

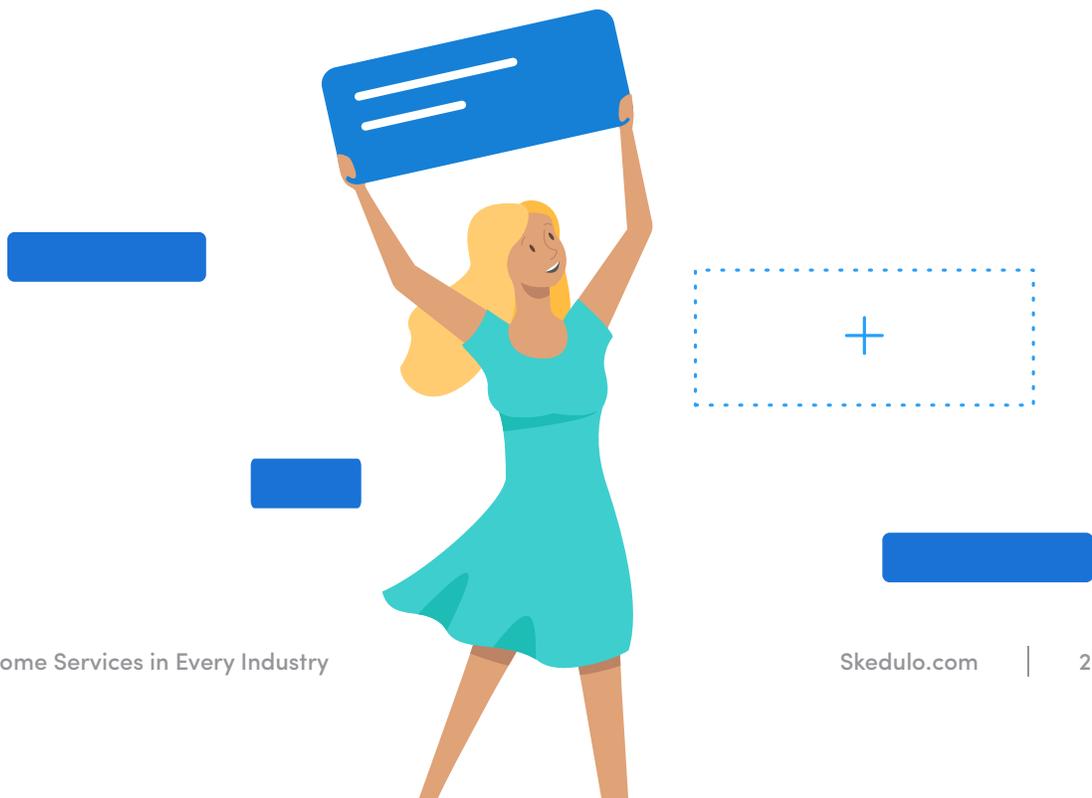
The Rise of Home Services in Every Industry

Personalization, speed, and responsiveness in the age of the customer.



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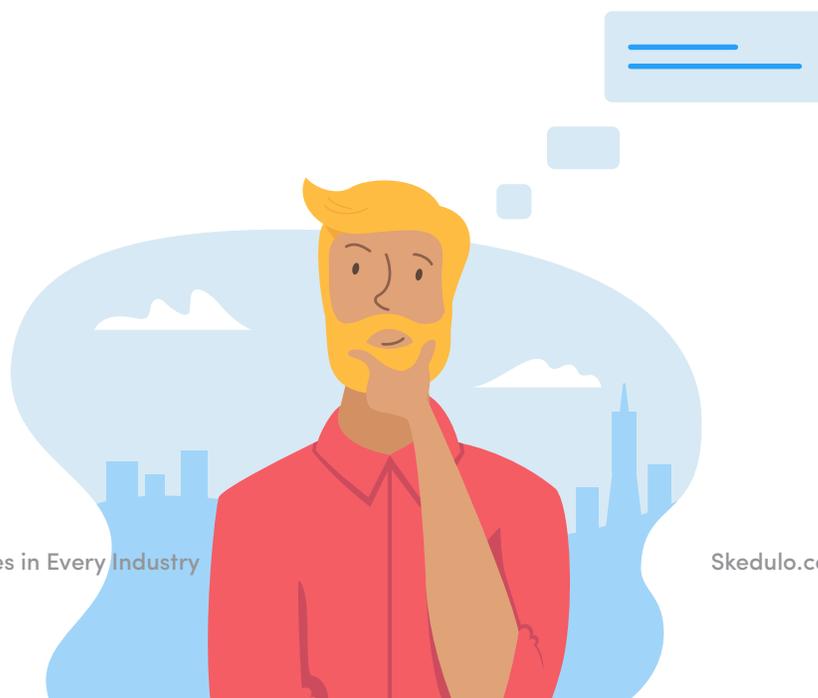
Introduction

The age of the customer is well underway. Is your business keeping up?

