



A ServiceTitan Magazine

# TOOLBOX

ISSUE 6



## Mama. Carrie

Losing a daughter and growing a company:  
Carrie Kelsch's journey as the A+ Garage Doors CEO

ALSO: LOOKING BACK AT PANTHEON -  
BIG ANNOUNCEMENTS, BIG ENERGY AND BIG WINNERS

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Editors'  
Note

Happy new year! And welcome to the latest issue of Toolbox, ServiceTitan's magazine for the trades. For those of you new to Toolbox, this magazine is the print counterpart to our digital home at ServiceTitan.com/Toolbox, which includes articles, webinars, podcasts, tools, licensing guides and so much more.

We have a lot of great stories in this issue of Toolbox, leading off with an amazing cover story about Carrie Kelsch's journey as the CEO of A+ Garage Doors. Eddie Wooten crafted a brilliant and moving article about Kelsch's evolution as a leader following the loss of her daughter to brain cancer, and the care Kelsch brings to her work family, changing lives as "queen of the company."

Also featured in this issue:

- If you missed ServiceTitan co-founder Vahe Kuzoyan's keynote at Pantheon — you need to get caught up on it, right now. On Page 8, you'll see the recap of a mind-blowing look into the future of AI, and that future is reality today with Atlas in ServiceTitan.
- Recaps of two in-depth industry reports published by ServiceTitan:
  - The State of the Trades report looked at consumer trends with Visa and Synchrony, detailing the needs and expectations of consumers for the trades.
  - The Commercial Service Industry Report showed stability, growth and optimism, with more than 66% of contractors reporting stable or growing revenues in 2025.
- And then a great look at the highlights from Pantheon 2025, including the Prometheus Award winners and Pantheon Winners Circle. Start your planning now for Pantheon 2026, coming in October in Orlando!

We hope you enjoy this issue of Toolbox. And from the entire team at ServiceTitan, thank you for all you do, each and every day!

Scott Goldman

Scott Goldman, Toolbox Editor



Events  
YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS

Toolbox Live

Toolbox Live is for owners, general managers, and operations leaders looking to maximize their ServiceTitan experience. Get two days of hands-on learning and 1:1 consultations to equip you and your team with best practices that drive actual results.



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Come See Us at These Upcoming Events

2026 Dates	Event	Location
1.20	International Roofing Expo	Las Vegas, NV
2.2	AHR Expo	Las Vegas, NV
2.5	GAF Chicago Roofing Summit & Expo	Schaumburg, IL
2.10	Storm Restoration Summit	Irving, TX
2.12	EGIA Epic	Las Vegas, NV
2.17	WWETT	Indianapolis, IN
3.10	National Facilities Management and Technology Conference and Expo	Charlotte, NC
3.10	ACCA	Las Vegas, NV
3.15	MCAA	Phoenix, AZ



# 40 GRAND

In an environment where techs would change jobs for a dollar, what could that number mean?

By Pat McManamon

**F**orty-thousand dollars. That's the annual potential benefit ServiceTitan's Field Pro could provide each technician at Chesapeake Electric in Annapolis, Maryland. Forty-thousand actual dollars. Merely with the 10% increase in close rate and the observed increase in average ticket achieved with Chesapeake's standard sales process, which Chesapeake refers to as "bookmarks."

"Gold nuggets are available to them within the Field Pro product," Chesapeake president and founder Ryan Deshaies said. "I think it's great what Field Pro can do for the company."





An add-on to ServiceTitan, the cloud-based software for the trades, Field Pro allows a business to record, with the customer's permission, an interaction between the technician and the customer. Titan Intelligence—ServiceTitan's AI—then assesses the discussions based on standards/bookmarks input by Chesapeake, and gives each conversation a scorecard.

"We ran the math," Deshaies said. "And with a 90% bookmark adherence based upon their average sale and their close rate, if you increase their close rate 10%, that's an extra \$40,000 in their payroll for the year."

The business benefits, the team benefits. Most important, the customer benefits.

"It gives a better customer experience, and the technicians have a better experience as well," Deshaies said. "When a technician leaves the home, they feel good about the level of service that you've provided. That's what's going to bring you joy in your career. Field Pro helps us accomplish that."

**Having an impact**

Deshaies opened Chesapeake in 2014, three years after he started working on his own.

"I never thought I would start a business," he said. "But I started this one because I wanted to have the same impact on other people that I had on my own career."

For five years, Chesapeake used QuickBooks, paper tickets, Google calendar for schedules and a carbon-copy paper ticket system. Deshaies admits the system was antiquated, and his interest in technology led him to upgrade. He was introduced to ServiceTitan in 2019, and started his journey with the software that same year.

"You don't know what you're missing," he said, "until the solution is presented to you."

When Chesapeake started using the software, service was 15% of its revenue and generated, in Deshaies' words, a few hundred thousand. Now Chesapeake is a 100% service business that expects to take in \$8 million in 2025.

"There's such a huge gap between ServiceTitan and every other field service software," he said.

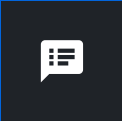
Deshaies has explored ServiceTitan's Pro products, finding benefits from Marketing Pro, Dispatch Pro and Scheduling Pro.

Field Pro, which provides key information to technicians, streamlines workflows and integrates with the entire ServiceTitan system, was the most recent addition.

"We're able to use a best-practice system that's integrated into Field Pro, and it monitors how well we're performing against that," Deshaies said. "We'll make more progress in three months than we would make in three to five years without that product, just because we're able to fine-tune and see what's really going on in the field and help better support our technicians and their advancement."

**A process, and an opportunity**

Deshaies maximizes Field Pro by clearly explaining its processes to Chesapeake's team. Technicians then are expected



**"We ran the math and with a 90% bookmark adherence based upon their average sale and their close rate, if you increase their close rate 10%, that's an extra \$40,000 in their payroll for the year."**

**Ryan Deshaies**  
*Chesapeake president and founder*



to utilize the process. Through AI, the scorecards provide insights about individuals and the team as a whole. That provides a great coaching opportunity for all.

"There is absolutely one-to-one training, but when you're having a team meeting, we're talking about team growth," he said.

Chesapeake is careful about using the reviews in a positive manner. Deshaies said its goal isn't to sell per se, but to listen to the customer and meet their needs.

"It's all on the customer to let us know, based upon the questions we ask, what they're looking to accomplish," he said. "You reward the technicians and you train based on the information you receive."

In just 30 days, Deshaies said, Chesapeake saw a 5% increase in adherence to the standards in its in-home process. Overall, Deshaies said bookmark adherence is at 60%. Seeing that figure led him to do the calculations, using data provided by ServiceTitan, that produced the \$40,000 figure.

"That's not smoke and mirrors," Deshaies said. "That's hard data."

**Chesapeake's desire to be great**

Deshaies talked of a friend who has a plumbing/HVAC business, but does not use Field Pro. Deshaies said he advised continuing that way would keep him from reaching where he wants to be.

"The only bad thing to do is to not do anything at all when it comes to Field Pro," Deshaies said. "I can't imagine operating our business right now without having that in place."

