



5 ESSENTIAL steps to get more done in your fire protection business (and improve profitability!)



Running a fire protection maintenance business can be challenging. Compliance requirements constantly change, finding and keeping good staff is complex, and managing operating costs is a daily struggle. The reality for any business is that there are only two routes to improve profitability: reduce costs or increase revenue. If you can get more done with the same resources, you can effectively achieve both. In this productivity guide we'll explore five ways to get more done in your fire protection business - today.

Automate processes

Every fire protection maintenance business follows hundreds of processes each week. It's the nature of compliance-driven industries that standards and regulations mandate what needs to be done and when it needs to be done. Automating any process starts with understanding the process and identifying tasks that can be done faster, in parallel, or even eliminated. Look for repetitive and predictable processes that frustrate your team or irritate your customers.

Leveraging technology to improve operations and enhance services can include using software to automate scheduling, billing and defect management, utilising mobile apps to streamline field operations, and implementing remote monitoring and alerting for fire protection systems.

Automating processes saves time and resources, improves accuracy, and enables you to offer better customer service and remain competitive in the market.

“Systemise (automate) the predictable, so you can humanise the exceptional.”

Gino Wickman

Optimise scheduling and the assignment of tasks

Scheduling inspections, tests and rectification work with your customers and assigning field techs is a make-or-break task for every fire contractor. Get it right; your customers are impressed, compliance is assured, your field techs' time is maximised, and your business is profitable. Get it wrong, and you're in a world of hurt.

The challenges stem from the vast number of variables involved in scheduling. Knowing the service frequencies for each fire asset type and the frequency tolerances from the standards are key data points. Likewise, technician availability, skill sets, tools and equipment availability, coordination with customers and building access all contribute to the complexity.

Scheduling on paper might work for one or two techs and a moderate number of properties and fire assets. But paper-based scheduling is similar to using a landline telephone – it works, but today there's a better way. Numerous software tools offer scheduling automation, from basic recurring appointments in MS Outlook to some of the most advanced software systems ever written that help airlines schedule flights. Software built for the fire industry by people that understand the peculiarities of standards and regulations is vital to optimising scheduling and job assignment.

This optimisation will save time for service managers, field techs and your admin teams. Make a schedule change in one place, and it's seen across the company and shown to your customers. It means you'll never miss a scheduled test again, and the fire protection systems you maintain will remain compliant.

“Straight away I could see that FireMate came from our world. It had obviously been built by someone with the same mindset as us.”

Sai Dale, Select Essential (Australia)

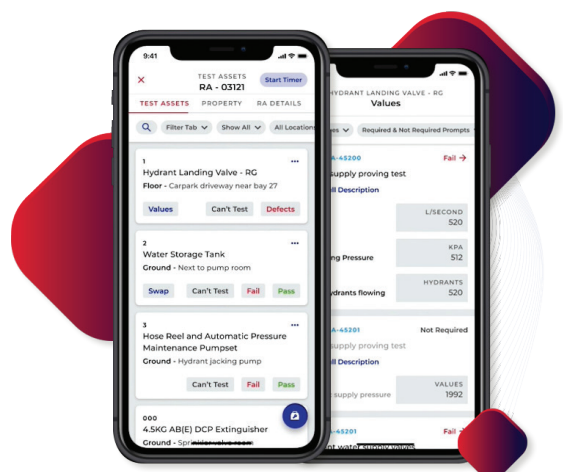
Improve field staff productivity

Your field techs are your frontline team. Their knowledge of fire protection systems, standards and regulations is critical in delivering services to your clients. Likewise, their productivity is vital to the profitability of your company. So how can you improve their productivity?

As mentioned, an optimised schedule will reduce travel time and ensure that inspections and tests are completed per the routine service frequencies and tolerances. On-site techs need easy access to the job list on their mobile or tablet. They need to see the big picture for the day, the site they're attending and a list of assets with historical data so that they can adjust and be flexible as may be required.

Mobile apps are just another tool to help techs get their job done, but not all tools are the same, and not all apps are as helpful as they should be. Having an app designed for fire protection maintenance means the workflows are familiar, and prebuilt common responses mean consistent and professional data is available for reports and analysis. Apps should reduce and eliminate paperwork by seamlessly synchronising photo evidence from the mobile back to the office to create content-rich reports for your clients. Likewise, digital timesheets reduce paperwork and guesswork by field techs and the office team.

Having in-context access to the relevant standards in the mobile app also means no more thumbing through hundreds of pages of standards to clarify an applicable standard, saving time and increasing quality. More time on the tools reduces frustration and helps your techs get more done.





Simplify compliance management

Ever-changing compliance requirements mean the cost and complexity of fire protection maintenance continue to skyrocket. A change in the annual fire safety certification report required by a government, alterations to labour laws, or an update to the maintenance standards will all add to your weekly task list and stop you from getting home on time.

