

SRM, Asset Maintenance, and the Technology Alphabet Soup

A guide to optimizing the service
process for commercial assets in
today's confusing IT world

Decisiv[™]

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Introduction

Like other industrial markets, commercial asset maintenance has been slow to fully leverage the latest cloud and IT technologies. This lack of digitalization raises total cost of ownership by reducing asset uptime as well as employee and financial performance. In recognition of this pressing gap, the financial and competitive pressures to digitalize value propositions from information and management technologies are ever increasing.

Unfortunately, the technology world is filled with three-and-four letter acronyms (TLAs) and buzzwords that make it hard to uncover the true value of any technology. Plus, each industry overlays their own dictionary, and business and IT departments speak their own acronym-packed languages. The popular media doesn't help either, often focusing on catchy buzz terms and not necessarily what delivers business value.

Asset maintenance happens to have one of the most complex alphabet soups, with a dizzying array of acronyms. At the same time, traditional industrial markets are in critical need of digital transformation. So, if you're a business executive who wants to drive change and create more value, how do you keep from drowning in this endless alphabet soup?

This paper is a guide to simplifying the asset maintenance technology landscape. Making this more understandable will provide a clear approach for maximizing the effectiveness of your approach and your return on investment.

With fifteen years of experience, millions of service and repair cases, millions of assets, and tens of thousands of users, Decisiv is thrilled to be a business accelerator for our customers. We're transforming how they communicate and interact around commercial asset maintenance to deliver more asset uptime, reduce costs, improve operations. Read on to see how.



The Commercial Asset Service Value Chain

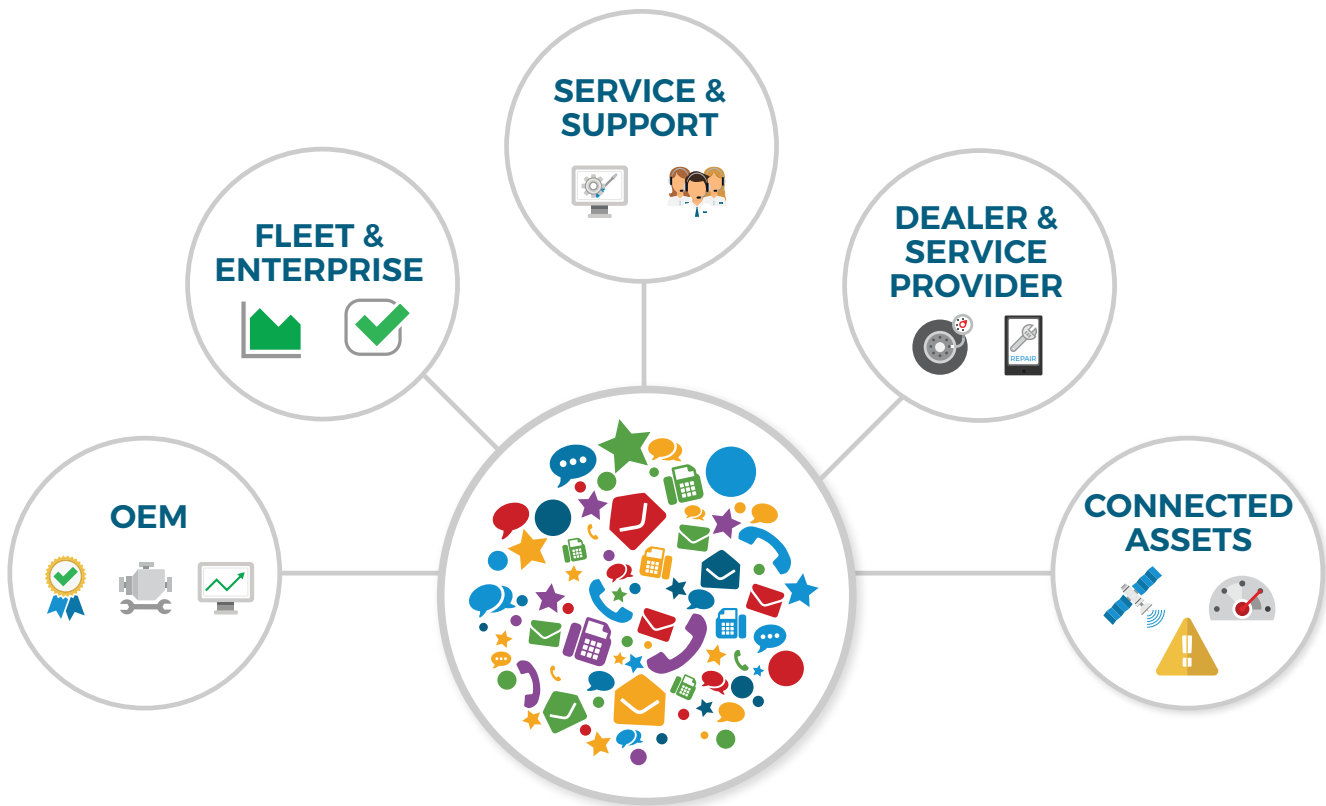
As defined in [SRM: A Strategic Approach to Commercial Asset Maintenance](#), the service value chain for commercial asset service management is a complex and dynamic web of connected assets, data, people, technology, and processes across multiple enterprises.

