THE ULTIMATE

Capital Planning Guide for Field Service Leaders

2026

XOi™

The New Era of Capital Planning

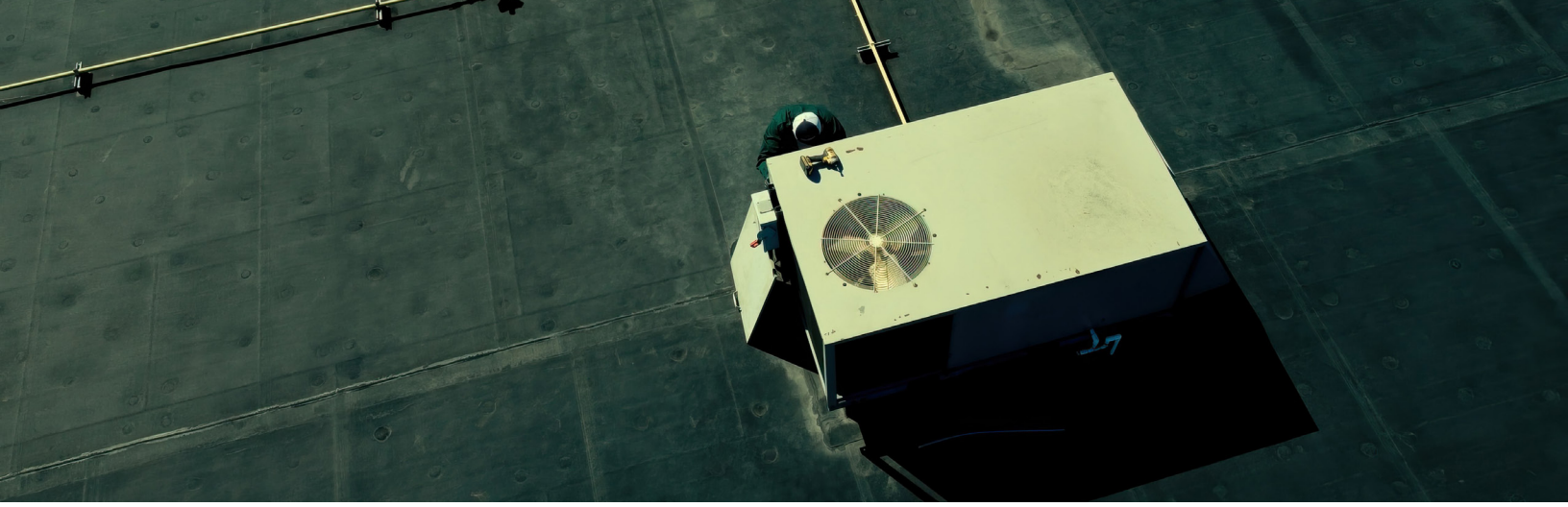
Capital Planning, reimagined for all.

If you've opened this guide, chances are you already understand the complex nature of the capital planning process. If you are on the financial or sales side of your business, the functions of implementing a capital plan are second nature. Yet for all that familiarity, one question persists: why does turning a plan into action demand such an extraordinary investment of time, energy, and coordination? According to our research from nearly 1,000 customers and a decade of collected field data, failure to execute consistently occurs because the details of your equipment are missing or inaccessible, and your technology systems are not communicating.

The reality of the capital planning process today is mired in unorganized equipment inventory and condition assessments. To create a multi-year plan for the critical equipment you make, manage, or maintain, you need to know what you have, how old it is, how well it's performing, and when it will reach end-of-life or become inefficient. Today, these details are surface-level, siloed in disparate systems, un-indexed, and inconsistently captured.

When a critical asset goes down, millions of revenue dollars, jobs, and even lives could be lost. When this much is at stake, what is the acceptable level of risk (e.g.: downtime, system failure) you should be willing to accept? In this new era, the answer can, and should be *none*.

In this guide, we'll provide you with an alternative to today's process, and show you how the use of data-focused and intelligent technology is the key to getting your equipment details in order.



The 2026 Economic Outlook for Field Service Providers and Asset Owners

Heading into 2026, field-service businesses are standing at a pivotal moment. Behind them: years of rapid transformation. Ahead: a future defined by smarter equipment, rising expectations, and real economic headwinds. Despite economic cross-currents, **the service sector is set to expand**. Field service businesses face a landscape rich with opportunity and woven with margin pressure. The smart operators will see this as a moment to lean in: to the equipment, to the data, and to the people who make it happen.

