

The Rapid Evolution of Field Service Management in a Composable World



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The MedTech industry is contending with significant business challenges.

It must operate within a profitable business model while adhering to stringent regulatory standards and consistently meeting service level agreements (SLAs). The overarching goal is to minimize downtime and optimize patient care, which is a critical concern in this field. But with outdated legacy systems and a patchwork of technology from mergers and acquisitions, the industry is struggling to keep up.

Legacy systems refer to outdated computer hardware, software or technological frameworks that remain in use, often because of their continued utility, reliability or importance in a company's daily operations. However, they create obstacles such as limited scalability, incompatibility with modern technologies and increased security risks.

These systems often accumulate “technical debt,” which is the increasing cost and effort required to maintain, update or replace legacy systems to comply with current standards and best practices. Technical debt may include software coding using outdated technology, missing documentation or architecture restrictions.

As resources are tied up in managing old technology, inefficiencies arise, delaying progress and stalling innovation. In service management, for example, the service-specific capabilities within these legacy systems are often a blend of technologies built and customized over the years, ultimately resulting in outdated functionalities that cannot scale alongside the business.



Mergers and acquisitions present additional issues

“Many medical manufacturing companies are made up of a handful of business units, with complex requirements and disjointed workflows, often influenced by years of M&A strategies, legacy systems and the ongoing struggle to maintain a unified vision,” said Matthew Shea, Senior Strategic Account Executive at IFS.

The lack of interoperability creates silos among teams, hindering effective communication and collaboration. These silos contribute to various problems, including poor data management, inefficient manual processes and human errors that collectively undermine overall business performance.

These challenges create barriers to adapting to market disruptions, scaling effectively with organizational growth and integrating the latest technological innovations. This situation is further complicated by the unique demands of the industry, which require prompt responses to service requests and effective management of time and resources, all while ensuring profitability and adhering to strict regulatory standards.

The harsh reality is that while MedTech companies are eager to embrace cutting-edge technologies to minimize downtime, optimize patient care and remain competitive, they are often hindered by the very systems once deemed indispensable.



The future of business is composable

Composability solves the growing demand for IT flexibility, which has become a key consideration for organizations contemplating system replacements. However, many organizations still struggle to understand the implications of a composability strategy, often citing a lack of executive-level awareness and insufficient progress toward cloud-based solutions as significant obstacles.

The concept of composable business was first coined by Gartner in 2020.¹ Gartner shared examples from the pandemic of businesses that shifted rapidly to take advantage of market opportunities and defined the composable business as “an organization made from interchangeable building blocks.”

The modular setup enables a business to rearrange and reorient as needed depending on external (or internal) factors like a shift in customer values or sudden change in supply chain or materials.” Since then, composable technologies have evolved rapidly, including powerful solutions across ERP, CRM, AI and FSM, further enhancing business agility.

Today, add-on composable software (often using AI) seamlessly integrates with core systems, creating a secure, standardized language that allows different systems to communicate and share data in real time.

Using APIs and streamlined workflow integration, composability allows medical device manufacturers to reimagine their operational framework.

By treating organizational components as modular building blocks, they can orchestrate these elements in a manner akin to assembling Lego bricks, providing flexibility to mix and match different capabilities based on their specific requirements and adapt to new opportunities through a unified user interface. As the organization’s needs change and grow, composable software can be added or removed.

Consequently, understanding and implementing composability is not just advantageous but essential for MedTech organizations seeking the efficiency, adaptability and scalability necessary to handle current challenges and drive innovation.

Composability + AI = A powerful synergy

Implementing composable software for specific functions is one part of the answer to many organizational challenges. The second part is the integration of AI into this composable framework.

AI's superpower is data mining. While most medical device manufacturers have massive amounts of data, most struggle to use it effectively.

AI is essential for analyzing and converting large datasets into actionable intelligence, sifting through historical data and making predictions, ultimately providing real-time business solutions and recommendations.

Composable software, coupled with AI's intelligence, is a game changer for medical device manufacturers. By enabling predictive analytics and timely insights, companies can anticipate challenges, while modular components can be easily rearranged and integrated to adapt swiftly. This synergy helps ensure alignment with strategic goals, future-proofing their operations in a competitive marketplace.



Navigating MedTech field service challenges with composability

Medical device manufacturers face numerous challenges in managing field service operations, which require seamless coordination of highly specialized technicians, rapid response to urgent repairs and strict regulatory compliance. Composable technology provides critical solutions to address these unique FSM challenges.



Legacy Systems' Limits

Challenge

Legacy systems often create significant barriers to managing modern, evolving service demands. They also often require extensive coding to implement changes and may struggle to handle additional business needs.