"We're really not focused on being good, we really want to be great. Without ServiceTitan, we wouldn't be able to deliver the service that our customers expect." ■



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# From Clippy to Atlas

ServiceTitan's Vahe Kuzoyan unveils AI that 'lives in your business'

By Scott Goldman

The house lights dropped, and a familiar paperclip with wiggling eyebrows floated onto the big screen. • Vahe Kuzoyan, President and Co-Founder of ServiceTitan, grinned as the crowd of 4,000 at Pantheon in Anaheim recognized Clippy. • "It all started with this guy," he said, setting up a whirlwind tour from the first digital assistant to a new one built for the trades.

Kuzoyan used the moment to draw a line through the history of assistants that came after Clippy — Siri in your phone, Alexa in your home, ChatGPT on the internet — leading to the one he believes matters most for contractors.

"Because it doesn't matter how smart you are if you don't have the data," he said. "That's where Atlas comes in."

The keynote moved briskly through the limits of well-known tools. He praised the leap to modern AI—"A new technology emerged. And it is smart. It is freakishly smart." — but pointed out the gap contractors still face: AI without access to the system that runs their businesses.

## The Reveal: Atlas, an AI that speaks "ServiceTitan"

"As opposed to Siri, who lives in your phone, or Alexa, who lives in your home, or even ChatGPT, who lives in the Internet — Atlas lives in your business," Kuzoyan said. "He completely understands your data, and has the full power of ServiceTitan behind him."

"This isn't just an integration, it's much more

than that."

In practical terms, Atlas removes the need to "speak ServiceTitan."

"From here on out, you no longer have to speak ServiceTitan," Kuzoyan told the audience. "With Atlas, ServiceTitan speaks your language. Even if it's Armenian."

## Baby Atlas: Powerful on command

In its early phase, Atlas listens and executes.

Kuzoyan demonstrated a real scenario — preparing for a heat wave by rebalancing the job mix. Instead of building rules in Adaptive Capacity, he said, "I need to deprioritize tune-ups and prioritize emergency no-cools during peak season."

Atlas configured it, then narrowed it by date and branch.

"Not bad for a baby, huh?" he quipped.

He then shifted to the field. Rather than call the office, a tech can ask: "Hey Atlas, when was the last time we did maintenance on each unit?" and follow with, "What size air filters have we used on RTU #3 in the past, and how many?"



### ATLAS IN THE FIELD

Scan this QR Code to see a projection of Atlas in action for a technician.

### LEARN MORE ABOUT ATLAS

[www.servicetitan.com/features/atlas](http://www.servicetitan.com/features/atlas)

Atlas can also handle calculations contractors often juggle with third-party tools: "Hey Atlas, I want to verify that the system is delivering proper cooling for its capacity. Can you give me an airflow calculator?"

## Teenage Atlas: Proactively seeking opportunity

The real shift, Kuzoyan said, arrives in months, not years.

"By the end of the year you'll see Atlas grow out of being in a baby phase, and jump straight to adolescence," he said.

Instead of waiting to be asked, Atlas will "automatically read every single field on every single record, searching for opportunities to help make you more money."

Whether it's a tech note buried in a job summary or a memo on a piece of equipment, Atlas flags it, creates a CRM opportunity, and routes it—"Well played, Atlas, well played."

## Adult Atlas: He's everywhere

Kuzoyan then introduced a video that envisioned the future state of Atlas for a technician, "in the not-too-distant future, when Atlas is all grown up."

While he pointed out the difficulty in predicting where technology is going, Kuzoyan closed with a promise and a track record: 82 of 90 past Pantheon announcements delivered.

"The future of ServiceTitan is unmistakably automation-first," he said.

"Let's go get the success we deserve, together." ■





# Covering their Bases

How ServiceTitan Brought Major-League Tools to Ferguson Roofing & Exteriors

By Brendan Meyer

**C**hris Hoffmann likes to speak in baseball metaphors — which is no surprise, given that his family's HVAC, plumbing and electrical shop has its own branded section at St. Louis Cardinals baseball games: The Hoffmann Brothers Rooftop. • Hoffmann, the CEO, is proud and vocal about his St. Louis, Nashville and Denver-area businesses being family-owned. And in a competitive consolidation and private equity (PE) space, he and his brother Joe (COO), and father, Robert (founder), often touch base with other shops that are looking for alternatives to PE. • In 2023, those discussions led to what appeared to be a consolidation straight out of left field: Hoffmann Brothers added a brand new vertical to its services — Ferguson Roofing & Exteriors.





Why was it a potential curveball? Unlike the HVAC consolidation game, which Chris Hoffmann said is very far along, the residential roofing ballgame has just started.

“Right now, roofing is maybe in the third inning of the consolidation wave,” Hoffmann said. “And I love that.”

He loves it because, even with stark industry differences like insurance and contracted labor, Hoffmann believes that roofing shares a large commonality with the other trades they provide.

“Really, it’s sales and marketing,” Hoffmann said. “And candidly, (the roofing industry is) marked by a low level of sophistication from competitors today, so it’s easier to acquire leads. On average, the service that customers receive in that space is really poor. So it’s easy to differentiate yourself by elevating the customer experience, doing what you say you’re going to do, showing up when you say you’re going to show up, and answering the damn phone. The bar is lower.”

And he has the stats to prove it.

### Software, you’re on deck

Ferguson had been a multi-generational mainstay in the St. Louis area since 1939. But before Hoffmann Bros. acquired it, the shop struggled with top-of-funnel strategies like marketing and call center operations.

“They weren’t spending any money on marketing. They were getting a bunch of phone calls just by word of mouth and reputation,” Hoffmann said. That was impressive — but what followed was too many bottlenecks and workflow issues.

“The call center was run poorly,” Hoffmann said. “50% of the calls were not even being answered.”

Selling jobs lacked visibility. So did ordering materials, setting up jobs, and sharing all of that information with crews. Much of this had to do with Ferguson’s previous software system and reliance on Excel spreadsheets. They couldn’t offer reporting metrics like close rates and average tickets. Neither

could they show how the sales team was performing.

“No one zoomed out and said, ‘Why do we do it this way? How does this impact the customer?’” Hoffmann said.

That’s why the first hack after acquiring Ferguson was to create processes with more visibility. That included putting the shop on the same software system that Hoffmann Bros. used: ServiceTitan.

Right off the bat, the software mapped out workflows — from a job sales checklist, to how to get a job on the schedule.

“Ferguson went from a 50% abandoned call rate down to sub 5%,” Hoffmann said. “And we’re using ServiceTitan to see sold jobs, scheduled jobs, all the visibility that we didn’t have before that was in Excel and in people’s minds.”

ServiceTitan also allowed Ferguson to offer third-party financing, which made converting sales a lot easier.

By the end of 2024 — one year after acquiring Ferguson — revenue jumped from \$12 million to \$18 million.

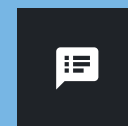
### Covering the bases, for every trade

Insurance is one big differentiator when comparing the residential roofing industry to HVAC. But Hoffmann foresees a shift in that landscape.

“If I took out my crystal ball and fast-forwarded 10 years, I think we’re going to see a much more retail-centric model as insurance companies begin to increase their deductibles,” Hoffmann said.

“Because candidly, insurance companies are sick of this game of, ‘Everyone wait for a storm and then get a free roof.’ Therefore, (I think) you’re going to see deductibles, particularly on your roofing line, become a percentage of home value. That’ll effectively push reroofing into the retail channel.