It's hard to pick up an industry or IT publication that doesn't talk about the promise of big data and the Industrial Internet of Things (IIoT). Unfortunately, many companies rushed to deploy "the latest and greatest" technologies and are only now realizing the shortcomings of their decisions. Single-purpose applications and stand-alone "health portals" have not provided the anticipated return on investment and anticipated asset uptime gains. Remember, "Internet of Things" just means connected devices and the vast amounts of data they collect. It's been [proven](#) that in order to make a positive impact on service management, IIoT-enabled data needs to be actionable and directly integrated into the repair process.

However, connected assets comprise just one of many applications and technologies that come into play when you talk about asset maintenance. Traditional applications (each with its own acronym: Customer Relationship Management (CRM), Product Lifecycle Management (PLM), and Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) are not designed to solve the complex nature of service value chain obstacles.

For instance, each participant in the service value chain may have their own internal systems with similar acronyms: Field Service Management (FSM), Dealer Management Systems (DMS), Fleet Maintenance Systems (FMS), Enterprise Asset Management (EAM), that need to exchange and share data to ensure successful service events. Also, there are a variety of equipment ownership and contract maintenance models that increase the number and type participants until you end up with "a small village."

Constant and consistent communication, collaboration, and access to information by each participant ultimately enables more effective asset service management.



Every participant in the service value chain has its own confusing collection of acronyms and jargon. Service Relationship Management (SRM) helps them talk to each other.

Technology Alphabet Soup

It's important to have a basic understanding of the technology landscape and the ability to separate useful key words from distracting jargon. What terms are important will depend on the industry, IT organization, and asset type. We've highlighted the most relevant technologies below. This list is by no means exhaustive, but will provide you with a comfort level when these terms are used so you can determine which ones you need.

| Category | Buzzwords | TLAs |
|---|---|---|
| Customer Management Manages sales relationships & contract terms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multi-channel interactions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CRM (Customer Relationship Management) SFA (Sales Force Automation) |
| Connected Assets Capture and share information with assets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remote Diagnostics Sensors Telematics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DTCs (Diagnostic Trouble Codes) IoT (Internet of Things) IIoT (Industrial Internet of Things) OTA (Over-The-Air) Software Updates |
| Big Data Aggregate, analyze, prioritize, and predict connected asset and related data | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Machine Learning Prognostics Predictive Analytics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BI (Business Intelligence) AI (Artificial Intelligence) |
| Asset Management Measure and manage asset performance based on usage, costs, downtime, etc. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asset Utilization | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EAM (Enterprise Asset Management) APM (Asset Performance Management) AHM (Asset Health Management) PLM (Product Lifecycle Management) |
| Maintenance Manage scheduled service based on forecasted or actual usage and time | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zero unplanned events | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CBM (Condition Based Maintenance) RCM (Reliability Centered Maintenance) AMMS (Asset Maintenance Management Systems) VMRS (Vehicle Maintenance Reporting Standards) |
| Service Perform service, repair, and related activities, including inspections | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electronic inspections Smart Forms Wireless shop tools Mobile applications | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FSM (Field Service Management) DMS (Dealer Management System) DBS (Dealer Business System) CMMS (Computerized Maintenance Management Systems) FMS (Fleet Maintenance System) |