Solution

Composable technology can be integrated as an add-on. This allows companies to independently modernize or replace specific parts of their FSM operations, such as scheduling or inventory management, without disrupting legacy systems. Additionally, composable solutions are more customizable, meaning they can be configured to support complex and specific business needs, offering a more flexible approach to upgrades and scaling.

Siloed Data

Challenge

With critical service data spread across multiple platforms – ranging from inventory to customer relationship management – service teams often lack a clear, real-time view of the entire product and service lifecycle.

Solution

A composable FSM platform allows these disconnected systems to communicate, pulling data, for example, from CRM, inventory management and scheduling systems into a unified interface. This integration provides holistic visibility into a company's operations, improving decision-making, reducing downtime, and ensuring a more efficient service lifecycle.

Optimizing Workforce Management for Service Excellence

Challenge

Service organizations fundamentally rely on people, making effective workforce management a top priority. Managing multiple contracts and ensuring precise planning requires a system that reflects technicians' skills and certifications. Without such systems in place, organizations may struggle to optimize hiring, training and retention, leading to underuse of personnel and inefficiencies that can affect service delivery and patient outcomes.

Solution

Composable platforms can help optimize workforce management. By ensuring that scheduling aligns with the skills and certifications of technicians, these platforms facilitate effective workforce forecasting, enabling service organizations to plan against contractual demands and align with business objectives. Additionally, robust composable solutions allow for accurate capacity planning and dynamic scheduling, ensuring that human resources are used efficiently. This end-to-end service-centric approach enhances overall workforce effectiveness and knowledge levels, ultimately improving service delivery.



Meeting Strict Regulatory and Compliance Requirements

Challenge

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) puts strict demands on MedTech companies as part of its compliance and validation processes. Besides a rigorous FDA approval process and ongoing monitoring and reporting, organizations operating in Europe may need to comply with the EU Medical Device Regulation. This means they require agile and scalable platforms to continuously meet changing regulations and compliance requirements in the industry.

Solution

Composable solutions can adapt easily to changing regulatory requirements. New compliance features can be quickly integrated without disrupting core FSM functions.

Balancing Service Costs and Profitability

Challenge

MedTech companies often face slim profit margins on service revenue, making it imperative for them to maintain a sharp focus on cost control and efficient resource management. Effective estimation, management and billing of contracts are central to achieving profitable service outcomes.

Solution

A composable enterprise enhances visibility into field operations, automates workflows and ensures that performance metrics and responses align with the agreed-upon SLAs, streamlining billing.



Coordinating Timely, Life-Critical Repairs

Challenge

“Service is mission critical,” said Mark Brewer, Vice President of Service Industries at IFS. “Many medical devices, such as dialysis machines and respirators, are the only thing between life and death with patients.” It’s crucial to ensure that the right specialist – with the right skills and necessary parts – can complete repairs within often tight time frames. This becomes even more challenging when disconnected legacy systems separate supply chain and service management.

Solution

Achieving high first-time fix rates demands seamless coordination of personnel and parts, which modern composable platforms enable. By integrating scheduling, supply chain management and field service operations into a unified system, organizations can dispatch the right technicians with the necessary parts and tools, supporting rapid response times while significantly reducing service delays and operational costs.