Forecast Snapshot

While much of the public data focuses on the software/technology side of field service (e.g., the global field-service-management market), that still gives us a proxy for underlying business momentum. The global field-service-management software market is projected to reach 11.78 billion by 2030 from 4.43 billion in 2022 (~13.3 % CAGR)

From these signals

- Expect revenue growth for well-positioned service firms in 2026 (though likely not double-digit growth across the board).
- Margins may be flat or slightly compressed unless offset by productivity gains, higher mix of recurring service, or pricing discipline.

1 Grand View Research, Field Service Management Market Industry Analysis Report

Growth Signals for Service Businesses

- According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics,[2] HVAC and refrigeration technician jobs are projected to grow 8% from 2024-2034. This is classified as much faster than average.
- Facility services and asset owners are driving longer-term maintenance needs and recurring service work, which supports predictable revenue streams.
- While specific global revenue figures for the entire field-service business segment are scarce, the trend lines suggest that firms aligned to preventive, recurring and connected-asset work are better positioned for growth rather than decline.

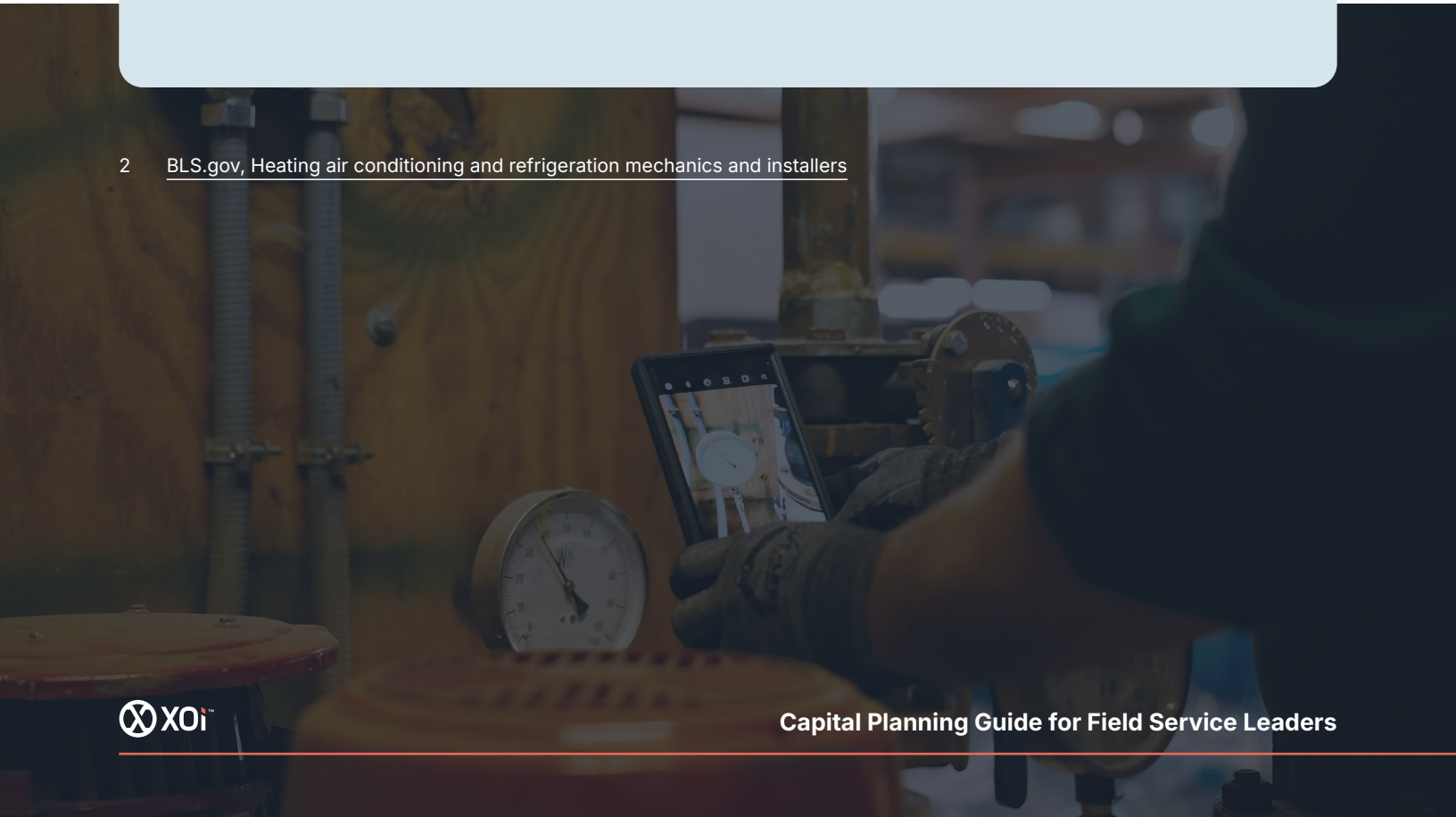
Pressure Points

Margin Compression & Structural Challenges

- Skilled technicians are in short supply, especially as the jobs demand more digital fluency, customer-interaction, and responsibility for the equipmentt's lifecycle. That drives wage inflation and service capacity risk.
- Logistics and "costs of doing business" like travel, parts, vehicles, and tools continue to push up the cost of delivering service. Unless productivity improves, margin erosion is real.
- Businesses still operating with manual, paper-based or disconnected workflows risk being overtaken. Those that digitize the workflow, optimize scheduling, capture equipment and job data, and use visual AI, generative AI, OCR, and live transcription will protect margins and gain uptime for customers.

What this outlook means for you

If your model is still dominated by reactive break/fix work or one-time installs, you're working harder, not smarter. If you're increasingly offering recurring service, data-driven maintenance, and partnering with OEMs/distributors, you're aligned to the growth currents.



2 BLS.gov, Heating air conditioning and refrigeration mechanics and installers

Building a Strategic Capital Plan

Equipment digitization and establishing your framework

Before you can offer proactive, strategic guidance to your customers, you must first establish a strong technology foundation. This is the infrastructure that allows you to collect, analyze, and act on the critical data that supports highly accurate capital planning.