U.S. companies [lose \\$62 billion annually](#) due to poor customer service—up more than 50% and 20 billion since 2013. This increase makes it seem like customer service is slipping, but in fact, it's a product of a new, higher bar for customer service.

Customers know their business is valuable, and they are willing to shop around for the experience they feel they deserve. They are looking for a [more personalized, streamlined experience](#), and they expect companies to be available 24/7 to answer their questions. As competitors see these new preferences in action, they pivot to improve and meet new expectations.

For home services providers, this “customer-obsessed” model isn't a switch you can turn on and off—it's a fundamental shift in how you operate and how you engage with customers. Read on to learn more about how customer preferences have evolved and how home services providers can adapt.



The evolution of customer preferences.

Sellers have long dominated the buyer-seller equation. In the past, sellers owned the product, the product information, and the purchasing channels in every customer interaction.

But with the rise of high-speed internet and smartphones—and the advent of Yelp, [Capterra](#), [G2 Crowd](#), and other review services—customers have more power than ever before. Customers can compare products and services, as well as customer service interactions, all at the click of a button.

“Simply put, customers expect consistent and high-value in-person and digital experiences. They don’t care if building these experiences is hard or requires a complex, multifunction approach from across your business. They want immediate value and will go elsewhere if you can’t provide it.”

- Forrester, [Leadership in the Age of the Customer](#)

More than ever, customers are looking for three key things:

Personalization

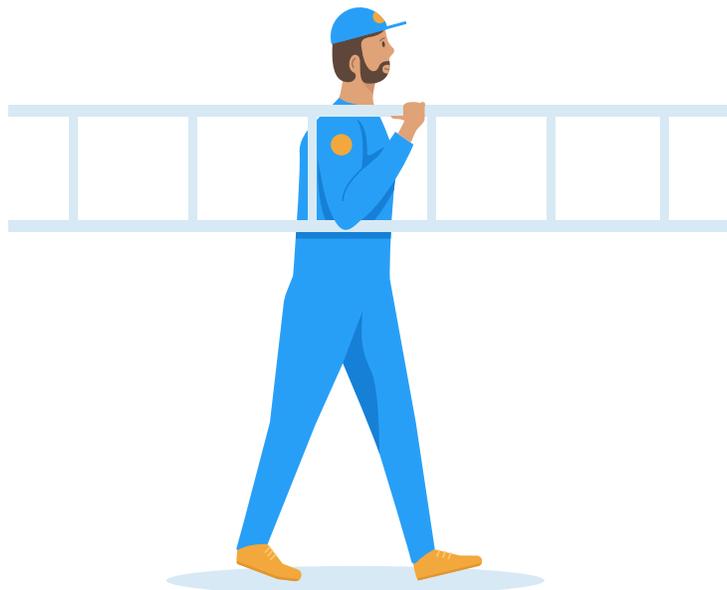
Even in an age of increased anonymity online, customers want an experience that is tailored to them and their needs. When it comes to home services, they want the person at their door to be informed about their situation, qualified to address the problem, and equipped to do it right then and there.

Speed

Customers want it, and they want it now. In the [era of instant gratification](#), companies that deliver service quickly, without sacrificing quality, win big. Speed is also critical after poor service; customers expect their concerns to be addressed quickly, and companies are investing in no-questions-asked refunds as a result.

Responsiveness

Customer-company interactions now happen when and how the customer wants them to. Brands that succeed in the age of the customer are the ones that offer a consistently great experience, no matter if the interaction starts on the website, on the phone, or in person.