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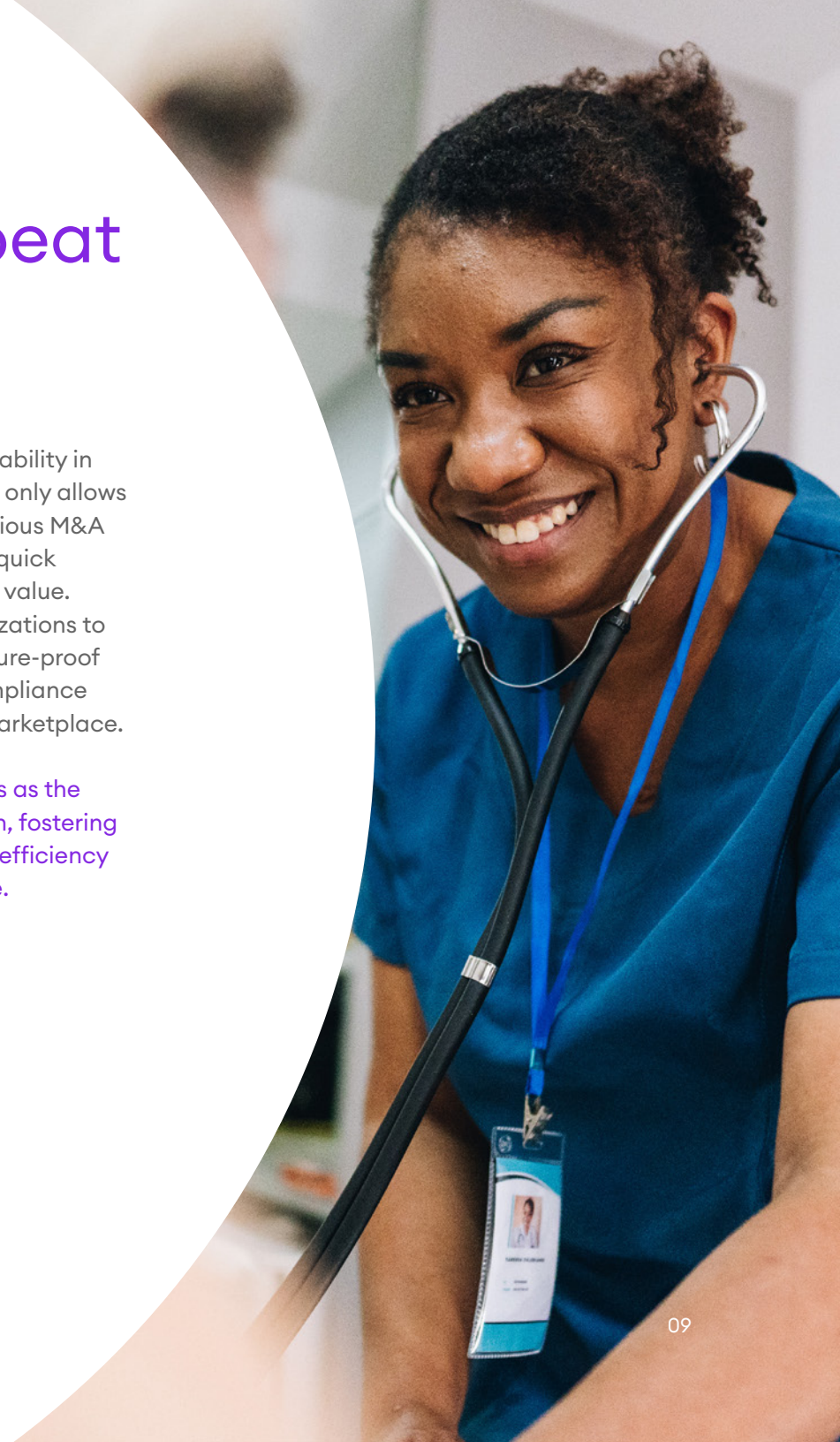
Composability: The heartbeat of your organization

In today's rapidly evolving MedTech landscape, the adaptability and flexibility offered by composability are crucial. They allow for quicker deployment of technology, enabling the rapid creation and integration of modular components – an advantage that legacy systems cannot provide.

A digital transformation project that works toward a composable strategy can significantly enhance an organization's service delivery. By integrating capabilities such as service order management, multi-level service contracts, and workforce optimization with systems for customer relationship management, human capital management, finance, supply chain management, and procurement, organizations can tackle complex challenges and streamline operations with greater efficiency and confidence.

Moreover, embracing composability in field service management not only allows organizations to pursue ambitious M&A strategies but also facilitates quick onboarding and faster time to value. This approach enables organizations to innovate more rapidly and future-proof their operations, ensuring compliance and resilience in a dynamic marketplace.

In essence, composability acts as the heartbeat of your organization, fostering an environment where agility, efficiency and strategic alignment thrive.



See how IFS delivers at the Moment of Service

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We are the leader in service for our industry, and I think that IFS Field Service Management supports us in being that leader. We are very proud of the service we provide.”

Adam Brody
Director of Enterprise Systems, Sysmex America



Find out how Sysmex America achieved leading service status with IFS Field Service Management.

[Read the customer story](#)

“

Fantastic bit of software, helps us to be able to complete the day-to-day jobs and getting feedback from field engineers is convenient.”

Lead IFS Analyst
Manufacturing



IFS has been recognized as the only Customers' Choice vendor for 2024 Field Service Management category on Gartner® Peer Insights™.

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About IFS

IFS develops and delivers cloud enterprise software for companies around the world who manufacture and distribute goods, build and maintain assets, and manage service-focused operations. Within our single platform, our industry specific products are innately connected to a single data model and use embedded digital innovation so that our customers can be their best when it really matters to their customers – at the Moment of Service™.

The industry expertise of our people and of our growing ecosystem, together with a commitment to deliver value at every single step, has made IFS a recognized leader and the most recommended supplier in our sector. Our global team of over 7,000 employees every day live our values of agility, trustworthiness and collaboration in how we support thousands of customers. Learn more about how our enterprise software solutions can help your business today at ifs.com





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