kept them running.

Roger Henson
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Company Culture Flaws That Inhibit Innovation (cont.)

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#3: The Fear Of Failure

Change is hard, for a lot of different reasons. One of them is the fear of failure. Spawning innovation can be tough because many people fear having a “bad idea.” But here’s the thing – there aren’t bad ideas. Ideas should be encouraged and free-flowing, because only through the open expression of thoughts can innovation be born. If your employees fear having bad ideas, they’ll stay quiet and squash the potential for innovation. Let your employees know it’s OK to think big, to think differently – that all ideas are welcome. Put the parameters in place for what ideas see the light of day; not on having them to begin with. And remember, failure isn’t your enemy – you just have to fail forward. If you try something and it doesn’t work, you learn from it and try something different. Failure isn’t permanent unless you give up – so encourage ideas, try new things, and keep moving forward.

Keep in mind that innovation is a broad term; it can range from small, incremental improvements in day-to-day operations (that sometimes make a big impact) to a total transformation of business model. You don’t have to start by trying to reinvent the wheel – you can start small. But standing still isn’t an option, so take steps to make sure your company culture is one that is promoting and rewarding innovation instead of sabotaging it.

Articles for NASM Newsletter

NASM publishes the newsletter quarterly.

Please submit articles/ information to Ken Cook, Ken Cook Co. (kenc@kencook.com).

Deadlines are:
November 15
for the December issue
February 15
for the March issue
May 15
for the June issue
August 15
for the September issue

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What’s on Your Reading List

Please take a moment to think about what you’ve read lately that would be of interest to your fellow NASM members. Be sure to include the complete title, author’s name, a brief book overview and where it’s available. Send your recommendations to kenc@kencook.com and we’ll include them in subsequent newsletters.

IFS Announces IFS Field Service Management 6 (cont.)

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- **Pay and deploy with even more flexibility:** Customers can choose to deploy IFS FSM 6 as a true multi-tenant solution on the Microsoft Azure cloud, as a managed service in the cloud, or on-premise. This flexibility also offers customers choice in how they pay, from outright ownership to a monthly subscription.

“We are very excited to offer a preview of IFS Field Service Management 6, which leads the market in terms of usability, configurability, connectivity, and flexibility,” said Mark Brewer, IFS global industry director for service. “With this major new release, we are further differentiating our value proposition but are continuing to provide customers with the ability to choose the functionality they need and deploy in the way they want—be it in the cloud or on-premise. Choice is a good thing, and with IFS, the customer can decide what makes sense for their business. Combine this flexibility with industry-leading functionality, leading AI and optimization technology and a new user experience and it is evident that IFS really does represent the most complete, connected field service solution on the market.”

One of the early adopters is Eickhoff, a leading manufacturer of machinery and gearing technology used in mining, wind turbines, and other industrial applications. Commenting on IFS Field Service Management 6, Dietmar Schmitz, Head of Product Development Service at Eickhoff, said, “As a provider of mission-critical machinery, we see service as a core competency and competitive differentiator. Consequently, we needed a solution to manage our more than 6.5 million items in complex parts lists for over 15,000 custom units. IFS FSM 6 provides an engaging and effective way to make this possible.”

The new version is planned to be made generally available in Q4, 2018. Read more about how IFS supports service organizations: www.ifsworld.com/corp/industries/service/.

About IFS

IFS™ develops and delivers enterprise software for customers around the world who manufacture and distribute goods, maintain assets, and manage service-focused operations. The industry expertise of our people and solutions, together with commitment to our customers, has made us a recognized leader and the most recommended supplier in our sector. Our team of 3,500 employees supports more than ten thousand customers worldwide from a network of local offices and through our growing ecosystem of partners. For more information, visit: ifsworld.com

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2018 Events

Note: Dates and locations are subject to change.

Field Service Amelia Island

August 27-29, 2018
The Ritz-Carlton
Amelia Island, Florida
<http://bit.ly/2J8SP3Z>

NASM 2018 Business / Board Meeting Schedule*:

Business/Board meetings are monthly teleconferences (**1-800-630-9030, pass code 4616060#**), unless otherwise noted. Typical meeting dates are scheduled for the fourth Tuesday of each month, starting at 10:00 a.m. central.

June 26, 2018 10:00 a.m. (cst)

July 24, 2018 10:00 a.m. (cdt)

August 28, 2018 10:00 a.m. (cdt)

September 25, 2018 . . . 10:00 a.m. (cst)

* With some exceptions, there will be face-to-face meetings that coincide with other NASM events. The face-to-face meetings will have available phone-in to the teleconference for those unable to attend.

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