Don't be concerned about TLAs that relate to the integration of or use of information around customer relationships, but don't specifically address service management. Here are a few:

- BPM (Business Process Management)
- CM or KM (Content or Knowledge Management)
- API (Application Programming Interface)
- Web Services (XML, SOAP, WSDL and UDDI)

The Importance of Servitization

Like the technology alphabet soup, the terms and names for the latest business approaches based on the latest technologies also have many names. The 4th Industrial Revolution, the Third Wave of the Internet (Web 3.0), and other terms have become synonymous with the evolution of industrial markets.

The IT world also likes to make up new words to help make new concepts more relatable—“servitization” is a great example. Simply put, servitization means that product companies should focus on service-related offerings and not just the sale of products and equipment.

The general emphasis of all these terms is that to continue to succeed as market leaders, companies must maximize customer-provider relationships and asset utilization while also reducing operating costs through digitalization of their products, processes, and information.

The continuous reinvention and development of new products as well as supporting service offerings now happens in a matter of weeks or months in the software world. This is a huge cultural change for companies that typically have one-to-five-year development cycles for off-the-shelf equipment that comes with little or no support. Enterprises who are not able to make this transition will become less competitive and ultimately inconsequential

In his [blog](#), Andy Neely, Head of the Institute for Manufacturing at Cambridge University and Director of the Cambridge Service Alliance, provides a good description of this transformation and the importance of servitization.

The ever-increasing number of connections between assets, data, people, technology, and processes has also inspired the creation of new terms. Connected assets and smart factories, for instance, are referred to as the Internet of Things (IoT). No matter what you call it, the key is to focus on the business value and outcomes that can be achieved when the words are actually turned into action:

- Improving communication and decision-making
- Creating new levels of visibility and transparency
- Distributing, collaborating on, and exchanging information internally and externally
- Ensuring process consistency and actionable feedback for continuous improvement

Servitization is completely reinventing the manufacturing business model. With increasingly complex, high-tech equipment, customers rely on their equipment dealers for service expertise more than ever.

Instead of focusing solely on selling a product, manufacturers are redeveloping their strategy to match the increasing needs of customers.

Their solution? To sell an entire field service support system around a product.

What Are The Missing Pieces?

While technologies have rapidly evolved, the service and repair process for commercial assets and the supporting communications processes have not changed much in more than 20 years. Even as the complexity of these assets increases and companies become more reliant on service outsourcing, the glue between these disparate systems, processes, and people continues to be phone, email, and even Fax.

The complexities of the service value chain require a more efficient approach that does not rely on old communication methods or siloed applications.

Maybe the answer is CRM. Or at least that's what some would like to think.

This \$40B industry has created many brand name companies. It focuses on the importance of managing the relationship between a "producer or seller" and a "consumer." The CRM industry has even made great strides incorporating connected asset information as well integrating data from 3rd party applications.

However, the dynamic, multi-party complexity of the service value chain does not fit nicely into the CRM model. This does not imply that you need to throw away your CRM implementation; rather it means that CRM, like connected asset information, is one of the many key inputs into a successful service management strategy.

As outlined in our recent white paper, [Welcome to the Service Value Chain Revolution](#), the need for a different approach is evident. This approach needs to be based on a several key principles:

- Connecting people, places, information, assets, and processes
- Real-time, contextual communication and collaboration
- Dynamic multi-party relationships
- Process controls and consistency
- Integration between systems of record and systems of engagement

SRM—Not Just Another TLA

As a software technology company, we are naturally drawn to creating yet another TLA (sorry). The concept of Service Relationship Management (SRM) does try to leverage the general comfort most feel with term CRM. But rather than focusing on another TLA, let's focus on how Service Relationship Management transforms the service value chain into a competitive differentiator.