“(I think) it’ll look a lot more like HVAC, where you need third-party financing, people are buying, they’re responsible for paying for it. Therefore you’re going to see better margins,



**“Ferguson went from a 50% abandoned call rate down to sub 5%. And we’re using ServiceTitan to see sold jobs, scheduled jobs, all the visibility that we didn’t have before that was in Excel and in people’s minds.”**

**Chris Hoffmann, CEO, Hoffmann Brothers**

too. The retail side is just more attractive.”

That is all the more reason to focus on sales, marketing and the customer experience, Hoffmann explained — which is why he’s relieved that Ferguson is using ServiceTitan.

“Whether you’re selling HVAC or whether you’re selling roofs, ServiceTitan has the ability to support workflows in both of those environments.”

He touted ServiceTitan’s recent integration with Eagleview — an aerial imagery tool that has a 98.77% accuracy rate — as well as the collaboration with Xactimate, for enhancing Ferguson’s sales process by allowing for faster and more accurate estimating.

“Don’t fall into the trap of thinking, ‘Well, ServiceTitan’s new to roofing, and therefore it’s unproven.’ I would say, ‘Listen, ServiceTitan’s clearly established itself as the technology of choice for in-home sales in one of the largest in-home sales categories: HVAC, plumbing, electrical.

“There’s no reason to think that they can’t do that in the

roofing world.”

### Keep your eye on the customer

As the roofing consolidation game moves into the middle innings, Hoffmann Bros. is proving that efficient workflows, smart tech and a relentless focus on customer experience have been the keys to their success.

“When we show up to the house, we have a well-defined sales process and batting order,” Hoffmann said.

“We have an inside sales function where we’re following up on sold estimates. There’s a higher degree of accountability around sales team performance. We significantly increased our ability to process jobs for our crews. And we’ve added a ton of crews to our team so that we can actually do way more roofs per day than we were doing two years ago.”

Two years after Hoffmann Bros. purchased Ferguson, its revenue has more than doubled to \$26 million and counting.

In a baseball metaphor? They’re crushing it. ■





# Heartbreak, Healing, Helping

Carrie Kelsch's journey  
as the A+ Garage Doors CEO

By Eddie Wooten

**C**arrie Kelsch slipped into the office, largely unnoticed, and settled in at her desk. • That day in October 2022 marked Kelsch's return to A+ Garage Doors, then in Sandy, Utah, two months after the death of her daughter, Kailee Brynne, of brain cancer. • Kailee was 26. • "I just stared at my computer," Kelsch says. "I couldn't gather my thoughts to do anything." • Losing Kailee — Kelsch's lunch-and-shoe-shopping bestie, the life of any dance party, and always a friend to the underdog — devastated the company CEO. At the time, getting back into the office provided no solace. • She gave it a couple of hours. • "It was just kind of a numb day," she says. "And then I left."





**The path to financial security was hardly traditional for Kelsch, who grew up in Utah’s Wasatch Mountains, not far from Park City. Her father ran a successful cabinet company. She calls her mother, Faye, a “badass” for raising Kelsch and her 12 siblings.**

Kelsch had stepped away months earlier to act as Kailee’s caregiver, leaving the executive team — Mitch Kelsch and Parker Kelsch, her cousins, and Ryan Rowell—to steer the business she had started from scratch.

“Rowell, you guys can run this company,” she told her colleague. “I don’t even know where I fit.”

More days like that first day back followed. Finally, Parker and Mitch asked the CEO what made her happy.

“I like growing the business,” Kelsch told them. “That makes me happy and gives me a lot of purpose and drive.”

Their response?

“All right, let’s go for it,” Parker says.

Kelsch calls her daughter’s death and what followed the single biggest trajectory change in the two decades of A+ Garage Doors, which is pacing toward \$50 million in revenue in 2025.

Rowell says it also helped Kelsch evolve as a leader, from “very vulnerable to being the strong yet compassionate person she is today.”

The pain and emptiness from Kailee’s death remain. But those emotions also steel her determination to make sure her families are taken care of.

“I know how much they give, with their life,” she says. “When I say my family, this is not just people related to me. This is everybody who comes here.

“People I care about so deeply will be able to have life-changing money, so I love that.”

It’s what Kailee would have wanted.

### **Her early fight to succeed**

The path to financial security was hardly traditional for Kelsch, who grew up in Utah’s Wasatch Mountains, not far

from Park City. Her father, Gary, ran a successful cabinet company despite limited education. A “hero, mentor, and idol,” he inspired entrepreneurship for Kelsch and her 12 siblings. She calls her mother, Faye, a “badass” for raising the lot with limited use of her right arm and a limp.

“My mom inspired me to keep going and to not let limitation win,” she adds.

But Kelsch certainly faced limitation. Tiny Silver Creek Academy dissolved during her 11th-grade year, and she planned to homeschool.

“Instead I got married very young, at age 16,” she says. “And once you’re like, ‘Oh, I’m married. I don’t have to finish school. And now I have a baby.’”

With Elijah in tow, Kelsch never completed that education. At 18, she gave birth a month early to a second child, Camron, but an illness and a fragile immune system took him after just

12 days.

In the year after Camron’s passing, when she was 19, Kelsch started her first company, Cuter Kids, producing headbands and foot frills and earning placement in stores.

The birth of Kailee and another son, Mason, expanded the young family, which struggled to manage money and moved from basement to basement for shelter.

“We just lived and mooched off people,” she says.

“Not a lot of people believed I would ever amount to anything. My personality and my competitive nature pushed me to prove them wrong. I was doing it out of survival instinct for me and my kids.”

Her entrepreneurship, and moxie, would prove vital. After 10 years of marriage, a divorce made Carrie Kelsch a single mother of three.



“Us against the world,” she says. “Just like all the single moms out there.”

### A new door opens

Kelsch worked at Home Depot and sold timeshares, and by the time of the divorce, Kelsch had come up with enough money to buy a house, providing stability for her children. She took a job working with a mortgage broker in 2003.

Then she began dating Ryan Humphreys, who inspired Kelsch to open her own garage door company.

“You’ll have a place for the kids to work,” he told her.

“Oh, I do want that,” she responded.

In 2005, using Kelsch’s entrepreneurial spirit and \$75,000 investment and Humphreys’ knowledge of the industry, A+ Garage Doors opened for business out of her home in Heriman.

Humphreys would soon move into a career as a consultant, but the two married a year later and eventually became parents to a son, Stratton.

Growth came slow and steady in the first few years. Perhaps appropriately, A+ would add a garage at Kelsch’s home, about four times the size of a standard garage, as the company began to expand.

But two key events — a strategic decision and a second personal tragedy — would be transformational for both A+ and for Kelsch.

### Triumphs and then tragedy

A+ Garage Doors, in those early years, grew, in some ways, in spite of itself.

“Oh my gosh, we were a mess,” Kelsch says. “Nobody was running the company. I owned it, but I had no idea who was running it.”

After learning about a Goldman Sachs program, 10,000 Small Businesses, Kelsch went to school in 2013. The 13-week program introduced her to new ways to evaluate A+’s finances and to be more intentional about hiring the right people and putting them in the right jobs.

The experience inspired system and workflow updates and introduced new marketing tools. It also taught her that her company had a culture, a lesson essential to what A+ has become.

Kelsch learned the power of delegating. She would add CFO Del Goehring, who bolstered her confidence when he told her, “You run this company better than I’ve seen most corporate men run a company.”

