

# 5 Questions with Matt Brown



*Matt Brown joined Vixxo last spring as Chief Sales Officer to lead and accelerate our business development efforts. One key aspect of his role is uncovering the most important trends that will impact the convenience store, grocery, restaurant and retail industries, and understanding how facilities management will fit into these trends.*

## **1) What are some macro trends that will affect Vixxo clients in 2019?**

Expect to see continued disruption from digital technology.

Consider the dramatic impact on retailers and grocers by digital forces like Amazon. Nearly everything retailed is available anytime, anywhere at the click of a button. Many of our brick-and-mortar store clients are continuously challenged by how to adapt and keep their customers happy and always coming back.

It is a dynamic that impacts all of these verticals. For restaurants, food delivery services are causing the disruption. For groceries, it's online shopping offerings. And for convenience stores, it's apps that allow you to make purchases without even pulling out your card. All of these connected technologies are forcing executives to reconsider their strategies. It's happening faster than any of us expected. These aren't five year trends; they need to be addressed now for businesses in these verticals to remain competitive. The good news is that brick and mortar stores are well positioned to address these changes. With our expertise across the grocery store, convenience store, retail and restaurant verticals, Vixxo can help guide companies through these disruptions and work to implement the changes necessary to stay competitive.

## **2) How will these digital disruptions impact how business owners operate?**

The biggest impact will be on the customer experience. When you consider that fewer customers are coming into stores because of their connection to the digital world, you realize the importance of every visit and the need for each customer to have a stellar experience. Enhancing the in-store experience is an essential competitive differentiator.

The store or restaurant of the future has to be a place where people feel welcome, receive superior service, and are able to experience something in ways they can't online - whether that's a touch, taste, feel or interpersonal element. For us, that means that assets need to work, facilities need to be welcoming, restrooms need to be clean, and product selection and merchandising needs to be absolutely on point to get people to return to the store or restaurant.

## **3) What do you think is the biggest challenge facing clients going forward?**

In a world where most purchases can be made with a click of a button and delivered to your front door, customer loyalty can be a real challenge for our clients.

Today's business owners have access to a treasure trove of data, yet they often struggle with how to leverage that data to achieve the business outcomes they desire. We help our clients make sense of the data they already have. Oftentimes they will ask us to help them understand the volume of our maintenance work, develop a maintenance plan, and ensure that they not be overcharged for that maintenance. They ask us to help them with budget management and budget control. They ask us to help them understand where the best uses of capital dollars are, which HVAC units need to be replaced, which pieces of equipment will perform reliably in the next 12 months ahead, and so on.

Data, once carefully analyzed and applied correctly, can be leveraged to support desired business outcomes, and drive decisions about improving in-store sales and increasing customer loyalty.

#### **4) How do you believe Vixxo addresses these challenges differently from our competitors?**

We work really hard to deeply understand the outcomes that our clients are trying to achieve and the pain points they face. To that end, we can dig in and provide a remedy to those pain points. Once we understand them, we can demonstrate the advantages of using Vixxo solutions versus a competitor or trying to self-perform. These differentiators include a full service component. We provide an end-to-end solution that starts from the point that a client calls us to fix a broken piece of equipment... to getting a qualified person on site and repairing it... managing the warranty... managing the lease hold... getting the equipment back up and running in a timely fashion without them paying more than they should... and delivering all that without a shocking invoice. That full service model is vastly differentiated from vendors who just offer a point solution, or rely on huge national service providers.

We also put a high level of detail into every transaction. Our clients tend to be very focused on the expenses as well as items that need repair in the store. They're also focused on driving cost out of those high-dollar maintenance actions. But they aren't as focused in the lower dollar actions, which are much more frequent. Vixxo stands out by the level of detail we put in every invoice – from \$10 to \$10,000 – and our ability to help significantly manage costs across every level of service.

Technology is a key differentiator as well. Our technology platform manages not just the client providing the service request, but the service provider completing the request, and the back office individuals who handle the invoices. This technology platform is a tremendous value-add to our clients, and the beauty is that it's mostly agnostic. It plugs and plays with a lot of different systems. It's user friendly. And we don't require people to rip out and replace their previous investments in technology.

Most importantly, it's the Vixxo team of professionals. Our teams come from backgrounds in which they've become subject matter authorities. When service requests come in, their deep expertise in HVAC systems, refrigeration and dozens of other trades significantly reduces downtime and provides a significant cost improvement. We take the extra time to find people on our team who have that field experience.

## 5) What is the best career advice you've ever received?

There are two pieces of professional advice that I live by:

1) "See the world through the client's eyes." Most of my work is in business development, and I've always been so much more successful when I consider business decisions from the lens of the customer. It's very easy to get internally focused and lose sight of the customer. If we aren't constantly stepping back and saying, "how would a client think about this," then we aren't asking the right questions.

2) "No matter what you're doing in your career, it's all about the people." You can have the best or worst products, technology, service, etc., but it's not going to mean a thing unless you're surrounded by people who are passionate, empowered and who love doing what they do every day. People are the differentiator in business; it has nothing to do with what you're doing or how well you do it. I learned this early in my career, and for me, it has always driven the importance of spending as much time as possible ensuring you have the right team in place.