In the late 1990's, BASF had a great slogan: "We don't make a lot of the products you buy. We make a lot of the products you buy better." This is also an apt description for SRM.

Our focus is on enhancing the service value chain to improve decision-making, reduce costs, ensure service event consistency, and maximize asset availability. Our approach unifies the management of service events by enabling rich, role-based user experiences that combine in-context access to connected assets, customer, and other information, real-time communication and collaboration, and business intelligence tools to enable improved real-time decision making and process improvements over after-the-fact reporting and analysis.

The Decisiv platform is a business accelerator for each member of the service value chain. With new levels of visibility, transparency and information access, all members and connected assets benefit from a more consistent, coordinated service delivery method. OEMs and service providers reduce operating costs and enhance and strengthen customer relationships. Fleets enjoy more predictable and consistent operational effectiveness (manufacturing, delivery, building, etc.), freeing them up to redeploy capital into core products and services.

Rather than replacing current systems, the goal of the Decisiv SRM platform is to quickly and cost-effectively integrate legacy applications to enhance their value and extend their useful life.



A case in point is Oakley Transport, a Florida-based liquid bulk food grade transportation services provider with terminals and facilities in several states. Oakley Transport fields a company fleet of more than 500 Volvo tractors and 550 Brenner, Walker, and Polar liquid bulk food grade tank trailers.

With SRM, Oakley is reaping [these benefits](#):

- \$60,000 per year saved by not having to add an additional breakdown specialist to handle cases involving vehicles
- \$50,000 in savings, a 9% improvement in five months, by ensuring all warranty claims on covered items are filed and recovered
- \$40,000 annually by transferring a breakdown specialist to the company's operations department
- \$20,000 per year by eliminating estimate-invoice mismatches
- A 10% improvement in asset utilization by reducing downtime for service and repair events
- A reduction in driver turnover from 95% to 65% in five months
- A reduction of as much as 50% less time on the phone to get status updates on trucks that are in service provider shops

An SRM approach delivers *the right data*, at *the right time*, shared with *the right people*, in-context of the specific asset and the specific problem. This unique multi-relationship information sharing and collaboration transforms the service value chain into a competitive differentiator.



Valley
POWER SYSTEMS

Recently, the Decisiv platform has also been used in heavy equipment and industrial markets including materials handling, construction, agriculture, and power generation. Leveraging the foundational elements of SRM, Valley Power Systems was able to improve both top and bottom line financial performance, including:

- Internal cost reductions of about 42%, mostly by making admins more efficient
- 3.2% increase in invoice values by more accurately managing repair jobs
- 66% reduction in time for quoting and approval
- 31% reduction in downtime
- 16% reduction in estimate-invoice mismatches, significantly reducing customer complaints and lowering goodwill write offs

In these examples, SRM fundamentally changes the customer relationship dynamic. It becomes a system of engagement in what would otherwise be a pure cost center. Participants communicate, collaborate, and share information during service-related activities to ensure consistent, valuable, and successful outcomes. Customers become more trusting, employees have less stress, and assets are more available even as inevitable breakdowns occur.

Where Does Your Connected Asset Program Fit?

There are many misconceptions about the “magic” of enabling access to connected assets in the cloud. Many companies have succumbed to the hype and built stand-alone “health portals” with limited sustainable value.

Knowing something is broken or going to break does not ensure effective service management or increased uptime. Companies such as Volvo Trucks of North America have taken a more innovative approach. By holistically integrating their connected asset strategy into a broader service value chain program they have seen great results.

Providing access to the Decisiv platform at breakdown centers, dealer locations, and fleet customers has set the standard for how to enable multi-party communication and collaboration to accelerate service management.

As a result, Volvo Trucks has been reducing triage more than 70%, lowering downtime more than 25%, and improving “fixing it right the first time” by more than 90% for several years.



