TeamWherx

How Technology Helps Electrical Companies Adapt for the Future

Whitepaper

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Introduction

Electrical Industry Overview, and Trends

As is the case with many industries that deal in both technology and energy, the electrical industry is a market that continues to expand as the future becomes realized. According to the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics, the electrical field is estimated to grow 9% into the year 2030[1], demonstrating little sign of a slowdown when it comes to the industry's exigency.

In addition to the projected growth, the field continues to rapidly evolve. CES News and Turbomachinery International report that in the span of the next four years, nearly 80% of new energy creation will be comprised of renewable sources like wind and solar[2]. CES News also projects that there will be upticks in both microgrids and residential opportunities[2]. Backup power sources separate from primary power grids can help commercial and industrial customers alike weather the storm of potential shutdowns more effectively and better prevent any resulting negative business impacts.

Demand for residential electrical work also continues to grow, with increases in new home construction driving new business[2]. Meanwhile, installations to replace old, faulty systems and simple repair work alike in residential buildings will continue to be an important part of the industry's routine business.

Lastly, an increased focus on productivity for companies of any industry and size is being observed, mainly due to many organizations opting to permanently switch to a remote work scenario in the aftermath of the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic. This is no different in industrial work, where an emphasis on output is always prevalent, highlighting the importance that sustained and reliably functional power supplies have on an organization's ability to produce. Increased reliance on technology and electric supply can boost worker safety, cost savings, and more (particularly for factories), according to ElectricalNews.com[3].

As a result, electrical companies are being stretched more than ever by their customers. Tools are needed to help effectively scale business operations, especially as staffing challenges (the recruiting and retaining of field professionals) and productivity may present barriers to capitalizing on the increase in demand.

Role of Data in Operations and Why Electrical Businesses Need to Collect It

For any organization, data is becoming increasingly critical to collect, manage, analyze, and act upon. Data helps companies better identify their target markets, what their customers want and need, and what areas of their business could be improved. Crafting business strategies that are backed by analytics also enables organizations to run smarter operations by guiding how they should fine-tune things, helping them to stay a step ahead of their competitors.

However, while data collection about your business's target market and the needs and wants of your customers or consumers is certainly important, data collection about your workforce's current operations is equally essential, particularly with a remote and deskless workforce.

Electrical companies with teams of mobile electricians are a prime example of this. With an almost exclusively on-the-go operation, the question of how electrical management teams can ensure productivity remains high when their electricians are working away from the office is always a concern. A scholarly article from Walden University[4] reported that disengaged staff, on average, are responsible for losses of nearly $350 billion for companies across many industries in the United States alone. That makes it clear that unoptimized productivity is one of the largest bottom-line detriments for any organization. There's even more potential for lapses in productivity to occur in the electrical industry given the nature of its primarily remote, away-from-headquarters work. Compiling real-time information about operations away from the office is invaluable to maintaining oversight of workforce performance.

"Every organization needs to rely on quick, accurate data to conduct business effectively. This is even more essential when coordinating a mobile workforce," said Tom Mitchell, Actsoft's CEO. "Companies with field workers need to accumulate data precisely and streamline the ways in which they collect it, or risk falling behind competitively. Data is, simply put, the driving force behind any efficient organization's business strategy; companies who place emphasis on using it to guide their business plans gain a significant advantage in the marketplace."

Other Common Pain Points and Inefficiencies for Electrical Companies

In addition to the general issue of ensuring their electricians are staying productive and are serving as many customers as thoroughly as possible, electrical companies also face other challenges during day-to-day operations such as:

- Little or untimely information about completed electrical installations or repairs.
- Limited visibility on which of their electricians are available to take on new jobs.
- Poor communication and field flexibility when assigning or reassigning customer visits.
- High paperwork costs and lengthy delays during the processing of work orders, installation or electrical diagnostic sheets, and invoices.
- No defined or secure way to accept payment for provided services at a customer's location.
- Too much time being spent by electricians driving back to the home base to perform manual, administrative tasks.

Disengaged staff, on average, are responsible for losses of nearly $350 billion for companies across many industries in the United States alone[4].

Benefits of Data Collection Via Field Service Management Software for Electrical Companies

Driving efficient data collection is a critical way to help address many of the previously outlined difficulties electrical companies regularly face. Simple improvements in the ways companies collect data can have hugely positive impacts on overall workflows and bottom lines. Unfortunately, many electrical companies might not realize that hidden inefficiencies exist and how increased data collection can help alleviate these issues. As a result, gaining additional field insight mistakenly falls lower on priority lists for management.