A+ had taken off. Revenue began to grow 30% annually.

But by April 2019, lights and shadows began to create negative impacts on Kailee, so Kelsch took her to a hospital emergency room.

The diagnosis: Glioblastoma.

“We got rushed right in to get brain surgery,” Kelsch says. “I was the caregiver for maybe two weeks, and then she’s off living her life again.”



**“Not a lot of people believed I would ever amount to anything. My personality and my competitive nature pushed me to prove them wrong. I was doing it out of survival instinct for me and my kids.”**

**Carrie Kelsch**  
CEO, A+ Garage Doors

Two months later, Kailee required another hospital visit. After a significant seizure in October 2021 and one more surgery, Kailee decided that would be the last one.

“Then we just rode it out,” Kelsch says.

Late that year and into 2022, caring for Kailee took top priority for Kelsch. Guiding A+ Garage Doors became the responsibility of Mitch Kelsch, the chief business officer; Parker Kelsch, the chief operating officer; and Rowell, the general manager. They’d reach out for her insight at times.

“I can’t tell you anything,” Kelsch remembers telling them. “You’re just going to have to figure it out. I just mentally can’t help you at all.”

### ‘My way of dealing with life’

In August 2022, Kailee’s fight ended.

“I was messed up,” Kelsch says. “I was angry.”

Husband Ryan offered strength, first in care and then in her grief. A+ Garage Doors grew, and Kelsch’s passion began to return. Yet the feelings wouldn’t subside.

“I literally wished I was dying,” Kelsch says. “When is it my turn to die?”

“My other kids are like, ‘Ouch, Mom.’ And I’m like, ‘I know. It just ... hurts ... so ... bad.’”

She remembers her first venture into a shoe store without

her bestie.

“I broke down crying and had to leave,” she says. “And it tears me up even thinking about it.”

When work eventually provided some refuge, she dug in.

“It’s just my way of dealing with life,” Kelsch says. “Do I think it was healthy? No. But I also feel like it helped get me to a stable place.”

The company founder found a new niche: Face of A+ Garage Doors. After being involved in every aspect of the business for so long, it was a shift.

“When I first started,” says Mitch Kelsch, a nine-year em-



ployee, “she was very involved in the business and wore a lot of hats. Very involved in every aspect of the office.

“It took a little bit for her to find out where she fits in the company again. But she did it amazingly.”

Soft-spoken by nature, eager to give credit to others, Kelsch has stepped into this even more visible role with the 144-employee company, whose home base is now a sparkling facility in West Valley City.

Kelsch draws applause at team meetings even before she distributes raffle winnings. She wears a paper crown and parades through the office to award bonuses to loud music and cheering.

Kelsch also plays along with the executive team’s inside joke. “The Imperial March,” Darth Vader’s theme, accompanies her walk to the front to address the A+ team.

“You can feel the love and energy,” Rowell says. “She’s really embraced (her) role, which has taken the culture to even a higher level.”

Outside of the company? Parker Kelsch, her longest-tenured employee at 19½ years, can’t avoid her, whether it’s seeing a commercial while filling his gas tank, watching a morning show, or scrolling social media.

“She’s all over the place,” he says. “In the last couple of years, she’s really stepped into that.”

Without question, others have noticed.

Acting on purpose

Jordan Dubin, a co-founder of the Guild Garage Group with Joe Delaney and Sean Slazyk, reached out to Kelsch in August 2023 to inquire about a possible acquisition.

For Dubin, it went poorly.

“We didn’t have a single company under LOI (letter of intent),” says Dubin, who was 26 at the time. “She let me give a two-minute spiel and then hung up the phone on me.

“And as she jokingly, but also not jokingly, says, ‘He was a punk-ass kid who didn’t know what he was talking about.’

“She’s a hundred percent right.”

That story doesn’t surprise Ellen Rohr, the Brand and Industry Marketing Lead for ServiceTitan and a founder and an owner of Zoom Drain. Rohr met Kelsch at Pantheon, ServiceTitan’s conference for customers, a couple of years ago, and the two communicate most weeks and are part of a text group called “The Sisterhood.”

“If I have a business challenge,” Rohr says, “she’s my first phone call.”

Rohr calls Kelsch a high-level thinker and “always the smartest person in the room.”

“She’s soft-spoken, but don’t let that fool you,” Rohr says. “She is a boss.”

Dubin knows that, too. And it turns out he might have known what he was talking about, after all.

“That punk-ass kid knew exactly the company to call, and it was A+,” Dubin says.



By 2024, Guild reached an agreement to partner with A+ Garage Doors. The transaction was structured similarly to a merger, Dubin says, “with A+ opting to take no chips off the table but instead rolling 100% of their equity with the transaction.”

Rohr has watched her friend welcome this new role as “queen of the company.”

“Her job is to represent,” Rohr says. “I think she’ll be very eager to step into that role as the representative of A+ and of Guild.”

Dubin has “zero doubt” that success in the Salt Lake City market and in offices opened in St. George, Utah, and, in 2025, in Las Vegas will propel the company past \$100 million in revenue by 2030.

Dubin, who holds undergraduate and MBA degrees from Harvard, calls Kelsch “the single most impressive entrepreneur I’ve ever met in my life.”

Regardless of all of that high praise, for all of the success experienced, the partnership with Guild Garage Group has an even higher purpose, one she “really, really leaned into after a tragic event,” Dubin says.

Caring for family, changing lives

Dubin refers to Kelsch as the “mother to us all” at A+ Garage Doors. Kelsch hears similar affection from her work family.

“Mama Carrie’s got us,” she says, echoing one employee, “and it’s that they know I’ve got their backs.”

She lived that out in the transaction with Guild.

“I was able to hold some of the shares, so I can give those shares out to the employees,” Kelsch says. “When we do turn



again eventually, they have skin in the game and they’ll be able to get rewarded for that. And it was a substantial amount. So I feel like I’m able to change some lives.”

And those around her will have stronger foundations and more financial peace of mind.

It’s what Kailee would have wanted.

“It’s either inspired by her,” Kelsch says, “or I’m trying to fill the gaps of the pain.

“She was always very proud of me. So I know she would’ve, a hundred percent, been supportive.

“She would’ve been incredibly proud of where we are and how many people’s lives are changing because of the work that we’ve all put in.” ■

