

Where does the time go between the field and the books?

A practical guide for leaders in energy and utilities: six steps from operations to reporting, a checklist and a worksheet.

ENERGY AND UTILITIES

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1. INTRODUCTION

Why time disappears in the handovers

In energy and utilities the requirements are high. Assets must run, service must be carried out safely, and everything must be documented for customers, authorities and auditors. Many leaders feel that documentation grows faster than the time available to produce it.

Time rarely disappears in operations themselves. It disappears when information has to be moved: from the sensor to planning, from the technician's notes to the report, from the report to finance and on to the authorities. Every time, someone has to write, copy or check.

This guide walks through the six steps information typically follows from the field to the books. For each step we describe what happens, the signs to look for, what you can do yourselves, and where technology can help.

How to use this guide

- 1 Read the six steps and mark the ones that sound familiar.
- 2 Fill in the checklist with a colleague from another part of the process.
- 3 Use the worksheet to cost your three biggest time drains.
- 4 Choose one step to start with. Not six.

This guide is written for leaders. It requires no technical knowledge, and you can use it whether or not you work with BCT.

2. WHERE THE TIME GOES

The six steps

Here are the six steps the work typically follows. For each step: what happens, signs that time is disappearing, what you can do yourselves, and where technology can help.

01 Operations and monitoring

Assets and sensors deliver large amounts of data every day. Often it sits in different systems and is only used once something has already gone wrong.

SIGNS THAT TIME DISAPPEARS HERE

- Asset data is rarely used to act ahead of problems.
- You have to look in several systems to get the full picture.
- Deviations are discovered by chance.

WHAT YOU CAN DO YOURSELVES TOMORROW

- List where your operational data lives today.
- Choose three key figures management should see every week.

WHERE TECHNOLOGY CAN HELP

Data is gathered in one place, so deviations are spotted early and service jobs can be planned before something breaks.

02 Service planning

Service jobs are planned from experience, spreadsheets and emails. Technicians get instructions by phone, and equipment and spare parts are arranged as they go.

SIGNS THAT TIME DISAPPEARS HERE

- The plan exists in several versions.
- Technicians go out without the right equipment or information.
- Urgent jobs upset the whole week's plan.

WHAT YOU CAN DO YOURSELVES TOMORROW

- Gather all service jobs in one place.
- Measure how many trips have to be repeated.

WHERE TECHNOLOGY CAN HELP

One overview of jobs, people and equipment, so the technician has everything with them the first time.

03

Work in the field

Technicians take notes, photos and measurements during the job. Much of it has to be written up again afterwards, often in the evening or the next day.

SIGNS THAT TIME DISAPPEARS HERE

- A large part of the technician's day goes on documentation.
- Notes and photos are re-entered when the technician is back.
- Documentation quality depends on who was out.

WHAT YOU CAN DO YOURSELVES TOMORROW

- Ask the technicians what takes the most time apart from the work itself.
- Remove the report fields nobody uses.

WHERE TECHNOLOGY CAN HELP

Digital tools document the work as it happens, for example with a helmet camera. The technician can focus on the job.

04

Report to the customer

After every job a report has to be written. It is often written by hand and looks different from technician to technician.

SIGNS THAT TIME DISAPPEARS HERE

- Writing a service report takes a long time.
- Reports look different and need correcting.
- The customer waits for the report before they can invoice or approve.

WHAT YOU CAN DO YOURSELVES TOMORROW

- Create a fixed report template.
- Measure how long it takes from job to report.

WHERE TECHNOLOGY CAN HELP

AI drafts the report in a fixed format from photos and measurements. The technician only edits and approves.

05

Finance and settlement

Hours, materials and mileage have to be collected and settled. Finance pulls numbers from several systems before the month can be closed.

SIGNS THAT TIME DISAPPEARS HERE

- Finance spends days gathering numbers.
- Settlement is done manually and in spreadsheets.
- Errors in settlement are discovered late.

WHAT YOU CAN DO YOURSELVES TOMORROW

- Count how many systems finance pulls numbers from.
- Find the settlements that most often need correcting.

WHERE TECHNOLOGY CAN HELP

Numbers flow automatically from the field to the finance system, so month-end closes faster.