Utilizing a solution built with equipment in mind, the collection of first-party data from the field requires little effort. The input and output of information about the job at hand is paramount to the usage of the technology. Through that jobsite-focused approach, data and information from the remainder of your technology stack (e.g.: FSM, CMMS) should flow seamlessly through the jobsite technology layer — becoming a "single pane of glass" solution to manage your equipment, back office, technicians, customers, sales quotes, and capital plans.

With this single pane of glass solution in place, jobsite and **equipment data is collected simultaneously as the technician or sales person is doing the job they were hired to do.** It's a systematic approach to the job that requires no extra work on their part, they just have to complete the job at hand. When information is flowing through a single source, the enrichment process of that collected first-party data is intuitive and straightforward.

Identifying the Iceberg Problem: Most data is surface-level

Many field service businesses only rely on that first-party collection of make, model, and serial. And by capturing that basic dataplate information, they believe they've fully digitized their equipment data. This basic digitization is crucial, but it only scratches the surface.

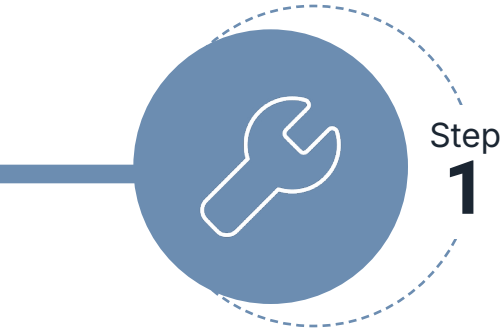
Without deeper context and structured, model-specific equipment data, sales and finance teams are stuck quoting and planning with a lack of context. Without detail, opportunities for revenue generation or cost savings are bound to be missed. Make, model, and serial data won't give you the intel to understand even basic capital planning pillars such as: What age is the managed equipment at the scale of your business? What actions should be taken and when? And, what is the compliance risk?

Below the Surface: Using enriched equipment data

Effective, customer-specific management and planning of critical equipment requires vast amounts of data that must be procured and maintained in real-time and on an ongoing basis. This step is where data intelligence technology is paramount to the success of your capital plans. Going beyond surface-level data to decode and acquire enriched equipment data is extremely complex and resource-intensive. Without the automation that data intelligence technology provides, this process can be taxing on a small scale, not to mention attempting for an entire portfolio of equipment. Data intelligence technology with automated capability effortlessly retrieves complete, detailed equipment records from a standard dataplate. When automated through technology, data retrieval is a continuous process, with new data flowing directly into the equipment record whenever available.

What exactly is Enriched Data? In this context, enriched data is the action of "adding on" to your existing, static data (which is typically the make, model, and serial number of a piece of equipment) with additional, informative data points that provide in-depth detail about how the model has performed, and is expected to perform in the future.