To help mitigate potential financial losses from employee disengagement, slow and inaccurate data reception, and poor communication, new technologies are emerging to help electrical businesses have greater visibility into their business operations in the field. With better business information transparency, companies can be more customer-oriented and competitive by digitally collecting and using field data to drive smarter decisions.

A few of the benefits service management solutions provide to your electrical company:

- Reduce overhead expenses by identifying areas of business that are consuming too many resources.

- Increase output by basing decisions on the quantity and quality of your electricians' daily production.

- Ensure greater security of company assets and property by tracking and monitoring locations and usage.

- Increase productivity and savings by automating manual processes.

# TeamWherx™, an All-in-One Electrical Software Solution

For truly efficient data collection from the field, Actsoft's flagship electrical software, TeamWherx™ (TeamWherx™), provides a single platform to help your electrical company boost its productivity and profitability. Our app helps streamline and enhance the efficiency of the ways your business obtains and processes its information.

Key Features of TeamWherx™ for the Electrical Industry

Mobile Timekeeping: Allow your electricians to clock in and out remotely from TeamWherx™'s mobile app to reduce unnecessary overtime costs and allow them to finish more tasks per day. See the pinpointed locations of your employees whenever they register a time punch and easily integrate timesheet data with many compatible third-party payroll systems.

Wireless Forms: Create digital versions of your organization's paper documents and have your electricians fill out and submit them securely from TeamWherx™'s mobile app. Reduce paperwork costs, increase the speed and accuracy of data reception, and even attach items like photos, signatures, and audio clips to your forms to make them dynamic. Decision logic also helps your electricians save time by only presenting relevant fields to fill out based on their previous answers.

Job Dispatching: Assign new work orders to electricians nearly instantly via digital notifications to reduce downtime and increase time spent at work sites. Your nearest available electrician can be directed to a new job site with our electrician scheduling software, helping your company serve more customers daily and maximize time spent on the clock.
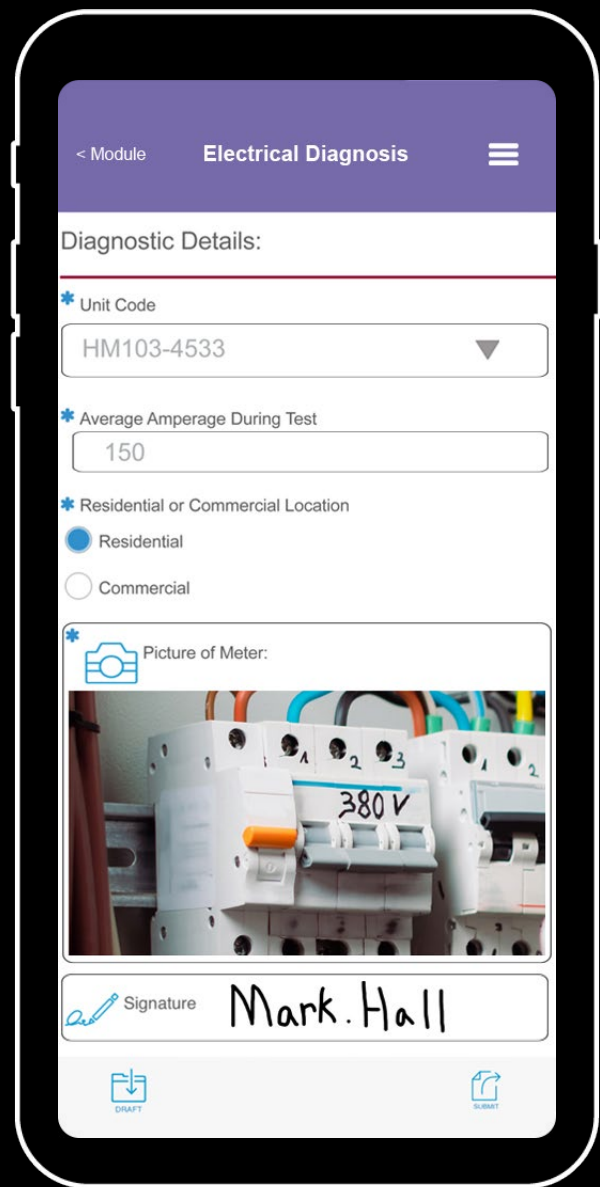

TeamWherx™ digitally transforms electrical workforces and their analog processes.