History teaches us that the complexity of fire protection will continue to escalate. How you manage the complexity will make a huge difference to your business. Simplifying the management of complex compliance requirements can be achieved in several ways.

- Utilising mobile apps, as mentioned above, that prompt and enable your field staff to accurately collect all information needed for compliance reporting.
- Offering your customers direct access to their reports, invoices, defect approvals and appointments via a customer portal can reduce unnecessary emails and calls and optimise your communications.
- Ensuring that defect reports indicate all relevant standards for the assets in question can eliminate compliance questions and provide your clients with the confidence that your business has got their compliance under control.



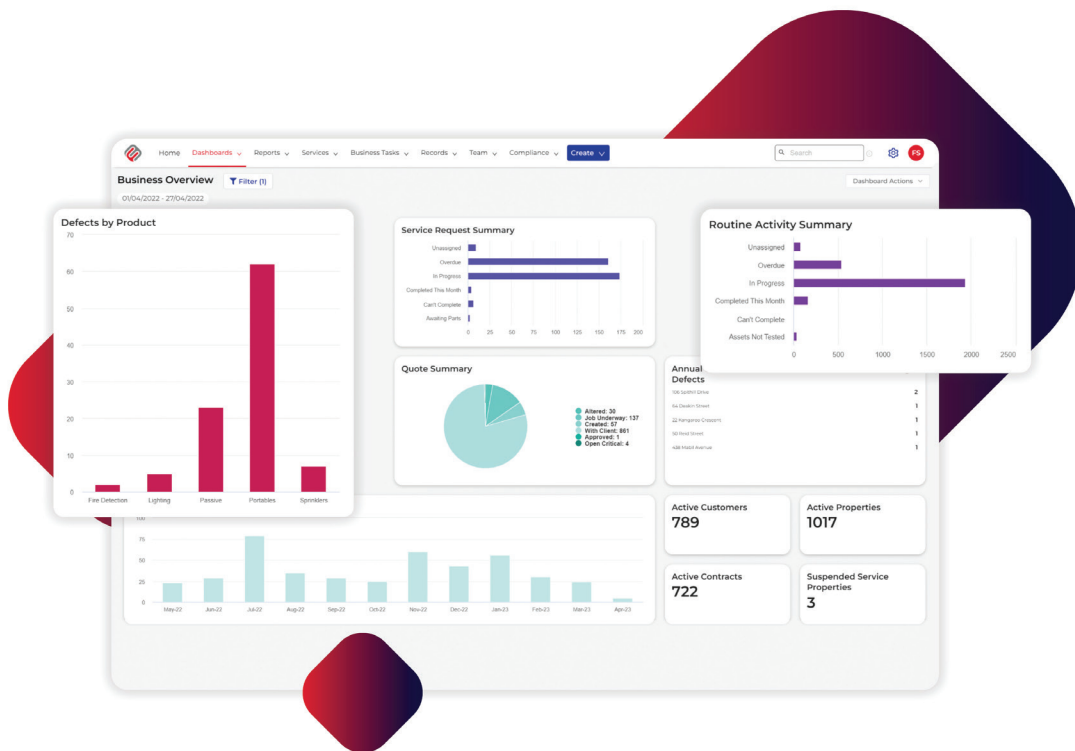
Continuously learn and improve

Staying up to date with the latest technology, industry trends, standards, regulations, and best practices in fire protection is demanding and essential. This can help you identify new opportunities for growth and improvement in your business.

The fire protection maintenance process can be a helpful framework for discovering continuous learning opportunities in your fire protection business. Allocate one step each month, looking for improvement opportunities in reporting this month, then defect management next month. In a year, you'll cover each step twice. Trade shows and conferences, industry association meetings, and training courses offer the opportunity to see the latest trends and network with other professionals in the fire industry.

Developing key business metrics and reviewing them weekly or monthly is also a tremendous source of business intelligence to help you make positive changes. This involves analysing performance data, identifying areas for improvement, and implementing changes to processes to increase efficiency, reduce costs, or improve service quality. This process includes tracking key performance indicators (KPIs) such as technician productivity, customer satisfaction, and revenue growth and using that data to drive decision-making.

5 ESSENTIAL STEPS TO GET MORE DONE



“FireMate has proven to be a game-changer for both our team and our clients, providing us with a comprehensive snapshot of all the key information and business insights needed to successfully operate and grow the maintenance section of our fire and lift service business.”

Advance Groups Fire, Lifts & Escalator Services (Australia)

Why FireMate

FireMate delivers pioneering fire protection software solutions built by the fire protection industry for the fire protection industry. We get your business – we’ve been where you are.

Our software is more than asset management, more than account management, more than job management, more than defect management, and more than compliance management. Our fire protection maintenance software is an end-to-end business management system.



For further information or a demo,
call +61 7 3107 1694 or check out
our website firemate.com