Enrichment brings structure and clarity to complex, inconsistent, or incomplete records — turning scattered datapoints into a full picture of each piece of equipment. Step-by-step, here is how you can use data intelligence technology and enriched data to create smart capital plans and forecasts:

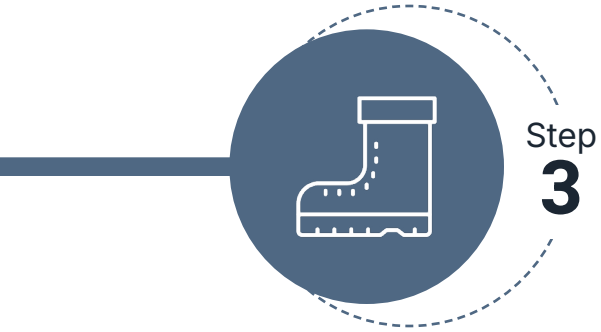


Equipment Inventory Management

Invest in intelligent technology that creates complete, accurate records across your full equipment portfolio — a single source of truth to access your entire roster, automatically updated as you add and enrich new records.

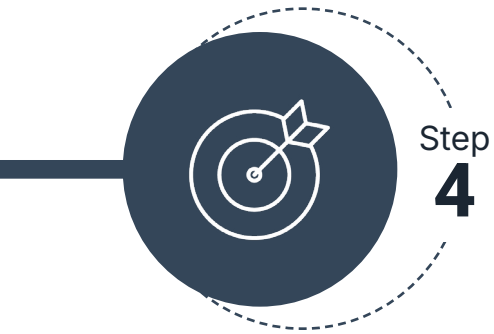
Data Quality and Enrichment

Automate enriched data to your existing equipment portfolio. Having this data automated, rather than manually procured, validated and contextualized information is updated consistently and lives within each equipment record. Quality data unlocks the ability to speak intelligently to every asset in a portfolio at scale.



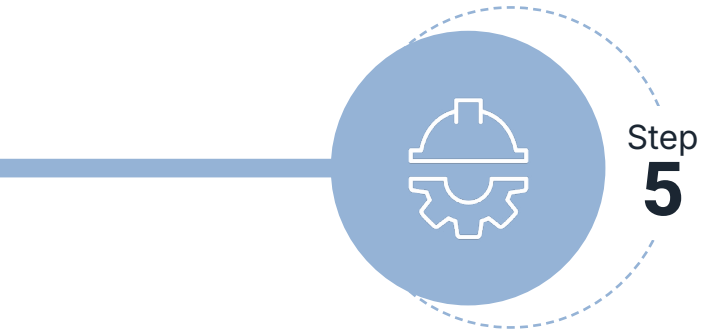
Service and Maintenance Quotes

Once you have the technology and data foundation established, sales and field teams can quote quickly and precisely with instant access to clean, contextual equipment data. Having data on historically accurate pricing, larger-scale capital plans are guaranteed to be accurate and in-line with previous spends.



Strategic Sourcing

Taking a deeper look into the root cause of equipment failure is essential for a variety of critical business outcomes. Enriched data uncovers when and how equipment components are likely to break down, which fuels smarter procurement decisions. This step greatly improves cost-efficiency, margins, and equipment lifecycle outcomes.



Decarbonization and Energy Modeling

With a clear understanding of which equipment may be affected by regulations or safety issues, sales teams can align with customer's sustainability goals by offering data-backed recommendations. Teams highlight the safety and efficiency challenges being created, establish a maintenance cadence to improve performance, or start a conversation about replacement

Risk and Compliance Monitoring

One of the most impactful categories you access with enriched equipment data is information on refrigerant charge across a customer's entire portfolio. Visibility into equipment falling short of compliance requirements helps reduce liability and positions contractors as proactive partners.

Lifecycle Management and Capital Planning

All of this data (and more) rolls up into the ultimate sales advantage: the ability to generate forward-looking, multi-year equipment plans. This helps customers forecast spend, avoid surprises, and make better capital decisions.

Building a data-driven decision culture

How AI is changing capital planning

Artificial intelligence is reshaping how capital planning connects to real-world operations. Where once decisions were based on static spreadsheets and annual walk-throughs, today's forward-looking teams are linking equipment health directly to investment strategy. In this new world, AI is the connective tissue; turning fragmented field data like technician input, maintenance records, and jobsite visuals into a living, breathing system of insight.

Machine learning models surface patterns in equipment behavior, predicting failures and estimating useful life. Intelligence transforms photos and videos into structured, shareable evidence of real-world conditions. The result? **A feedback loop where what's happening in the field actively informs what happens in the back office** — information accessed with greater speed and efficiency than ever before.

At the planning level, AI brings clarity to complexity. Algorithms map out "what-if" scenarios, testing how different budget constraints, risk appetites, or sustainability goals would reshape capital allocation. Instead of reacting to breakdowns, organizations can shift to proactive investment, guided by real-time equipment risk and performance data. Generative AI closes the loop by mining notes, manuals, and service records to highlight the insights that matter most. What was once hidden in a binder or buried in a spreadsheet is now front and center, powering a capital planning process that's dynamic, evidence-based, and aligned with what's really happening on the ground.