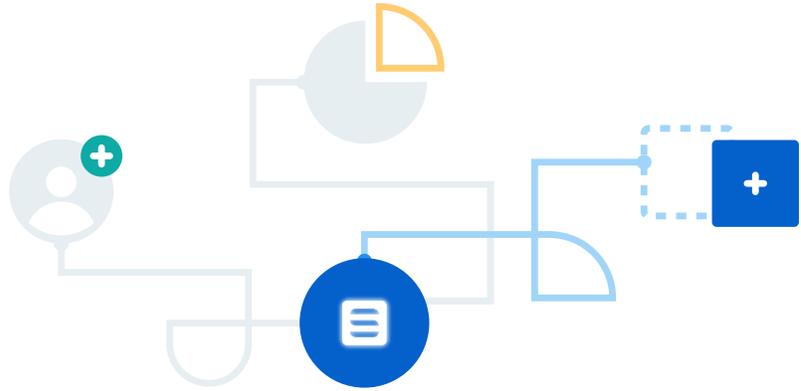
How home services providers can step up their customer focus

Home services have developed a bad reputation over the years. Whether it's blocking out a 3-hour [window for the cable guy](#) or waiting around for the plumber to track down a part they forgot to bring, everyone has a less-than-stellar home service story to share.

But the times, they are a-changin'. Customers continue to judge service by their "[last best experience](#)," and as a result, they want certain things from home service providers: defined appointment times, a simple interaction, and workers who are equipped to get the job done.

Some companies, like installers and home healthcare providers, have dealt with the challenges of on-the-spot customer service for many years. But even these industries are adapting to meet brand-new expectations, preferences, and capabilities.

The industry players who rethink the status quo for home services may well be the ones who best prepare themselves for the future. See how different home service providers are revisiting "business as usual" to better suit customers:



Home healthcare and aged care

The status quo:

A homecare nurse goes into the office at the beginning of the day to get a list of patients to visit. If anything changes on the schedule or if the nurse is delayed unexpectedly, she has no way to contact the next patient and give them an updated ETA. She spends time at each appointment filling out a stack of paperwork, which is dropped off at the main office for processing at the end of the day. The next day, the process repeats itself: a new list of patients and a new stack of a blank paperwork.

The way it should be:

A homecare nurse checks a mobile app from home to get her schedule for the day. The app adjusts for morning traffic and automatically gives her the best route to her first patient. When a new appointment is added to the queue, relevant patient details are pushed to the app. She reviews the information before she walks in, so she is already prepared to provide great care. She captures important data and signatures right in the app—no paperwork required—and it is shared with the back office in real-time.

Case study

Health**Strong**

HealthStrong increased scheduling capability by 30% and increased overall efficiency by 200% with a mobile workforce management solution.

Internet and cable installation

The status quo:

An installer for an internet or cable provider gets a list of jobs from the back office at the beginning of the day. He goes about his day, visiting several customers to install services and filling out paperwork along the way. When he arrives at one customer's house, he finds out he needs a specialized part that he doesn't have with him. The customer is frustrated that the service won't be performed today (after waiting at home for the entire delivery window), and then is likely forced to call and reschedule the appointment because the installer has not way of solving this friction for them.

The way it should be:

A technician gets a list of today's jobs delivered on his smartphone—each with a precise appointment time, not an “estimated service window.” The app connects with best-in-class GPS routing and mapping to send him on the best route to the first job. Before knocking on the customer's door, he reviews the customer information right in the app. When he realizes he needs a specialized part for one job, he sends a request to the back office. The back office provides a status update to the customer, and the part is sent out with another worker who will be in the area later that day.

Case study



Rocket Fiber saw a 68% increase in customer satisfaction by using Skedulo scheduling and dispatching tools.

Solar

The status quo:

A consultant for a solar panel installation company is sent out to each new customer to inspect the home and provide recommendations. Customers then fill out the required forms and request a follow-up appointment to install the solar panels. The employee who installs the system is rarely the same employee who made the recommendations, so the installer is unsure why certain decisions were made or is unprepared for a specialized installation issue. Appointments take longer than they should because installers are performing rework and fielding questions from customers that they are not equipped to answer. Installers are frustrated by the lack of information or equipment, and customers are frustrated about scheduling multiple appointments for the same service.

The way it should be:

The employee who performs the solar panel consultation checks in on a mobile app when the job is finished, triggering an automatic email to the customer with necessary forms and follow-up information. Once the customer returns the completed forms and payment, the installation appointment is automatically added to the queue. The employee who performs the installation uses the app to see customer history, the signed contract, and the detailed installation recommendations. Armed with this information, the installer brings the right equipment and installs the solar panels according to the specifications the customer agreed to. The customer is happy with the quick turnaround, and the installer can efficiently move on to the next assignment.