The Decisiv platform integrates vital connected asset information directly into the service process across web and mobile applications. With key information at their fingertips, users can make better and faster decisions by:

- Capturing information from multiple connected sources and components
- Notifying designated users and automatically creating a shared electronic workplace for collaboration (from any device)
- Displaying diagnostic fault codes as well as fluid, pressure, temperature, and other sensor alarms
- Categorizing fault codes and other system failures by source into severity levels using a color, numbers, and a “friendly name” or alias (e.g. Stop Now) based on user defined parameters
- Organizing operational performance data as well as fluid, pressure, and battery levels
- Linking recommended repair or triage plans directly into the service event
- Adding labor operations, and parts, based on source, type, and severity to work orders

Recognizing that connected asset information is an enhancement to—not an enabler of—effective service event management, the Decisiv SRM platform is also being integrated into connected asset strategies by a growing number of leading brands in the North American commercial vehicle market.



A [recent article](#) further highlights the value of integrating connected asset data into the broader service management process. When the entire service value chain (in this case Kenworth, Central Oregon Truck Co. and Papé Kenworth) can access connected asset data and other required information, everyone gets value. The TruckTech+ Service Management platform, powered by Decisiv, provides Brian Tate, Kenworth TruckTech+ Service Management program coordinator for Papé Kenworth and service staff members at Papé Kenworth and other Kenworth dealerships detailed chassis information, parts catalogs, service bulletins, plus warranty and repair histories. This helps them quickly and efficiently diagnose, estimate, and complete service work.

“When one of the company’s Kenworth T680s was traveling under load in Canada in late March and early April, by examining the truck’s service records, I could see that the fuel system was just about due for its next scheduled service. Based on the telematics data from TruckTech+ and our experience with the fuel systems, I was able to make the recommendation to continue driving, drop the load, and plan to service the truck at a more convenient time later that week,” Tate said.”

Papé Kenworth, a top Kenworth dealer for sales, leasing, and service on the West Coast, has further integrated the Decisiv platform into their entire customer engagement process. Papé has achieved a time savings of over 2,000 hours per month since they began using the Decisiv SRM platform by:

- Streamlining estimate tracking and approvals
- Reducing administrative costs
- Increasing the overall efficiency of their maintenance, service, and repair operations

Don’t Let Technology Alphabet Soup Bog You Down

While the service value chain for commercial assets is complex, implementing a solution that pays off within a few months instead of years is not. Unlike the typical timeframe for large system overhauls, adding the Decisiv platform can mean starting small while delivering returns right away.

In the Oakley Transport (fleet) as well as Papé Kenworth and Valley Power examples above, implementation time was short and the ROI was almost immediate—*from implementation to real value in less than six months*. Many of our OEM customers have taken similar a similar “start small, win big” approach and realized similar results. To implement a solution that begins paying off quickly, make sure you know:

- Which TLAs matter for you, and which are distractions
- Tech jargon may seem complicated, but new technology usually shares one or more of these goals:
 - Maximize customer-provider relationships
 - Maximize asset utilization
 - Reduce operating costs through digitalization of products, processes, and information

Remember, SRM doesn’t replace your existing business systems—it makes them better. And it’s not just another TLA: it’s a revolutionary concept that’s critical for any business that wants to improve decision-making, reduce costs, ensure service event consistency, and maximize asset availability throughout the service value chain.

Conclusion

Hopefully this paper clarified some of the TLAs and buzzwords that surround commercial asset service management. As manufacturing and product companies march toward the latest technology frontiers, success will be enhanced by having a clear picture of where and how technology needs meet sustainable business value.

The Decisiv SRM platform is a great way to effectively pull all these pieces together. Combining industry domain expertise and the latest technology with strong communications acumen enables the Decisiv SRM platform to provide a great foundation for the next generation of industrial business applications. Add Decisiv to a small part of your business and see results in under 6 months, just like many of our OEM customers.

To learn how Decisiv can help you accelerate your growth in the current industrial revolution and quickly improve your service management process, email solutions@decisiv.com. Our team looks forward to working with you.



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Find out more about SRM at
decisiv.com