GPS Tracking: See the near real-time positions of your mobile electricians during working hours, as well as your organization's vehicles and assets around the clock from a live-view map. Enhance efficiency and accountability for your workforce by knowing the whereabouts of your staff at job sites in the field; plus, enhance the security of company property.

Alerts: Receive email notifications about your mobile workforce such as geofence entries and exits (digital perimeters you define around remote worksites), harmful or costly driving behaviors by your drivers using company vehicles, and more.

Intra-Company Messaging: Communicate with multiple electricians at once and receive job site updates in near real-time from your staff, directly from the field. Further adjust workflows for employees (if needed) with intuitive desktop-to-handset integration.

Reporting: See graphs and analytics about your workforce, such as electricians' time spent at certain job sites, mileage statistics on each of your fleet vehicles, and how many jobs have been completed per worker to optimize productivity. To further reduce your organization's operational costs, study metrics about staff overtime to curb unnecessary payouts.
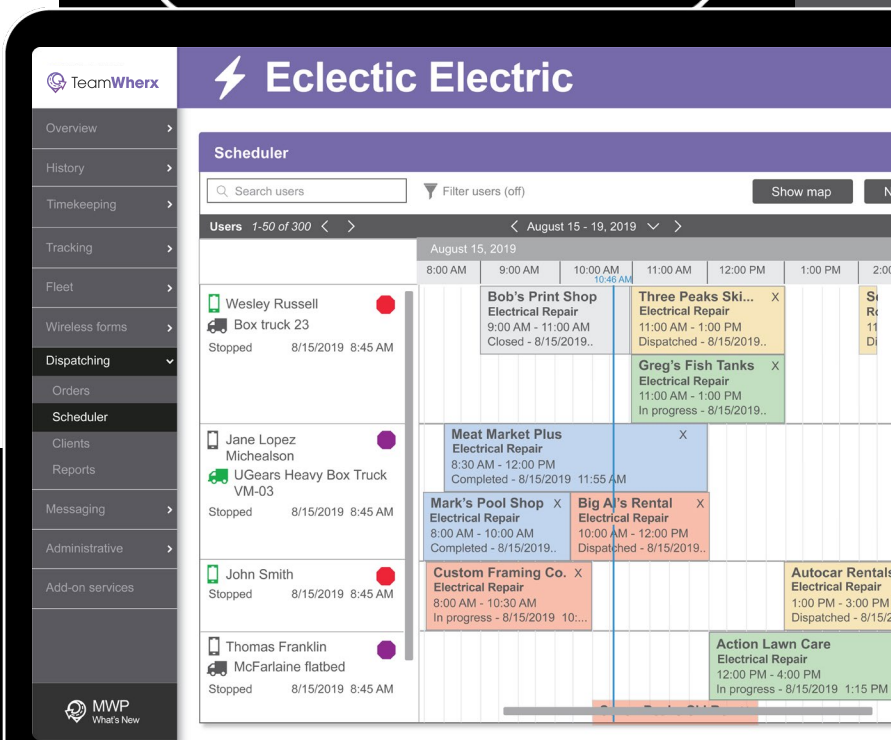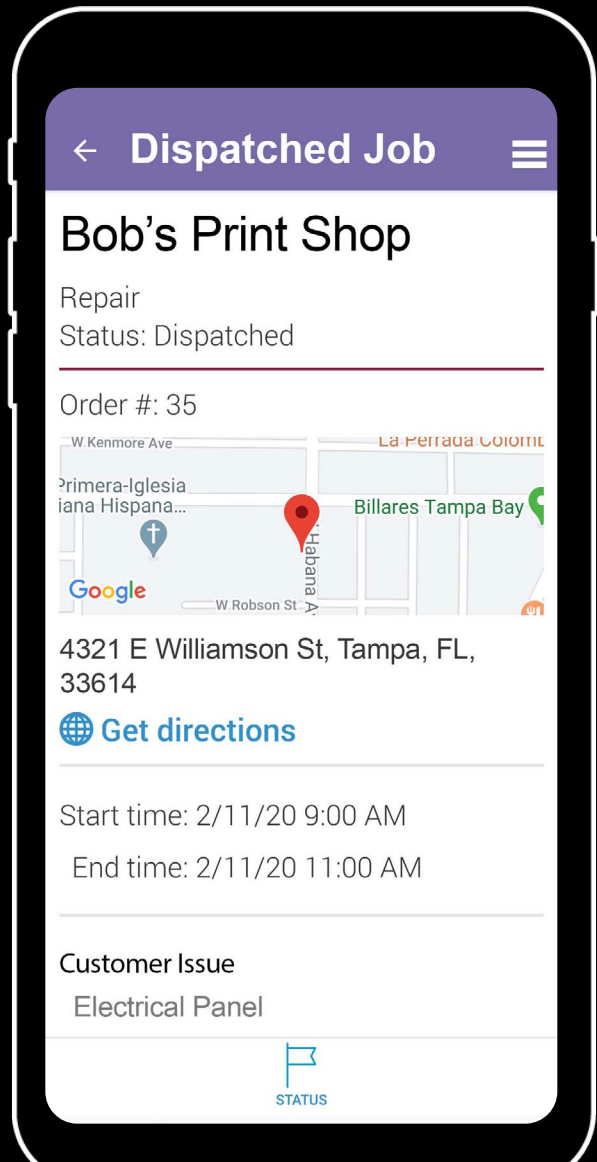
How TeamWherx™'s Features Help Enhance Electrician Workflows