The ROI of Skedulo:

“ It has literally shaved one whole work day off my project administrator with the automated process setup from Salesforce to Skedulo—so the product has paid for itself tenfold.”

- Joe C. of [RoofDepot](#) - [G2 Crowd](#)

New players are shaking up the home services market

Some industries, like the ones discussed above, are refining their mobile work strategy to better meet customer needs. Other industries are starting from scratch.

Bringing services right to the customer's home is a fundamental shift for many companies, but if it's done well, it can bring tremendous opportunities for growth. Take a look at how "right to your door" services are making an entrance in unexpected ways:

X-Ray and ultrasound

Companies are investing in [portable X-ray technology](#) and portable ultrasound machines to perform services in the patient's home. This is particularly valuable in situations where moving someone to the hospital for imaging services would be risky.

Pet care

Furry friends worldwide are reaping the benefits of the home services evolution. Pet owners can instantly book a pet sitter or dog walker from apps like Rover and Wag, and mobile grooming and vet services are popping up in brand-new places.

Grocery stores

Online grocery sales are [expected to top \\$100 billion by 2025](#), spurred by delivery partners like Amazon Fresh, Instacart, and others. Giants like Walmart and Amazon are even testing [in-home delivery](#), where delivery drivers use one-time codes to enter the home and put away groceries.

Cleaning and furniture assembly

There's a growing market for people to help with chores and handiwork around the house. Apps like Handy, Takl, [and others](#) match customers with people who can clean the house, assemble furniture, pack moving boxes, troubleshoot devices, and even mount a TV.

Meeting the challenge: How to empower mobile workers and delight customers

No matter the industry, the power of home services and residential contractors is undeniable. Companies are ready to try and meet customers where they are, even if it means shaking up their business model.

Regardless of the service you provide, if you want to bring your service right to customers, there are two key steps to take first:

Define your success.

To an engineer or a developer, success could mean adding new features. To an accountant, success could mean cutting operational costs. To a salesperson, success could mean new accounts or bigger contracts. When you develop your home service strategy, don't wait until later to decide on success metrics; identify specific goals for each part of your business at the very start, and then make a plan to get there.

Listen to your customers.

Strong businesses collect feedback from customers—satisfied and otherwise—to make strong decisions. Make sure your customers' self-described needs are driving the conversation. This is a time-intensive process, especially when it comes to [capturing nuanced feelings from customers](#), but it's worth it to prioritize and focus your efforts.

Once you know what your customers want, you can put a plan in motion.

For example, if your customers are looking for better communication, consider ways to provide real-time status updates. If they're frustrated by workers who arrive unprepared or uninformed, look for ways to better equip your mobile workers by integrating existing systems with your CRM. Don't let existing systems and processes prevent you from delivering the kind of experience you want to be known for.

How Skedulo supports home services and residential contractors

Every interaction your mobile workers have with customers is important. These in-person moments can convince them to stay (and rave about your service to others), or it can convince them to look elsewhere. Skedulo offers the powerful mobile workforce management system that companies need to stay focused on customers.

Skedulo's powerful scheduling and dispatching software is designed for teams on the move. On average, companies that use Skedulo:

- Increase visibility in on-site job execution by 28%
- Increase customer satisfaction by 8%
- Increase resource utilization per day by 21%
- Decrease time to schedule by 48%

Skedulo has helped schedule more than 2.5 million appointments for over 100 customers in home services, healthcare, nonprofit, manufacturing, and commercial services. Request a free demo today to see how Skedulo can help you manage your mobile workforce!

Skedulo

Skedulo is the platform for intelligent mobile workforce management. Our solution helps enterprises intelligently manage, schedule, dispatch, and track resources in the field, whether they are full-time, part-time, or contract employees. With native solutions that integrate seamlessly to Salesforce and ServiceNow, and our independent platform that connects to any system of record, Skedulo offers enterprises and mid-market companies a mobile workforce management product that complements any tech stack.

Founded in 2013, headquartered in San Francisco and with offices in Australia, Asia, and the United Kingdom, Skedulo has enabled over 100 companies to seamlessly schedule and service more than 2.5 million appointments all around the globe. The company secured \$9.2 million in Series A funding in 2016, led by Costanoa Venture Capital. For more information, please visit www.skedulo.com.

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