06

Reporting and compliance

Tax, authorities, auditors and customers require figures and documentation. It has to be found, checked and compiled every time.

SIGNS THAT TIME DISAPPEARS HERE

- It takes a long time to compile figures for authorities and auditors.
- It is hard to trace a figure back to its source.
- Documentation requirements grow every year.

WHAT YOU CAN DO YOURSELVES TOMORROW

- List the reports you have to deliver every year.
- Find out where the data for each report comes from.

WHERE TECHNOLOGY CAN HELP

Reports are based on the same data as operations and can be traced all the way back to the source.

3. FIND YOUR TIME DRAINS

Checklist

Tick the questions where the answer is “too long”, “too many times” or “we don’t know”. Each tick is a place where time and money are probably disappearing. Ideally, do it with a colleague from another part of the process.

01 Operations and monitoring

- ☐ Do you use asset and sensor data to act before something breaks?
- ☐ How many systems do you have to look in to get the full picture?

02 Service planning

- ☐ Are service jobs planned in a system, in spreadsheets or in emails?
- ☐ How often does a technician go out without the right equipment or information?

03 Work in the field

- ☐ How much of the technician's day goes on documentation?
- ☐ Are notes and measurements re-entered when the technician is back?

04 Report to the customer

- ☐ How long does it take to write a service report?
- ☐ Do reports look the same regardless of who wrote them?

05 Finance and settlement

- ☐ How many systems does finance pull numbers from before month-end?
- ☐ How much of the settlement is done manually?

06 Reporting and compliance

- ☐ How long does it take to compile figures for authorities and auditors?
- ☐ Can you trace a figure in a report all the way back to its source?

Three ticks or more? Then there is usually something to gain, and it is worth taking a closer look.

4. WHAT DOES IT COST YOU TODAY?

Do the maths

It is easier to prioritise when there is a number on it. Use the table to cost your three biggest time drains. The figures do not need to be precise. A good estimate is enough to see where there is most to gain.

Hours per week × number of people × hourly rate × 46 weeks = EUR per year

Task	Hours/week	People	Rate (EUR)	EUR/year
Example: Service reports	5	6	70	96,600 EUR
1.				
2.				
3.				
Total				

The example is for illustration only. Use your own figures. Remember that time is not the only cost: lost orders, errors and delays often cost more than the hours.

GOOD QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN YOU DO THE MATHS

- Who does the task, and how often?
- What would they spend the time on if the task disappeared?
- What does an error or a delay cost when it happens?
- What happens when the person who knows the task is ill or leaves?

5. NEXT STEPS

How to get started

Once you have found your time drains, it is tempting to fix them all at once. That is rarely the best approach. Here are five tips from the projects we have been part of.

1. Start with one step

Choose the step that costs the most and solve it first. It delivers results quickly and experience for the next ones.

2. Measure before you build

Write down how many hours, errors and days are involved today. Then you can see whether it works.

3. Talk to the people who do the work

They know where it hurts. Solutions built together with them get used.

4. Build on what you have

You rarely need a new system. Often it is about getting the systems you have to work together.

5. Agree price and extent up front

A fixed price and a clear plan make it easy to decide and easy to follow up.

A REAL-WORLD EXAMPLE

Clobotics – wind turbine service

Clobotics repairs wind turbine blades. Technicians spent too much time on documentation rather than repairs. BCT built a service platform where helmet cameras document the work and AI drafts the report in a fixed format.

Result: 30% faster repairs and better documentation for customers.

6. NEXT STEP

Let's have a no-obligation chat

This guide gives you a good starting point. If you would like help taking the next step, the easiest way is to call or email us. It is free and without obligation, and you will get an honest answer about whether there is something to gain.

1 Call us for a chat

A conversation of about 20 minutes where we listen to where your time goes and share how others have approached it. No sales pitch.

2 Book a Shadow Walk

We follow the work at your company for ½–2 days and put numbers on where the time and money go.

3 Get a concrete plan

About a week later you receive a report of typically 50–75 pages with an action plan and a financial overview. Fixed price, and you own what we build.



CALL OR EMAIL DIRECTLY

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Book a Shadow Walk: blackcapitaltechnology.com/en/the-shadow-walk/booking/

You set the pace. Many start with a short chat and come back when the timing is right.