Why this market shift matters to sales teams

Today's customers are increasingly digitizing every part of their personal and professional lives, and expect partners who can keep up. With this market shift, guesswork and inconsistency — as a result of manual processes — are becoming less and less acceptable. Today's customers are savvy, and not so easily swayed by the sales pitch; they are expecting a data-driven sales advisor, who can insist on proactive care of their equipment.

Backed up by structured, clean, and enriched data, the modern sales team can turn scattered data points into a full picture of each piece of equipment. This means faster quoting, better conversations, and strategic alignment with the customer's long-term plans.

The best sales people can lead strategic capital planning conversations because they can see which assets are aging, inefficient, or overdue. There are a few key factors that can turn the average sales person into a capital planning professional, equipped for today's market:

Know what's on site

Incomplete or inaccurate details lead to quote delays, rework, and lost margin. Data Intelligence technology made for field service sales teams captures complete, real-time equipment details during the jobsite walk so you know what's actually there, what shape it's in, and what needs attention.

Digitize and automate your survey process

Manual surveys and guesswork delay proposals and kill momentum. Digitize your surveys and connect equipment data to quoting workflows, cutting time-to-quote and improving accuracy on every deal.

Match your quotes to the reality of the jobsite

Overpromising (or under-scoping) based on bad data breaks trust fast. Digitizing your equipment data keeps everyone aligned with verified field intelligence so scopes match reality and customers see you as a partner, not just a price.

Get your data out of silos

FSM, ERP, spreadsheets — none of it talks to each other. Bring field, sales, and ops together with one unified equipment record, so you're not wasting hours chasing info or reconciling versions.

A Smarter Path Forward

The future of capital planning doesn't lie in more spreadsheets or longer meetings; it lies in better data, smarter systems, and aligned execution. In 2026 and beyond, educated guesses can turn into precise, data-driven processes built on data clarity. With enriched equipment data and intelligent technology in place, field service and sales teams move from reactive maintenance to proactive guidance, enabling both financial stakeholders and field professionals with clean, clear data.

The implications of this shift extend from operations into company culture. Capital planning is no longer a once-a-year event, but an ongoing process that adapts as your business grows, your equipment ages, and your goals evolve. From sales to finance to operations, the organizations best positioned for tomorrow are the ones who can bring data, field insights, and strategic planning into a single, connected motion. When every decision is backed by trusted equipment data, you're not just maintaining that equipment, you're ensuring the critical assets you make, maintain, or manage are guaranteed to be running at maximum uptime.

Capital Planning Success Checklist

Establish a Digital Foundation

Deploy jobsite and equipment-focused technology that captures complete, real-time equipment data with no extra effort from the field required.

Create a Unified Equipment Record

Ensure equipment details flow through one connected source to eliminate silos and manual reconciliation.

Automate Data Enrichment

Go beyond make, model, and serial to automate the addition of specification data, model-specific performance, and lifecycle insights.

Enable Smarter Quoting

Give sales and field teams immediate access to contextualized data to generate accurate, timely service and capital quotes.

Implement Strategic Sourcing

Use data to identify failure trends and make informed procurement decisions that reduce costs and extend equipment lifespans.

Capital Planning Success Checklist

Support Decarbonization Goals

Model energy and compliance risks, and align maintenance plans with customer sustainability targets.

Monitor Risk & Compliance

Gain visibility into regulatory gaps and safety liabilities across the entire equipment portfolio.

Drive Operational Uptime

Use intelligent equipment data to focus on maximum operational uptime of your equipment.

Connect Sales to Strategy

Equip sales teams with real-time field data to become strategic advisors—not just sellers.

Foster a Data-Driven Culture

Ensure every technician, seller, and strategist has the insights they need to act with clarity and purpose.

Want to easily check off each item in that checklist? Talk to the team at XOi. In 2026, we are launching a suite of capital planning solutions, beginning with our Site Survey tool. Site Survey, made for field service sales teams, turns manual site assessments into intelligent, guided experiences. Users speak naturally about equipment while AI-powered voice transcription captures and structures the information into complete records.

XOi puts connected, accurate data at the center of your business, so service and sales teams stop acting like vendors and start operating like trusted advisors who help customers plan ahead, prevent downtime, and make smarter investments. That's intelligence that keeps the world running.

LEARN MORE

XOi™

Intelligence that Keeps the World Running™