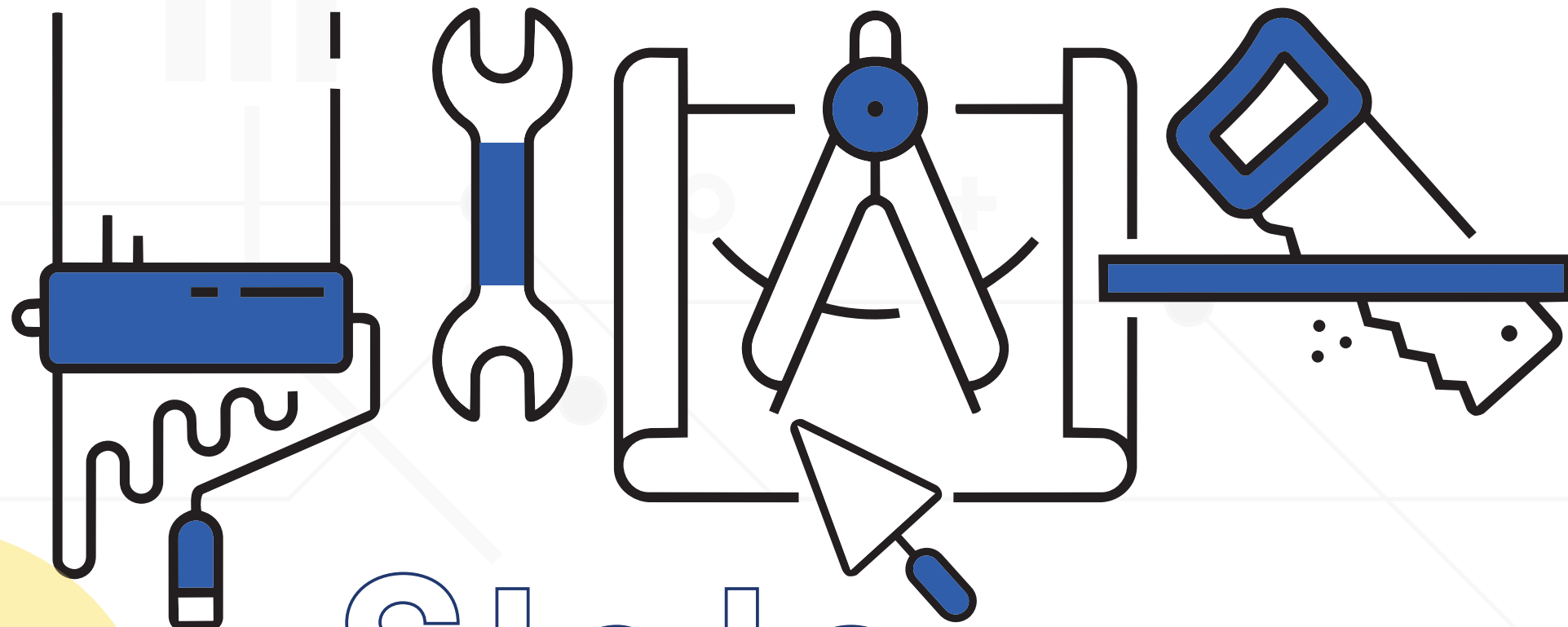


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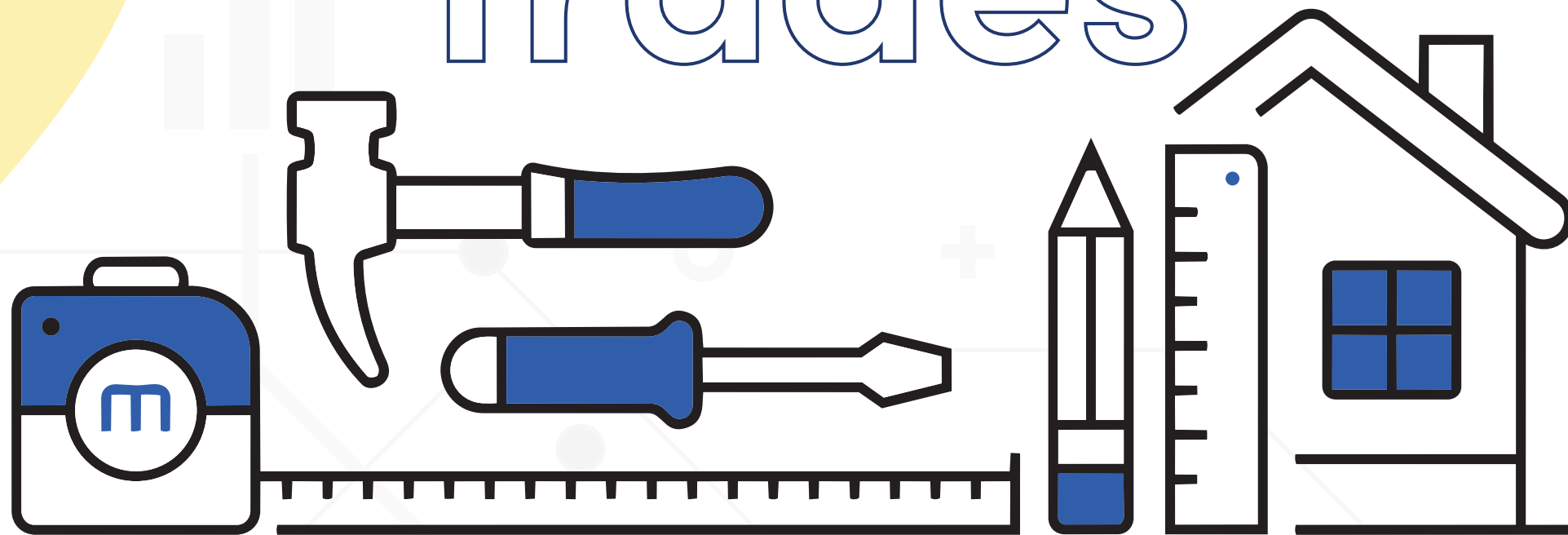
Discover how A+ Garage Doors redefined the customer experience and scaled to 36 locations by treating every detail with an “A+” standard. Read the article to learn their secrets to service success.







# State of the Trades



## A resilient industry, with a big caveat

Customer expectations are shifting fast. Contractors have to adjust accordingly.

By Mike Persinger

**T**he beauty of the home services industry, ServiceTitan's Chris Hunter says, rests in its resilience. • No matter what happens in the economy, if an air conditioner goes bad or the water heater develops a leak or won't produce hot water, the customer has to get it fixed. • Hunter, a ServiceTitan Principal Industry Advisor and the former owner of Hunter Super Techs in Oklahoma, says, "the buying decision is still a need-based thing." • But that customer doesn't have to buy from YOUR company. • They have options. And an outstanding customer experience from the first phone call to the final payment makes some contractors stand out. For every potential customer, though, another estimate is just a Google search and a phone call, virtual chat or online form away.



A consumer trends report that includes data and insight from ServiceTitan, Visa and Synchrony explores changing consumer expectations, the tactics contractors can employ to meet them, and data trends to inform a broader strategy.

Consumers demand a lot – including five-star treatment, personalized experiences, seamless digital interactions, financing options, convenience and value. Choosing a contractor can depend on awareness through ads and social media, a memorably branded service van, an online search, or a referral from a trusted friend.

Or the decision could, especially among younger consumers, come down to brand representation, how easy it was to book online, the experience they had with a technician, or an online review.

Now more than ever, it's about meeting the customer where they are, says ServiceTitan Industry Advisor Angie Snow, also co-owner of Utah's Western Heating & Air.

"They want to contact you the way they want to contact you," she says. "They want to pay you the way that they want to pay you. You have to be a company that will accommodate all of your different customers."

A huge opportunity

The staggering size of the opportunity in the trades highlights the task for contractors.

ServiceTitan's internal analysis of industry data estimates that customers from homes and businesses in the United States and Canada alone spend approximately \$1.5 trillion annually on trades services. That's more than the approximately \$1.1 trillion spent on retail e-commerce, or the \$0.9 trillion spent on accommodation and food services, each in 2023.