TeamWherx™ was designed to help companies in the electrical industry maintain better field insight and visibility into real-time operations. Whether your electrical company deals in residential work, commercial work, or both, our electrical business software provides all the features you need to enhance profitability and productivity.

TeamWherx™ for Residential Electrical Work

Residential electrical companies can use TeamWherx™'s Wireless Forms feature to document safety checklists for power installations in homes faster and more dynamically. Wireless Forms' Photo Capture ability helps residential electricians ensure that there are no instances of exposed wiring after an installation is complete during a new home build. They're also able to use additional features, such as Intra-Company Messaging, to quickly communicate with managers at the office from a job site, which helps them better serve their customers. Residential electrical companies can also use pre-built form templates for their industry, helping them get started with TeamWherx™ quicker. Its Mobile Timekeeping feature helps increase output daily due to a reduction in unnecessary drive time while on the clock for all electricians on staff. Electricians at the job site level are also able to bill for any repairs or installations in the field via the solution's Mobile Payments feature, powered by Stripe.

TeamWherx™ for Commercial Electrical Work

Electrical companies servicing businesses, stores, office buildings, and other types of commercial entities are able to use TeamWherx™'s Photo Capture tool on Wireless Forms to document fixes to exposed wiring on ceilings. For more technical jobs that require master electricians, they can also use Job Dispatching to route only the employees who are capable of completing the assignment to that particular work site. In addition, Barcode Scanning on TeamWherx™ enables them to streamline inventory management for parts and equipment, such as cabling, fuse paneling, smoke detectors, and wiring. Commercial electrical companies can efficiently take on new business with a solution that helps them boost productivity and ensure building wirings remain up to code in greater detail with multiple ways to verify that proper installations took place.

The Role of Our Electrical Software Solution

Given the recent trends of increasing reliance on new technologies and huge growth projections from both a demand and staffing perspective, it's even easier to see why data collection is so important for the electrical industry. The ability of TeamWherx™ to efficiently help your management team gain information from the field in multiple ways helps you address multiple pain points your company faces, whether they're obvious or not. Allow our software to help you acquire better oversight and control over your operations, which will help your company effectively scale itself as the industry continues to expand.

Future-Proofing Our Solution for Your Continued Success

Our software is constantly evolving to continually meet and exceed the needs of our customers, especially in the electrical field. Actsoft takes pride in being an innovator of field solutions that make your business more efficient and effective, so your organization can spend more time driving excellence in customer service and support.

Our quarterly releases include enhancements to our solution's already robust features and always offer new ways for your electrical company to increasingly gain more return on investment. We'll continue to blaze a trail into the future of electrical software and deliver new ways to increase your organization's top and bottom lines through truly powerful field data collection.

Footnotes

1. "Occupational Outlook Handbook: Electricians." https://www.bls.gov/ooh/construction-and-extraction/electricians.htm. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 8 September 2021. Accessed 8 November 2021.

2. "2021 Outlook for the Electrical Industry." https://blog.cityelectricsupply.com/2021-outlook-for-the-electrical-industry/. CES News, 2021. Accessed 8 November 2021.

3. Shaughnessy, Erika. "Electrical Trends 2021." https://electricalnews.com/electrical-trends-2021/. ElectricalNews.com, 2021. Accessed 8 November 2021.

4. Osborne, Schrita and Hammoud, Mohamad S. "Effective Employee Engagement in the Workplace." https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1239&context=ijamt. Volume 16, Issue 1, Walden University, 2017, pp. 50-67, Minneapolis, MN. Accessed 8 November 2021.