

EXECUTIVE INSIGHTS

Johnson Controls: Accelerating Digital Transformation in the Field

Digital Summit

On June 26th, Buddy Saucier, Johnson Control's Vice President HVAC Service & Controls, North America and Marty Gowling, ProntoForms' VP of Customer Success, sat down to discuss digital transformation in their session: *"Executive Insights with Johnson Controls: Accelerating Digital Transformation in the Field"*.

In this transcript, you'll learn:

- How digital transformation helps technicians improve the customer experience
- How to prepare for the new normal with digital tools
- The importance of rapid adoption
- How data and integrations can make a million-dollar difference for organizations



The New Normal: Digital Transformation

Buddy Saucier:

I think the things we've done, whether it was with ProntoForms or other digital transformation has been unbelievable, and it's truly been a journey. Making our technicians as professional looking as possible in front of our customers is most important thing we can do. It's all about them, and as they say, they are the customer's most trusted advisor.

Marty Gowling:

As organizations look to transform their businesses with existing technology stacks, they quickly realize that some of the existing systems that they're using don't allow them to get the full distance of a digital transformation. As a result, sometimes the field users don't adopt, they find difficulty in reacting to regulation, or reacting to customer-driven changes, ebbs and flows.

Marty Gowling:

Be it CRM, ERP, or any of the highly specific field service management or fleet management, again, it gets the incumbent started on this transformation journey. ProntoForms' advantage therefore rests with its ability to provide powerful field first capabilities that compliment your existing stack to create custom apps on a low code platform, designed for the field organization. This discussion is really around organizations transforming. What advice or considerations do you have for organizations starting or accelerating their digital transformation journey?

Buddy Saucier:

It is a journey. And you start thinking about, it's all about making it easy for someone to do their job, it's all about the data and leveraging the data and telling a story with the data and making it easy for your customers.

I think about the technology today, the leaps and bounds that we have made in the last two years is just unbelievable. And I think as we are here in COVID and we come out post-COVID, we're probably going to see even greater leaps and bounds. When you think about how physicians are supporting healthcare workers and patients tomorrow, I think you're going to see things particularly in health

care, get accelerated at this unbelievable pace. And we're doing the same thing in our organization, whether it's scanning people's faces looking for high temperatures, it's accelerating at a very, very quick pace. I don't know if we'll never go back to normal, but the new normal is going to be a highly, highly digital world.

Marty Gowling:

I'm curious as you start to come back to the new normal, has change of protocols have you had to make augmentations changes to what was existing pre-COVID?

Buddy Saucier:

As we support our healthcare customers, we're seeing just unbelievable transformation. We're bringing buildings back into service, buildings that were shuttered. We support different humidity settings, climate expectations, as well as negative-ness or negative rooms within facilities. So there's a tremendous amount going on, not just in healthcare, but almost in any building today from a small building to some of the largest that we serve.

“I don't know if we'll never go back to normal, but the new normal is going to be a highly, highly digital world.”

BUDDY SAUCIER:
VP HVAC SERVICE & CONTROLS, NA
JOHNSON CONTROLS



Richer Data, Richer Results

Marty Gowling:

From our earliest days of the Johnson Controls and ProntoForms partnership, there's been this overarching emphasis and almost an excitement around the prospects of having rich operational data. I remember someone once told me at Johnson Controls, that while they had an incredible amount of financial-related data that typically guided the business, this prospect of operational data available to the organization was the heart of the excitement. So the question here is now that you have it, how has deeper, richer data helped drive better customer satisfaction at JCI?

Buddy Saucier:

Data has started to really take foothold in the past four to five years by making our technicians look very professional in front of our customers and by allowing them to have all the asset information on a site. We've done quite well with really going through all of our assets and doing asset management. We've done that with ProntoForms, also leveraging other apps when it comes to what I would consider governance.

It's all about serving the customer. We survey our customers quite frequently. We try to make it simple as possible for our customers to answer our customer loyalty surveys. We leverage the data from that twofold: to make us better and to better support them. Then we also educate our front-liners, who have a lot of touchpoints with our customers. So leveraging that data and educating our team has been very important for us the last two to three years.

Marty Gowling:

What's the cost of greater customer satisfaction? What's the cost of speed and agility?

Buddy Saucier:

I would say when it comes to a point or two of net promoter score, it's millions of dollars in our case, when you think about our businesses. I've been very fortunate that we've leveraged everything we can. Technology is connecting things more easily today with integrations that just bring everything together, whether it's the net promoter score data or bridging databases together for knowledge management.

When you think about your install base and where you have the opportunity to go manage and mine, that's also very, very important and easy for a technician when they're out in front of the customer to know, "Here's how many assets, this is the scope of work I need to perform. I got dispatched on a certain type of asset." That knowledge management system will actually pull up everything about that asset and learning tools like asset manual, videos, contextual chats, help desks, or past technical support.

"We've done quite well with really going through all of our assets and doing asset management. We've done that with ProntoForms."

Marty Gowling:

The point of knowledge is really, it often gets lost in the data. Everyone thinks it's just structured data, assets, but the knowledge thing is really coming on strong as you see a much younger workforce in the field who is in some ways as part of their enablement process. It's critical that they have access to those types of artifacts.

Buddy Saucier:

Yeah, very much so. We measure productivity, we make sure our workforce is very productive, and we rack and stack people. But at the end of the day, the only way you can get the productivity out is to teach and learn and make sure they have everything they need to drive the productivity. The visibility of a dashboard's only one piece of it.