And the housing stock is aging, ServiceTitan data shows. Contractors using the software have recorded 65 million pieces of equipment in the software, and data shows:

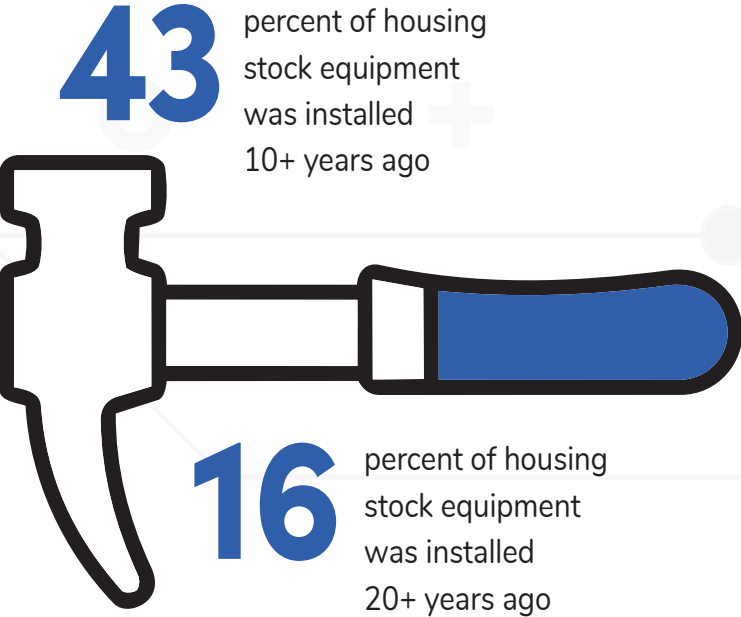
- 43% of that equipment was installed 10+ years ago
- 16% was installed 20+ years ago

The fact that ServiceTitan users installed 2.5 million pieces of equipment in 2024 also demonstrates the significant opportunity for trade businesses, but success for contractors will hinge on deeply understanding consumers and effectively engaging with them.

No two situations are the same

That opportunity, though, is not a monolith. Expectations differ by age, by gender, by race, and by economic status. Here are just some of the data points from the joint report:

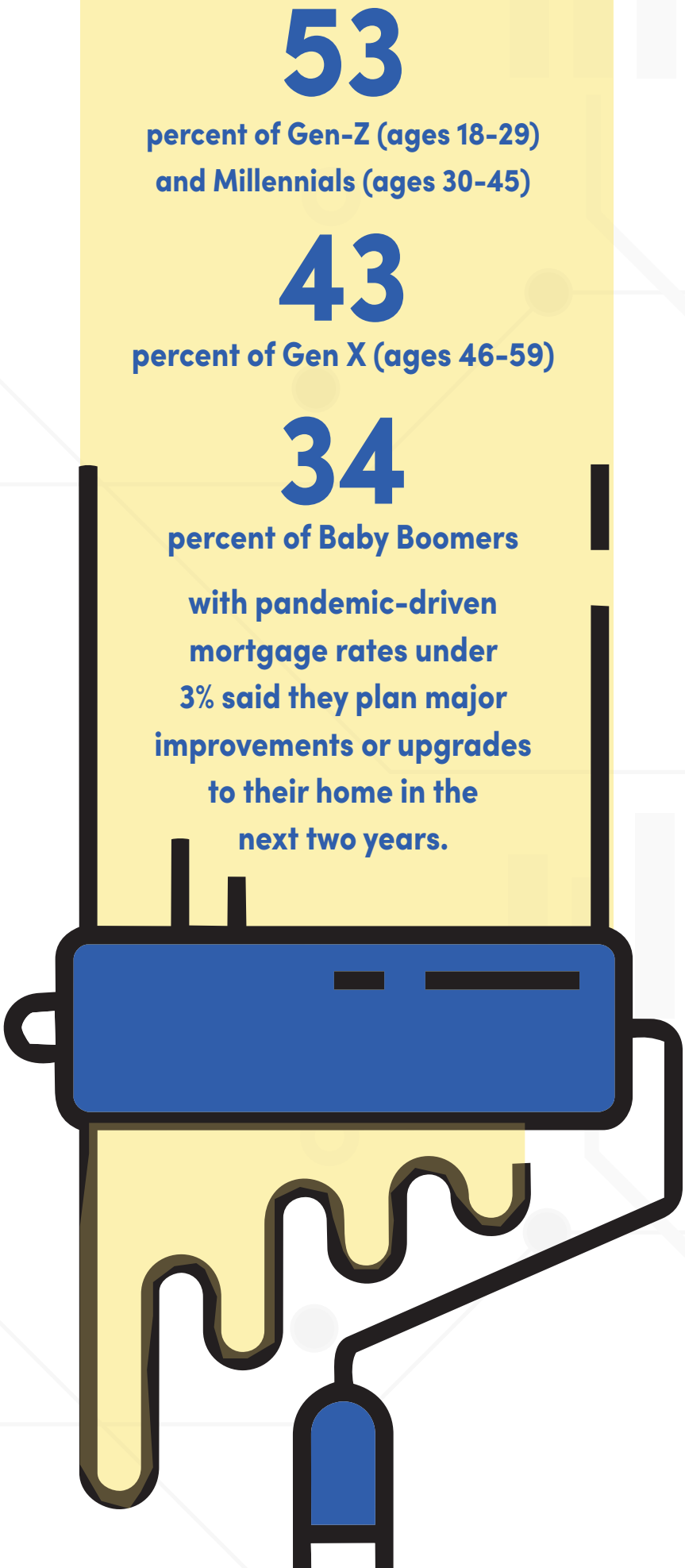
By the Numbers



Home improvement shoppers begin research online 80% of the time, with 53% using mobile devices throughout their purchase path.

34% of Gen Z and 38% of Millennials are comfortable with AI bots serving as customer service representatives.

Less than half of consumers (46%) were satisfied with the ease of online payments and checkout.



- According to a Synchrony survey of consumers:
- Home improvement shoppers begin research online 80% of the time, with 53% using mobile devices throughout their purchase path.
  - When those with pandemic-driven mortgage rates under 3% were asked about their home improvement plans, 53% of Gen-Z (ages 18-29) and Millennials (ages 30-45) said they plan major improvements or upgrades to their home in the next two years. That compares with 43% of Gen X (ages 46-59) and 34% of Baby Boomers.
  - 33% of buyers would go to another retailer or not purchase if financing weren't available.
  - Less than half of consumers (46%) were satisfied with the ease of online payments and checkout.
  - 34% of Gen Z and 38% of Millennials are comfortable with AI bots serving as customer service representatives.

And Visa found that how home services customers pay is changing.

- A staggering 94% of home service customers own a credit card.
- A remarkable 90% of these cardholders use their card regularly.
- Home service customers allocate 48% of their total spending to credit cards, compared with 42% for the broader population.
- In 2015-16, Visa data shows, 59% of home service spending was paid by check. By 2024-25, that had fallen to 36%.
- Conversely, credit card payments went from 27% of jobs in 2015-16 to 37% in 2024-25.

Snow summarizes the data, and the expectations the data suggests, by focusing on the three commonalities that deserve every contractor's focus.

"If you can convey to them how your product or service will save them time, will save them money, or will contribute to the safety and well-being of their family, you can build value," Snow says. "Technicians should keep that in mind. Those will be big factors in their success."

Hunter agrees. "I don't care who you're talking to," he says, "that really resonates."



