

Paper 365-2007

# SAS Response: Optimizing the Service Chain

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## ABSTRACT

After years of automating their manufacturing, supply and demand chains, leading organizations increasingly are focusing their attention on the only thing left that counts – their customers. Once considered an after-thought, after-sales service and “The Service Chain”, is quickly becoming one of the last bastions of automation and may likely be the most important movement ever to hit operations and IT.

Capitalizing on services is easier said than done since the service chain encapsulates a wide range of business processes from warranty, parts and pricing, call centers, field service to cross-selling, up-selling other products, and extended service contracts. Bad problems are exacerbated and can have a snowball like effect on the entire chain. For example, a product quality issue that emerged unnoticed takes a toll on the call center, lowering average speed to answer (ASA) and transfer rates, increasing service technician loads and demand for certain service parts, which are out of stock in many locations, which increases expedited shipments but negatively effects first call completes. This snowball effect ultimately impacts customer satisfaction, product brand image and the company’s position verses its competitors in the market.

Early studies are beginning to show that a key difference between a good service chain and a great one typically lies in a company’s ability to efficiently monitor, predict, and optimize. In this session, we explore these concepts and, through case examples, learn how leading companies are achieving this new level of service excellence.

**No paper was submitted for publication.**

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