Empowering your Tech Stack

Marty Gowling:

I talked about how ProntoForms extends and enriches the field first mobile capabilities of your existing technology stack. How has your technology investments enabled your field technicians?

Buddy Saucier:

It's got to be simple. Training has to be less than five minutes. You really need to create a pull versus a push. A lot of times we're asking technicians to gather information for our benefit to support the customer, drive additional reoccurring revenue streams and things of that nature. But we've leveraged, ProntoForms, for example, when it came to doing site surveys and collecting data and being able to take that data and turn it into useful information.

“Before we started using electronic forms, we would have to have a technician and gather that information on either an Excel spreadsheet or if you had paper. All that had to be faxed in and be translated. And it just took a very, very, very long time to make the data useful.”

Today, we can make that data very useful as each of those technicians do a survey on a facility. It's something that has gone a long way for us to speed of answering RFPs, particularly for large enterprise account customers. We can take an RFP and survey several hundred sites and within a week be able to convert that into an estimate and proposal for our customers.

Marty Gowling:

You touched on adoption. Any guidance to folks who may have started in a regional area, but then all of a sudden it's taking off, any guidance around the adoption for something that size and that scale?

Buddy Saucier:

Very few people are working in our offices today. As we've gone through COVID, as well as other exchanges and transformation with our frontline workforce, it's been about leveraging technology to make their job easier, get them to the job every day safe, send them home every day safe, leverage the tools that we have and the technology we have for them to do their job easier.

Marty Gowling:

Good. Any other lasting comments on the backend stack technology integration?

Buddy Saucier:

Integrations today versus the integrations of yesterday are much easier. Through our journey, and I say it's a journey, we've learned sometimes the hard way. We've had partners such as yourself, as well as others, that we've taken the stance we want to build something internally, when in hindsight there are great off-the-shelf platforms that allow you to connect and build that stack much easier, faster, and cheaper than you can internally. So today we're looking at that more than we have in the past of doing it internally. It just makes more sense for us to... We're in the HVAC business, we're not in the IT business. So our goal is to keep our IT costs down, leverage the expertise of others in that field, and then do what we do best and that's serve customers and fix and repair HVAC, fire, and security systems.

Marty Gowling:

Definitely the advent of cloud, open API technologies certainly have started to make life a little easier probably than those that were directly involved in 2009 Johnson Controls.

Buddy Saucier:

We've come a long way, technology since then.



Stay Agile, Respond Fast with Low-Code

Marty Gowling:

As part of your digital transformation, I personally believe that Johnson Controls has executed on the establishment of the citizen developer in the context of your business in a world-class way. We have 3000 customers globally and I get to see about 200 of them that I would classify as enterprise-grade, and I put you guys at the top. Of course, this is only possible if you get the okay through corporate IT. Security, scalability, ease of integration are all very paramount to this. What's the power of putting app building into the hands of those who know intimately these field processes the best?

Buddy Saucier:

I think processes are processes and the technology just makes it easier. When you drive the right technology down to that frontline workforce, it makes it easy for them to follow those processes.

We find that at the end of the day, sometimes a technician may be tired, and they may not put the effort into it of telling that story or that structured story, or taking all the pictures you may want them to take to tell that story of, "Hey, here's how the equipment looked before we began the repair. Here's what it looks like after the repair." All of our people have adopted our technology, and that helps us drive our processes much easier. I only see it getting even better in the future, as we look to leverage and build out and drive digitization in everything we do.

Marty Gowling:

Do you ever have anyone in the organization trying to encourage you to work in an agile fashion, and you can immediately tell them, "Hey, I've been agile since, for a long time?"

"Yeah, you have to be prepared to work fast, move fast. You're going to make mistakes. When you make a mistake, make it fast and fix it fast."

Marty Gowling:

It's the gap, isn't it? It's the gap for the one and done approach to building mobile apps. Obviously it's going to need to be changed and iterated and if you haven't got that secondary piece in place, it really starts to hurt you.

Buddy Saucier:

It just makes sense for us to bring things to our customers, to be in that agile flexibility. Versus if we need to build everything ourselves, we're not going to deliver it fast enough. Usually compared to other expertise in this realm, it would cost us more money to build these things ourselves.

Marty Gowling:

Second part of this question. I think we've touched on it, but given today's climate, any other additional comments around agility for what's coming next for Johnson Controls in any of their strategic imperatives?

Buddy Saucier:

I touched a little bit on COVID, there's a lot of things that we are moving very, very fast on right now to be able to open buildings a lot quicker. We are positioned well, but we're moving faster than I can ever remember a pace to get to market, particularly with some of the things for our healthcare customers.

Marty Gowling:

Any last commentary, something maybe we haven't covered?

Buddy Saucier:

You need to be brave when you go at this, and if you have not been in digital and haven't started this journey, it may seem pretty scary, but there are a lot of consultants out there. There are a lot of vendors out there that can help you through this. You've got to be brave in today's climate, because I can tell you digital is the new norm and, the way you implement it will have a big bearing on your business.

Having everything possible, driving productivity means you just don't need to have as many front-liners in your staff. But not everything can be fixed remotely, and eventually I do have to roll a truck. I just want to make sure I'm rolling the right person, and if possible, have everything they need to do their job very efficiently.