READ THE FULL REPORT from ServiceTitan, Synchrony and Visa with this QR code.



# ADVICE FOR CONTRACTORS: EDUCATE. PERSONALIZE. OFFER OPTIONS. MAKE IT EASY.

**1** **Have a process in the home.** Have every technician go through the same steps on every call, from arrival to payment to ensure a repeatable standout experience. “Without that, you’re allowing anyone to throw their own assumption on the customer,” ServiceTitan’s Chris Hunter says. “If everybody is offered the same things, that limits the technician’s bias.”

**2** **Lead with empathy.** Remember why you’re there, says Head’s Plumbing’s Khadija Head. “I call you because I have a problem,” she says. “How quickly can I be attended to? What are your financing options? Can I leverage my credit?”

**3** **Give options, not ultimatums.** Whether it’s good-better-best solutions or how to pay, offer alternatives. “It’s up to the customer to decide what’s best for them,” says Stephanie Allen of AirWorks Solutions. “It’s our job to educate them on all the possibilities.”

**4** **Educate, educate, educate.** Clear explanations of the problem are essential — on every call. “The confused mind says no,” ServiceTitan’s Angie Snow says. “Make sure the homeowner feels empowered, and understands what’s best for their system. That makes it easier for them to say yes.”



**5** **Serve the customer’s budget.** Providing information on financing and payment options is essential. “Offer financing on everything, even the repairs, because you just don’t know what situation they’re in,” ServiceTitan’s Chris Hunter says. “And you can’t assume you know what’s best for them.”



**6** **Understand brand expectations.** Customers want a wrapped truck, uniforms, and a well-groomed technician. It’s your job to deliver. “They have a preconceived notion of how they want this interaction to be,” Head says. “And they want (satisfaction) instantaneously.”

**7** **Always exhibit respect.** Have technicians pay particular attention to biases, and guard against them.

**8** **Consider a selling-technician model.** Some contractors are moving away from salespeople to selling technicians, to condense the HVAC sales cycle. Diagnose the problem, offer options, help with financing and more. “It’s an all-in-one experience,” Snow says.



**9** **Keep it simple.** For every decision, customers go through a process. Help them work through it. “It all boils down to offering options,” Snow says.

**10** **When in doubt, see No. 1.** At Airworks, a customer advocate works through soft skills and processes with technicians. The goal is simple: “It really doesn’t matter whose home you walk into,” Allen says. “You’re going to work the process every time.”



# Optimism Returns

## ServiceTitan's Commercial Service Industry Report reveals stability and growth in 2025

By Brendan Meyer

**F**ive years after COVID and its ensuing ripple effects, the commercial service industry has welcomed back a long-lost feeling — optimism.

According to a recent ServiceTitan survey, more than 66% of contractors reported stable or growing revenues in 2025, with 53% optimistic about the market.

"With COVID in the rearview mirror — a period where many contractors had to reshuffle their customer bases because they were exposed in retail and class A commercial offices — the market has now worked itself out," said Charlie Warren, Vice President of Commercial and Construction at ServiceTitan.

"The upshot is that the current demand happens to be among the most durable, exciting part of today's economy: industrial, health-care, distribution, manufacturing, and of course data centers. I'm not surprised that the results of this survey say, 'We have a lot of durability in our business.'"

ServiceTitan's survey of 1,014 commercial owners and executives primarily in mechanical, electrical and plumbing was conducted by Thrive Analytics from May 5 to May 23, 2025.

While the overall takeaway revealed an optimistic view, commercial contractors are still concerned about familiar headwinds. According to the survey, the three most pressing concerns were:

- The skilled labor shortage (52% of respondents)
- Rising labor and overhead costs (45%)

- Longer materials lead times (31%)

Raffi Elchemmas, the Executive Director of MCAA, stressed that contractors need to keep a pulse on parts availability and material lead times, especially with the threat of tariffs.

"There's going to be a cost for people to receive materials faster," Elchemmas said. "So I think this is a moment for the commercial service contractor to focus on operational excellence."

One way to accomplish that is by mastering cash flow. Survey respondents reported that the average time to send invoices is two days, while the average time to get paid is 28 days. There's a variety of ways contractors are collecting payment. The top responses were:

- ACH (37%)
- Check (30%)
- Credit card (14%)
- Wire (13%)

Warren stressed that the easier contractors make it for their customers to pay, the better they'll look.

"How contractors bill and invoice is a representation of their

brand," Warren said. "It's an overlooked way to highlight the overall product and offering."

Another way contractors are boosting operational excellence is by utilizing preventative maintenance agreements (PMAs). A significant 63% of contractors reported that more than half of their customer base is secured by PMAs.

But Warren and Elchemmas stress that, by far, one of the most impactful ways commercial contractors can fuel growth and manage headwinds is by leveraging customer relationship management (CRM) systems. The survey echoes that sentiment:

- 70% of respondents are using a CRM to increase customer retention, increase lead conversions and improve their close rates.
- Of the 30% who are not using a CRM, nearly half of them (47%) are considering it.

"CRMs are overwhelmingly impactful in supporting commercial service contractors to better communicate and build stronger, more trusted relationships with their customers," Elchemmas said. "This is an area where if you're not doing it, you need to get on this train."

"And it's not just investing in technology. (Some contractors) might have four or five different softwares that they're using. It's (important to) consolidate that technology into one or two platforms."

Warren and Elchemmas agree that ServiceTitan, especially with its current use and forward-thinking approach to AI, is an all-in-one platform that can help contractors achieve their goals.

According to the survey, those goals include:

- Increasing net profit margins (39%)
- Optimizing existing processes (39%)
- Growing recurring revenue (37%)
- Retaining existing customers (33%)

But Warren reminded that at the end of the day, there's only one goal that truly matters.

"Everyone wants a large maintenance base. But contractors' recurring revenue is only as durable as their most recent service visit — both the quality of the interaction with the customer and how well they performed that work," Warren said.

"That puts the onus on actually delivering."

Of course, it helps when contractors are delivering during a time of optimism.

"Technology investments are driving growth, and workers are welcoming the adoption to help drive operational efficiencies," Elchemmas said. "All things considered, the commercial service contractor is having a moment." ■





# Let's Reminisce

## 7 Highlights from Pantheon 2025

By Brendan Meyer

**Y**ou know that blah feeling you get in the days or weeks after an event you looked forward to for so long has come and gone? Well, more than 4,000 people know that feeling very well.

Let's call it the "Post-Pantheon Blahs."

The biggest trades event of the year was once again a time to remember, with 2,395 ServiceTitan customers, 75 breakout sessions, six main stage keynotes, 1,262 partners and exhibitor staff, countless networking opportunities, and one big, epic party.

Didn't make it this year? Or are you stuck in the Post-Pantheon Blahs? Let's take a moment and reminisce. Here are seven highlights from Pantheon 2025.



### Atlas

Wouldn't it be cool to say you were in the crowd when Microsoft first introduced Clippy? How about when Apple unveiled Siri, or when Amazon announced Alexa? Because a moment like that happened at Pantheon during Vahe Kuzoyan's keynote when he unveiled a new, AI-powered tool for ServiceTitan users: Atlas. Atlas empowers technicians with real-time answers to questions using the data already in ServiceTitan. It can provide instant information about customer and equipment history. It will recommend and even launch marketing campaigns. The tool is only in its infant stages. And if you were in the crowd, you can say you were there when Atlas was born.



### Food Truck Friday

Ever been to food truck heaven? Pantheon attendees have. On Friday, attendees were treated to an outdoor lunch where 10-plus food trucks lined both sides of a walkway, each one offering a specialty bite. Burger slider? Yes please. Sushi next? Of course. How about some Neapolitan pizza, em-panadas, veggie tacos and ice cream sandwiches? Why not?

### Unlocking Peak Performance

Get. More. Sleep. That was one big piece of advice given by keynote speakers Dr. Andrew Huberman (host of "Huberman Lab" podcast) and Dr. Peter Attia (host of "The Drive" podcast, and author of "Outlive: The Science & Art of Longevity"). Their talk went into the science of how to unlock peak performance from a chemical level, as well as concrete steps that service professionals and others can take to enhance physical, emotional, and mental health.







## Hack-Theon

Ever wish you could speak directly to an engineer at ServiceTitan and have them solve your problem or implement your great idea, in real time? For the first time, Pantheon had its own “Hack-theon” booth, which consisted of two parts: Hack Zone and Feedback Zone. The Hack Zone was where ServiceTitan engineers solved specific, real-world problems submitted by ServiceTitan customers — right at the booth. The Feedback Zone was where product teams unveiled new features and concepts to Pantheon attendees to gather early user feedback.



## Birds of a Feather

Back by popular demand, the Birds of a Feather lunch connected professionals across various industries who share the same or similar job titles. This year, nearly 400 attendees were seated at a variety of tables — ranging from service managers to dispatchers and shop owners — to network and pick one another’s brains.



## Titans for Change

Pantheon attendees once again had the chance to give back. At the Titans for Change booth, you could assemble “Titan Treasure” bags — filled with jigsaw puzzles, teddy bears, coloring books and more — for children receiving treatment at Children’s Hospital of Los Angeles. In total, attendees completed a whopping 1,000 of these care packages, with an estimated donation value of \$51,890.





## Titan Appreciation Party

The ServiceTitan events team sure knows how to commit to a theme. This year's was "Big Top Circus," which included acrobatic circus performers, fortune tellers, carnival games, funnel cake, turkey legs, palm readers, and a woman in a cage draped with a friendly boa constrictor named Oreo. To top it all off, there was a private concert from Grammy Award-Winning country band Little Big Town — in a room that, naturally, looked like the inside of a circus tent. ■



**NEED A CURE  
FOR THE  
POST-PANTHEON  
BLAHS?**

Here's something  
to look forward to:  
Pantheon 2026 will be  
Oct. 5-7 in Orlando!





# 2025 Prometheus Award Winners

This year's Prometheus Award winners at Pantheon recognized two companies that drive progress and inspire positive change in their communities.

## Vines Heating & Air, Plumbing, Restoration

The company in Conway, South Carolina, won the Prometheus Torchbearer award, which recognizes large-scale organizations for giving back.

During the March 2025 wildfire in Carolina Forest, Vines partnered with Carolina Forest Community Church to create a 24/7 first responder rehab station. This site became a hub that supplied first responders with hot meals, hydration, hygiene products, socks, eye drops, and anything else they needed.

During this time, Vines's social media outreach led to carloads of donations, meals from local restaurants, and volunteers from every corner of Horry County. To honor the first responders' courage, Vines also co-sponsored a tribute event with the local minor league baseball team, where all proceeds went to South Carolina Mental Health for Heroes.

## Above and Beyond Service Company

Headquartered in Edmond, Oklahoma, the company won the Prometheus Flamekeeper award, recognizing the contributions of smaller-scale companies.

Above and Beyond, with locations in Edmond and Oklahoma City, donates \$5 from every membership they sell to the local Humane Society. This year, the company also played a key role in helping bring Poochella, one of the Humane Society's biggest community events, to life.

The finalists, all of whom were chosen for their community work, included:

**Flamekeepers:** True Pros Heating & Air (Layton, Utah), Haley Comfort Systems (Rochester, Minnesota) and Above and Beyond.

**Torchbearers:** Premium Service Brands (Charlottesville, Virginia), Quality Plumbing, Heating, Cooling & Electrical (Knoxville, Tennessee) and Vines Heating & Air, Plumbing, Restoration. ■





**TitanAdvisor**  
**MASTER**

Above + Beyond Service  
Company

Riley Plumbing Heating and Air

**TitanAdvisor**  
**ECLIPSE**

Richard's Plumbing and Electric

Ultimate Heating, Air and  
Plumbing

**TitanAdvisor**  
**LIGHTNING**

Summers of Marion

Bonsky Heating and Cooling

**TitanAdvisor**  
**COMET**

Summers of Fort Wayne

Summers of Huntington and  
Summers of Peru

**TitanAdvisor**  
**RISING STAR**

Above + Beyond Fencing  
Company

Speedy Tech Services, LLC

The only constant is  
(how you manage)  
**CHANGE**

**T**his year's Pantheon in Anaheim, California, reinforced two universal truths of life in the trades and ServiceTitan. No. 1, there will always be big shifts. The introduction of Atlas, the AI consultant who lives in your business, is truly that. Atlas was only one of the big changes announced at ServiceTitan's keynote event this year.

And No. 2, the resilience of the trades isn't just in the industry, it's in the people who adapt well to change, and manage it effectively.

Because of my psychology and counseling background, I know about the process of change. And as I would in a counseling session, I'll offer some gentle reminders for managing change in your business—and in your life.

- Take good care of those who will be affected by the change, because it's ultimately about them. That's Job 1. Make sure they feel secure expressing concerns and disclosing mistakes they make during the transition.
- Remember that change is a process, not one-and-done. Have touch-points to measure progress, solicit feedback, and pivot when necessary.
- If you're struggling or in doubt—and even if you're not—return to Job 1. Solicit one-on-one feedback about the change and where your people see problems. The more personalized the process feels, the better, and personalization creates stronger buy-in.

On our "Toolbox for the Trades" podcast, change is a topic that appears on almost every episode in some form. Change because of burn-out. Because of growth. Because of business needs. Because of new technology.

And on the "Mastering ServiceTitan" podcast, hosted by Josh Lu, we get into the nitty-gritty of change management.

Juan Lopez, in Episode 8, talks about his "get after it" mentality and use of ServiceTitan's Next environment to hone processes ahead of change. And the discussion with Renee Lenox in Episode 14 was about her meticulous process for making the uncomfortable more comfortable for frontline staff.

Those conversations are how I know how capable the industry is at managing and adapting to change. Learn from each other. Lean on each other.

AI is not going away, so I encourage you to lean in to avoid being left behind. Push vendors, including ServiceTitan, to make it better.

And above all, take care of your people. ■



Scan the code  
to check out  
the Toolbox  
for the Trades  
podcast.





ServiceTitan, Inc.  
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Glendale, CA 91203

## 90% of your competitors are missing the point.

ServiceTitan's 2026 State of AI in the Trades report found a startling gap: while most contractors see AI as a way to be more efficient, only 10% realize it's their biggest competitive advantage. Those who automate their marketing, dispatching, and payroll today will dominate the leads and the labor market of tomorrow. The "wait-and-see" era is over.

### Will you be in the 10%?



Get the report



Insights based on a survey of 1,000+ contractors conducted by Thrive Analytics for ServiceTitan.